






# The Influence of Competence, Work Environment, and *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB) on Paramedic Retention with *Turnover Intention* as an Intervening Variable

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**Abstract.** This study aims to examine the conceptual framework regarding the mediating role of *turnover intention* in the relationship between competence, work environment, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB), and employee retention. This study uses a conceptual approach by integrating various previous empirical and theoretical studies to construct a structured framework based on *Social Exchange Theory* (SET) and *Organizational Commitment Theory* (OCT). The results of the analysis show that competence, work environment, and OCB have a positive effect on employee retention, both directly and indirectly through *turnover intention* as a mediating variable. The originality of this study lies in the placement of *turnover intention* as a mediating mechanism that explains how individual and organizational factors jointly influence employee retention in health institutions. Practically, this study provides insights for hospital management in designing strategies for competency development, improving the work climate, and strengthening prosocial behavior to reduce *turnover* rates and maintain organizational stability.

**Keywords:** Competency, Work Environment, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB), *Turnover Intention*, Employee Retention

## 1 Introduction

Globally, the challenge of employee retention in healthcare organizations is increasing, especially in the healthcare sector, which requires professionals such as paramedics[1]. Many hospitals face high *turnover* rates, which can impact service quality and operational costs. High *turnover* rates also indicate that employees are dissatisfied or unmotivated to remain in the organization[2], [3].

Retaining paramedics is crucial to maintaining the continuity of quality

healthcare services and reducing the costs of recruiting and training new personnel[4]. Paramedics who stay longer have valuable experience, which contributes to improving the quality of patient care and the operational efficiency of hospitals[5].

Retention of paramedical staff is influenced by several factors, including competence, work environment, and *Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB). High paramedic competence not only affects the quality of medical services but also their commitment to the organization[6], [7]. A conducive and supportive work environment also plays an important role in creating a good working climate that influences retention[8], [9]. In addition, OCB behavior, which includes voluntary attitudes such as helping colleagues and actively participating in organizational activities, can strengthen paramedics' emotional bonds to the hospital, making them stay[10], [11], [12].

Although there is evidence supporting the influence of competence, work environment, and OCB on retention, there are inconsistencies in previous research results. Some studies show that competence has a positive effect on retention[6], [7], but other studies find that competence does not always have a significant effect on the decision to stay in an organization. The same applies to the work environment and retention. Some studies show a significant effect[8], [9], while others show the opposite, i.e., no significant effect. Research on the relationship between OCB and retention is similar. Some studies show a significant effect[10], [11], [12], while others show the opposite, i.e., no significant effect of OCB on retention.

There is also an empirical gap in this study regarding the influence of the work environment on *turnover intention*. Several studies show different results. For example, research by Ramadhani and Wardani (2025) found that the work environment does not have a significant effect on employee *turnover intention*. Another study by Purwati and Maricy (2021) identified that the main factor triggering *turnover intention* is workload, while the work environment and job insecurity do not contribute significantly. Additionally, research by Khasanah (2023) states that *turnover intention* is more influenced by psychological contract and work-life balance, while work environment factors, both physical and psychological, are not the main factors influencing employees' intention to leave. These findings indicate a diversity of results that need to be explored further, especially regarding the role of the work environment in influencing *turnover intention*.

By bridging the existing research gap and introducing *turnover intention* as a mediator, this study aims to provide deeper insights into the factors that influence employee retention. The main objective of this study is to determine and analyze the influence of competence, work environment, and OCB on paramedic retention with *turnover intention* as a mediating variable.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 *Social Exchange Theory (SET)* and *Organizational Commitment Theory (OCT)*

This study is based on two main theories, namely *Social Exchange Theory* (SET) and *Organizational Commitment Theory* (OCT). *Social Exchange Theory*

(SET), developed by Thibault, Kelley, Homans, Blau, and Emerson, views social behavior as an exchange process, in which individuals engage in interactions involving costs and rewards[24]. This exchange is driven by expectations of reciprocity and an evaluation of the benefits and costs received[25], [26], [27]. Paramedics tend to perform at their best when they feel that the hospital provides fair treatment, support, recognition, and a conducive work environment[28]. Competence reflects the contribution of paramedics to the organization, while a supportive work environment and OCB practices represent forms of reciprocity that strengthen the social relationship between paramedics and hospitals. SET helps explain how competence, work environment, and OCB influence paramedic retention through *turnover intention* arising from imbalances in the reciprocal relationship between individuals and organizations.

Meanwhile, *Organizational Commitment Theory* (OCT), developed by Meyer and Allen (1991), defines organizational commitment as a psychological condition that binds individuals to their workplace and influences decisions to stay or leave the organization[29]. Meyer and Allen identified three dimensions of commitment, namely *affective commitment* (emotional attachment to the organization), *normative commitment* (a sense of moral obligation to stay), and *continuance commitment* (consideration of the costs and benefits of leaving the organization). In the paramedical context, the alignment between competence and job demands, accompanied by a supportive work environment, can increase comfort and emotional attachment to the hospital. In addition, OCB that reflects concern and cooperation among coworkers also strengthens social bonds and loyalty to the organization[30].

## 2.2 Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to an organization's efforts to retain its employees for a long period of time. Retention is a key factor in maintaining organizational health and long-term success, especially in industries with high *turnover* rates such as healthcare, tourism, and hospitality[31]. Through retention efforts, organizations seek to reduce *turnover* rates and strengthen employee commitment, which ultimately contributes to the overall success and growth of the organization[35].

In the context of healthcare services, paramedic retention is influenced by various factors such as the work environment, organizational culture, compensation system, rewards, leadership quality, and interpersonal relationships between staff and management[34]. A conducive work environment, both physically and socially, can increase satisfaction and commitment, while reducing *turnover intention*[32]. A positive organizational culture that values cooperation and openness also strengthens paramedics' emotional attachment to the hospital. A fair compensation system and adequate rewards can increase motivation and job satisfaction[35]. When paramedics feel they have opportunities for growth and receive adequate support, they tend to be more committed to the organization[32].

## 2.3 Competence

Competence is a fundamental characteristic inherent in individuals, including knowledge, skills, and behavior that enable a person to perform their duties

effectively[37]. Competence reflects a combination of cognitive and behavioral attributes that support optimal performance and superior work results[38]. In addition to covering what individuals know and can do, competence is also related to the motives and attitudes that drive consistent performance towards expected results[39],[37], [40].

According to Bafagehi et al. (2023) and Helmold (2021), competencies have three main dimensions, namely *knowledge*, *skills*, and *attitude*. Competence plays an important role in influencing retention and *turnover intention*[7]. Good competence increases job satisfaction and organizational commitment, thereby reducing the tendency to leave[6]. Conversely, employees with low or insufficient competence who have fewer opportunities for self-development are more likely to feel dissatisfied and want to move on [23][42].

## 2.4 Work Environment

The work environment is the overall conditions that affect employees in carrying out their duties, including physical, social, and psychological aspects[43]. The work environment includes various processes, systems, structures, and facilities that can have a positive or negative impact on employee performance[44].

According to Jakimiuk (2017), the work environment consists of physical and non-physical dimensions that interact with each other to create conducive working conditions. The quality of the work environment has a significant impact on important organizational outcomes, such as employee retention, job satisfaction, and *turnover intention*[8], [49]. A positive and supportive work environment creates a sense of comfort and commitment, encouraging paramedics to stay longer and contribute maximally to the hospital. Conversely, a poor work environment (e.g., inadequate facilities or tense working relationships) can lead to dissatisfaction and a desire to leave the organization[50].

## 2.5 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

*Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB) is voluntary behavior performed by employees outside of their formal duties that contributes to the effectiveness and success of the organization[51], [52]. According to Adams-Robinson (2021), OCB is an indicator of organizational commitment, where employees who exhibit this behavior have high loyalty and a strong desire to stay. In the context of hospitals, OCB among paramedics can strengthen teamwork, increase job satisfaction, and create an environment that supports employee well-being and retention[53].

Based on Besse et al. (2024), Dewani & Swatantra (2024), and Maisyura & Heriyana (2022), OCB consists of five main dimensions: *altruism* (voluntary actions to help coworkers), *courtesy* (politeness and communication that prevents conflict), *conscientiousness* (obedience and responsibility beyond minimum standards), *civic virtue* (active participation in organizational activities), and *sportsmanship* (positive attitude and not complaining easily)[53], [54], [55], [56], [57]. In addition, OCB has a significant impact on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance[51].

## 2.6 Turnover Intention

*Turnover intention* refers to an employee's conscious desire to leave their job or organization within a certain period of time[58]. *Turnover intention* is influenced by a number of factors such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, career expectations, work-life balance, and organizational culture[59].

According to Ansori (2021) and Hermawati et al. (2021), *turnover intention* has three main dimensions that describe the thought process of employees before deciding to leave. First, *thinking of quitting*, which is usually triggered by dissatisfaction or an uncomfortable work environment. Second, *intention to search*, which is the active effort of employees to look for alternative jobs. Third, *intention to quit* (the decision to leave), which is the stage when employees are determined to leave the organization due to internal or external factors.

Compensation injustice can strengthen *turnover intention* because employees feel that their contributions are not commensurate with the rewards they receive[58]. Strong organizational commitment, whether affective, normative, or *continuance*, is also a key determinant in reducing *turnover intention*[60].

## 3 Methodology

This study uses a conceptual approach to deepen theoretical understanding and explore new insights from various relevant scientific works. A literature review is used to identify *research gaps* and build a conceptual framework that can be empirically tested in subsequent studies. The selected literature is synthesized to align with the research objectives, thereby providing an in-depth understanding of the relationship between the main variables. The result of this approach is the development of a conceptual framework that aims to answer the following key questions: (1) Do competence, work environment, and OCB have a positive effect on paramedic retention? (2) Do competence, work environment, and OCB affect *turnover intention*? (3) Does *turnover intention* affect paramedic retention and act as a mediating variable in the relationship between competence, work environment, OCB, and retention?

## 4 Results and Discussion

### 4.1 The Influence of Competence on Paramedic Retention

In the context of paramedics, high competence not only improves the efficiency of medical services but also influences job satisfaction and individuals' decisions to remain working in the organization. Based on the SET proposed by Blau (1964), the competence possessed by paramedics reflects their contribution to the organization, while support and recognition from the organization strengthen their sense of attachment, thereby increasing retention.

Meanwhile, OCT, developed by Meyer and Allen (1991), explains that organizational commitment is influenced by the level of competence felt by

employees. Paramedics who feel competent and valued tend to have stronger affective commitment, form emotional bonds with the organization, and are more likely to stay longer.

Musambai and Mukanzi (2018) found that strong competence has a significant effect on employee retention because competent individuals tend to stay longer. Fahim et al. (2023) emphasize that continuous competence development significantly increases the desire to stay in a job. Thus, the higher the level of competence paramedics have, the more likely they are to remain working in the organization. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that competency has a positive effect on paramedic retention.

#### **4.2 The Influence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) on Paramedic Retention**

*Organizational Citizenship Behavior* (OCB) is voluntary behavior by employees that goes beyond formal responsibilities and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organization[21]. Based on SET[62], when social exchange is effective, employees feel appreciated and emotionally attached, which ultimately increases retention. Meanwhile, OCT[63] states that high organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, encourages employees to remain in the organization.

Empirical evidence shows a positive relationship between OCB and employee retention. Tian et al. (2020) found that OCB increases retention through better communication and interpersonal relationships. Osibanjo et al. (2020) stated that a positive work climate driven by OCB can reduce *turnover* rates and increase retention. Thus, it can be concluded that OCB has a positive effect on paramedic retention.

#### **4.3 The Influence of the Work Environment on Turnover Intention**

In the context of paramedics, a supportive and conducive work environment, both physically and socially, serves as a protective factor that reduces *turnover intention*. Based on SET theory, the relationship between individuals and organizations is a social exchange process in which employees tend to stay when they feel that the organization provides benefits and support equivalent to their contributions[62]. Meanwhile, OCT explains that a supportive work environment strengthens employees' affective commitment to the organization[63].

Empirical research shows a negative relationship between the work environment and *turnover intention*. Camelia et al. (2024) found that a conducive work environment reduces *turnover* rates because employees feel comfortable and supported. Zuhri & Andriani (2024) showed that a poor work environment increases the desire to leave, while a good environment significantly reduces it. Thus, the better the work environment, the lower the *turnover intention* among paramedics.

#### **4.4 The Effect of Turnover Intention on Paramedic Retention**

Among paramedics, high turnover intention reflects dissatisfaction with

working conditions, environment, or lack of organizational support, which ultimately reduces retention. Conversely, low turnover intention indicates high satisfaction, appreciation, and emotional attachment, which encourages employees to stay.

According to SET, the relationship between employees and organizations is based on the principle of social exchange, where employees give their best contributions in the hope of receiving fair rewards, support, and recognition. When these expectations are not met, the imbalance in the relationship increases *turnover intention* and reduces retention. OCT also explains that a high level of organizational commitment, especially affective commitment, can reduce *turnover intention* and strengthen the desire to stay at work[63].

The results of the study support the negative relationship between *turnover intention* and retention. Wulansari et al. (2020) found that an increase in *turnover intention* significantly reduced retention. Sidiq & Pasaribu (2025) also emphasized the importance of managing factors that influence *turnover intention* to maintain retention. Thus, *turnover intention* has been proven to have a negative effect on paramedic retention.

#### **4.5 The Influence of Competence on Retention through Turnover Intention as a Mediating Variable**

In the context of paramedics, high competence not only improves individual performance but also plays a role in reducing *turnover intention* and increasing retention. Employees who feel competent usually have higher self-confidence, job satisfaction, and emotional attachment, making them more likely to stay. Conversely, a lack of recognition or development opportunities can increase *turnover intention*[58], [59].

According to SET, when organizations value employee competence, commitment increases, and *turnover intention* decreases. OCT also asserts that competence strengthens affective and normative commitment; however, if the desire to leave arises, that commitment weakens, leading to decreased retention[63].

Previous research supports the mediating role of *turnover intention* in this relationship. Fahim et al. (2023) and Kirana et al. (2023) show that good competency management reduces *turnover intention* and increases retention. Therefore, it can be concluded that *turnover intention* mediates the positive effect of competency on employee retention.

#### **4.6 The Influence of the Work Environment on Retention through Turnover Intention as a Mediating Variable**

In the paramedical context, a positive work environment with harmonious coworker relationships, leadership support, and safe physical conditions can reduce *turnover intention* and increase retention. Conversely, an unsupportive environment causes stress and emotional exhaustion, which triggers the desire to leave[64], [66].

According to SET, a good work environment is a form of *social reward* that strengthens the relationship between individuals and organizations. OCT also emphasizes that a supportive work environment strengthens employees' affective commitment and continuity[63].

Empirical evidence supports the mediating role of *turnover intention* in this relationship. Zuhri & Andriani (2024) and Putri et al. (2023) show that a conducive work environment reduces the desire to leave and increases commitment. Febiyana et al. (2023) and Pricelda & Pramono (2021) also confirm that a positive work environment reduces *turnover intention*, thereby strengthening retention. It can therefore be concluded that *turnover intention* mediates the positive influence of the work environment on employee retention.

#### 4.7 The Influence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) on Retention through Turnover Intention as a Mediating Variable

Among paramedical staff, behaviors such as helping colleagues, maintaining professional ethics, and actively participating in organizational activities strengthen social relationships and create a positive work climate that increases retention. High OCB indicates strong commitment and loyalty to the organization, thereby reducing turnover intention[14].

According to SET, the relationship between employees and organizations is based on the principle of reciprocity, where OCB is a form of extra contribution, and retention is a positive result of healthy social exchange[62]. Meanwhile, OCT explains that involvement in OCB reflects affective commitment to the organization[63].

Theoretically, *turnover intention* acts as a mediating variable that connects the positive influence of OCB on retention. When employees exhibit high OCB, their satisfaction, appreciation, and emotional attachment increase, thereby reducing their desire to leave. Research by Putri & Arianto (2022), Nasir et al. (2022), and Srivastava & Mishra (2018) supports this mechanism, where OCB reduces *turnover intention* and increases retention. Thus, it can be concluded that *turnover intention* mediates the positive influence of OCB on paramedic retention.

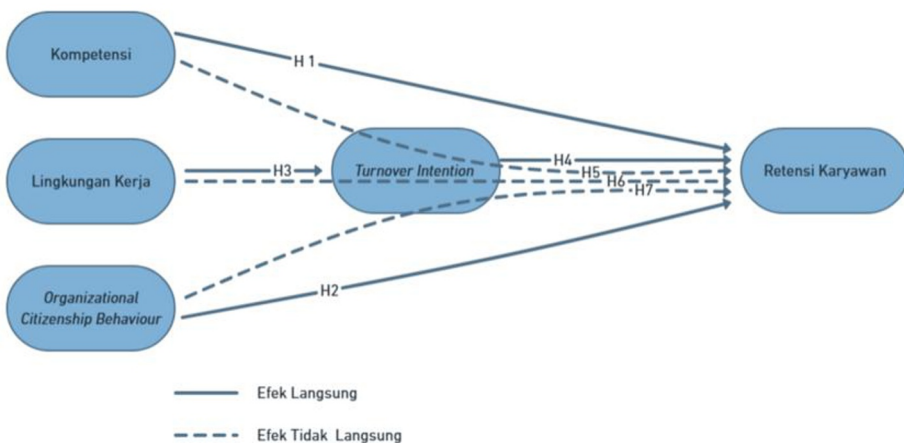


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

Figure 1. The conceptual framework of this study was developed based on previous

research findings and the integration of various relevant theories. This study suggests that competence, work environment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) have a positive effect on employee retention, both directly and indirectly through turnover intention as a mediating variable. This framework is supported by Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Commitment Theory (OCT), which explain that when employees feel valued and supported by the organization, they tend to reciprocate with higher commitment and a stronger desire to stay. A supportive work environment and high levels of competence can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty, while OCB strengthens social relationships and commitment to the organization. Conversely, high turnover intention reflects dissatisfaction and a desire to leave the job, which ultimately weakens retention rates. Therefore, turnover intention acts as an intermediary variable that links the influence of competence, work environment, and OCB on paramedic retention.

## 5 Conclusion

This conceptual synthesis shows that higher competency levels, a supportive work environment, and active implementation of *OCB (Organizational Citizenship Behavior)* increase the likelihood of paramedics remaining in their jobs, with turnover intention acting as a mediating variable in this relationship.

Theoretically, this study reaffirms the relevance of *Social Exchange Theory (SET)* and *Organizational Commitment Theory (OCT)* as useful conceptual frameworks, while also providing a new contribution by clarifying the mediating role of turnover intention in employee retention dynamics.

From a managerial perspective, the results of this study provide concrete policy directions, such as implementing systematic training, improving working conditions, both in terms of interpersonal relationships and communication, and implementing reward policies for prosocial behavior, in order to reduce turnover intention and ensure a stable, experienced workforce that is capable of maintaining the quality of health services.

This conceptual study has limitations that point to future research directions. First, the framework requires empirical validation, ideally through quantitative methods like SEM. Second, incorporating contextual moderators (e.g., hospital type, culture) would improve the model's applicability. Third, longitudinal designs are needed to establish causality and understand dynamics over time. Addressing these areas will refine the theory and provide deeper insights for HR management in healthcare.

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