

Perceived mentoring functions, perceived organizational fairness, and turnover intention of firms in China: The mediating effect of perceived organizational support.

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Abstract

Firms in China have been struggling with a high turnover rate in recent years. Thus, it is critical that Chinese employers recognize factors affecting turnover intention of employees. In addition, there are study tested the direct relationships of perceived mentoring function and perceived fairness on turnover intention. However, the process of linking the perceived mentoring function (PMF) and perceived organizational fairness (POF) on turnover intention is lacking. Based on these gaps, a cross-sectional study was conducted to investigate 508 responses in China regarding the turnover intention. Data collected were analysed by using multiple regression analysis to examine the direct relationships of PMF and POF on turnover intention. In addition, it also tested the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between PMF/POF and turnover intention. The findings show that POS significantly mediates POF on turnover intention, but not PMF on turnover intention. This study contributes to the knowledge by broadening the literature of turnover intention from direct and indirect impact of PMF, POF and POS perspective as well as shed light to practitioners the way to lower the turnover intention of the employee.

Keywords: *China, perceived mentoring functions, perceived organizational fairness, perceived organizational support, turnover intention*

1. Introduction

Firms in China have been struggling with a high turnover rate in recent years (Hu et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2021). The high turnover rate is a prominent issue which indicates ineffective managerial practices and becomes a non-negligible problem in human resource management (Jing and Yan, 2022). Moreover, recruiting and training new employees to replace who left incur high costs and might lose shared “tacit knowledge” of the company (Fan et al., 2022; Bertelli, 2007; Moynihan and Landuyt, 2008). Meanwhile, turnover disrupts sustainable relationships with revenue-generating customers (Palmatier et al., 2007). These disadvantages make identifying the antecedents of turnover intention crucial and urgent for corporates to reduce turnover behaviours and champion employees effectively.

Organizational sponsorship such as mentoring functions, organizational fairness, and organizational support are strong influencers to employees’ turnover intention (Fu et al., 2020; Choi and Hshin, 2022; Medina and Prieto, 2022; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Arora, 2020; Self, Gordon and Ghosh, 2020; Guan et al., 2015). Koberg et al. (1998) and Noe (1988) revealed that high quality of mentoring leads to low turnover intentions. Similarly, fairness treatment, as an important predictor of organizational outcomes, is directly associated with the intention to leave and effectively reduce the intention to resign (Choi and Hshin, 2022; Herda and Lavelle, 2012). However, despite an increasing need to understand the influence of mentoring and fairness perceived by employees to their turnover intention. A lack of knowledge about the intermediate process of how they work still exists (Medina and Prieto, 2022; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Herda and Lavelle, 2012; Pan, Sun, and Chow, 2011). Thus, it is utmost importance to look at the process of how these antecedents affect the turnover intentions.

Furthermore, as revealed in prior studies, the high quality of mentoring functions makes employees feel great support from their

companies (Carrell et al., 2021; Yang, Liu and Xu, 2022; Park, Newman, Zhang, Wu, and Hooke, 2016) and will further increase their intention to stay (Medina and Prieto, 2022; Fu et al., 2020; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Self et al., 2020). Similarly, organizational fairness is valuable for employees to gain a strong feeling of support from organizations which leads to low turnover intentions (Choi and Hsin, 2022). It is employees' perception that really matters (Joireman, 2006). Nevertheless, current literature overlooked the importance of organizational support as the intermediate factors which impacts the direct relationship of mentoring functions and organizational fairness on the employee turnover intention. Hence, there is a call to investigate the indirect relationship of organizational support in between the influence of mentoring and fairness perceived by employees and their turnover intention. In addition, most studies on the determinants of turnover intention were conducted in the context of western cultures (Vickovic, Morrow and Lambert, 2022; Quek et al., 2021; Köllen, Koch, and Hack, 2020; Self et al., 2020), the results of these studies may not be applicable to Chinese employees due to enormous working culture, social, political, and economic differences. Thus, it is worth to investigate the indirect effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between perceived organizational fairness/perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention in the context of China.

Based on the above-mentioned arguments, this study aims to explore: First, the direct relationship between perceived organizational fairness /perceived mentoring functions and turnover intentions. Second, the mediating effect of perceived organizational support (POS) in the relationship between POF/PMF and turnover intention. To achieve the research objectives as mentioned above, a review of related literature is presented in the next section, followed by the proposed research framework and hypotheses. Then, the research methodology and data analysis are presented. Lastly, the discussion and conclusion are shown.

2. Literature review

2.1. Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Social exchange theory maintains that employees develop relationships based on benefits and costs. The relationship involves the exchange of resources between both parties, and resources involve the benefits, advice, support, and information. When employees get benefits, they will feel obligated to reciprocate the treatment with positive workplace outcomes (Park et al., 2016).

Previous studies proved that perceived organizational support leads to positive career outcomes (Medina and Prieto, 2022; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Fu et al., 2020; Self et al., 2020; Srivastava and Agrawal, 2020). It is because employees tend to return favourable support from the organization by enhancing job attitudes and reducing turnover intention (Albalawi, Naughton, Elayan and Sleimi, 2019; Joo, Hahn, and Peterson, 2015). For example, Joo et al. (2015) posited that knowledge workers would stay in a company as they perceive that the organization cares about their well-being. Allen and Shanock (2013) found that organizational support leads to the lower intention to leave further. Wickramasinghe and Wickramasinghe (2011) highlighted that perceived organizational support is negatively associated with turnover intention and it significantly reduces turnover intention. In their study, Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002) demonstrated the negative correlation between perceived organizational support and turnover intention. More recently, Perryer, Jordan, Firms, and Travaglione (2010) and Arshadi (2011) supported that perceived organizational support has a negative impact on employees' intentions to quit. The main reasons is with more supports given by firms to the employees, they will be able to achieve a better performance and be more loyal to firms. Thus, it is hypothesized as follow:

H1: There is a negative relationship between organizational support and turnover intention.

2.2. Perceived Mentoring Functions and Turnover Intention

The last two decades have seen increasing mentoring studies in a field of scientific inquiry, workplace mentoring is a relatively new research focus (Rastgar, Alikarami and Jabari, 2021; Firzly et al., 2021; Allen et al., 2008). Mentoring in China is an emerging mechanism in Chinese workplaces compared to western organizations. Multinational companies have been observed formal mentoring programs in China, which is not common in local firms, where mentoring programs are rarely found (Allen, Finkelstein, and Poteet, 2011). Mentoring can be maintained by an organization through the formal program, or formed through unstructured social interactions, which is viewed as an informal work relationship (Armstrong et al., 2002; Chao, Walz, and Gardner, 1992). Meanwhile, Xi-fu is popular in line with Confucian value Chinese culture. Though the phenomenon of following an Xi-fu in Chinese organization is probably the same as informal mentoring, it still needs studies to verify the effects on career outcomes.

Empirical studies suggest that high quality of mentoring provides helps with employees' career outcomes, like job satisfaction, commitment, and low turnover intention (Koberg, Boss, and Goodman, 1998; Noe, 1988). Good communication and affiliation with mentors are established when employees are emotionally attached to mentors, they feel a cost to leaving the organization (Firzly et al., 2021; Chun, Litzky, Sosik, Bechtold, and Godshalk, 2010; Wang, Noe, Wang, and Greenberger, 2009). When employees imitate their mentors, they are coping the successful experience, which will probably lead their own success, they acquire more social capitals, resources and advances with this organization (Allen et al., 2004; Dreher and Ash, 1990). It will deter their intention to leave. For example, prior studies have demonstrated that supervisory mentoring has a strong impact on turnover intention (Rastgar, Alikarami and Jabari, 2021; Firzly et al., 2021; Pan, Sun, and Chow, 2011), formal mentoring negatively impacts on turnover intention (Chen et al., 2014), and there was reported a connection with informal mentoring and work attitudes which includes turnover intention (Armstrong et al., 2002). Since informal (additional), formal (company-sponsored), and supervisory mentoring acts as one of the important

perceived mentoring functions (Pan et al., 2011) and the positive impacts of work outcomes was widely studied (Allen et al., 2008), it is not difficult to relate perceived mentoring functions with turnover intention. Therefore, it hypothesised that:

H2. Perceived mentoring functions by employees are negatively related to turnover intention.

2.3. Perceived Mentoring Functions, Perceived Organizational Support, and Turnover Intention

Perceived mentoring functions refers to how the mentees perceive their interpersonal relationship with mentors and how they view the advice and support from their mentors (Noe, 1988). While, perceived organizational support (POS) refers to the general belief that employees feel that the organization cares about their well-being and values their contribution (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006).

According to Levinson (2009), employees tend to personify the organization in which they work. Based on the behaviour of executives and managers, employees tend to lend the organization as a system. Therefore, perceived organizational support corresponds to the degree to which employees feel, that is, the organization that hires them is willing to compensate their efforts fairly and help them when needed (such as illness, work-related issues), making their work interesting and inspiring and provide them with appropriate working conditions (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa, 1986). In short, employees form a general idea about the support provided by the organization. Employees may interpret the support provided by the mentor as the organizational support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), which will enhance their perceived support provided by the organization (Carrell et al., 2021; Yang, Liu and Xu, 2022).

A mentor, as a person with deep knowledge of work and life, can be anyone in the organization, supervisor, or other seniors from different departments. Mentors can offer two types of support to their mentees: career-related and psychosocial (Allen et al., 2008). Career-related

mentoring provides coaching in the form of sharing, feedback, and advice, providing protection to control risks that might threaten employees' reputation, providing challenging assignments, increasing employee exposure and visibility, and sponsorship. Psychosocial mentoring includes role model, friendship, and Counselling (Park, Newman, Zhang, Wu, and Hooke, 2016). Mentors may utilize their position, experience, and organizational influence to help junior employees learn organizational life, gain exposure and obtain promotion (Eby et al., 2013). Perceived mentoring function refers to how the employee perceives guidance from the mentor and it is considered an exchange relationship between mentors and mentees, reflecting how mentees feel about the level of support and feedback from mentors in terms of fulfilling the job requirement and personal development (Allen et al., 2008). Social exchange theory suggests that more mentoring support creates more feelings of organizational investment and support, which in turn, motivates more employees' beneficial behaviors to organizations that exceed their employment requirements (Joireman, Kamdar, Daniels, and Duell, 2006). Therefore, perceived mentoring functions have a direct impact on the level of employees perceived organizational support (Thomas and Lankau, 2009).

Given that mentoring function includes the process of psychosocial and career-related support from mentors to mentees. If employees feel supported by mentors, they will in turn re-treat the mentors in forms of behaviours beyond their expectations. In addition, employees build an emotional tie with their mentors in mentoring relationships through communication, trust, and friendship (Chun et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2009). These positive emotions will lead to empathy for their organization because employees perceive mentors are representatives in their organization, therefore, attribute such behaviours to their organization. It is not difficult to expect that employees feel that organizations support and value them when receiving benefits from mentors. In prior studies, this concept was supported. Firstly, mentoring functions help the employee to gain more ability to cope with problems and pressure in work, and further develop a more positive attitude towards their organization (Bozionelos, Bozionelos, Kostopoulos, and

Polychroniou, 2011). Secondly, mentoring may encourage employees to adopt organizational objectives and values (Stallworth, 2003), on one hand, employees realize their own success is also in way of achieving organizational goals, on the other hand, they feel supported by the organization which provides resources including mentors, to help with their achievement. Thirdly, employees perceive a high level of mentoring functions with a supportive atmosphere that appears to experience a sense of support and respect from their organization (De Clercq and Rius, 2007).

Therefore, it is believed that perceived mentoring functions are positively correlated with perceived organizational support (Eby et al., 2013), and perceived organizational support leads to reduced intention to resign (Fu et al., 2020; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Medina and Prieto, 2022; Park et al., 2016). It is expected that perceived organizational support might play a mediating role between perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention. Hence, it is proposed that:

H3: Perceived mentoring functions by employees are positively related to their perceived organizational support.

H4: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between mentoring functions and turnover intention.

2.4. Perceived Organizational Fairness and Turnover Intention

Perceived organizational fairness was defined as how fairly employees perceive they are treated by the organizations (Lynch et al., 1999). Organizational fairness (or justice) is considered and identified in four (4) different forms: distributive fairness, procedural fairness, interpersonal fairness, and informational fairness (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, and Ng, 2001).

Justice literature suggested a strong linkage between the organizational fairness perception and employees' work outcomes (Bae, Sohn, Cho, and Han, 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022). It is more common among researchers to study the correlation of

perceived organizational fairness and work outcomes such as job performance (Johnson, Truxillo, Erdogan, Bauer, and Hammer, 2009), and organizational engagement (Meng and Wu, 2015). Comparably, as one of the work outcomes, the turnover intention was studied less in the relationship with organizational justice, and the results are mixed (Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022). For example, Ma, Khansa, and Kim (2018) conducted research on the linkage between active community participation and crowd-working turnover in Turkey, in which, the impact of rewards fairness on turnover intention was also examined. They concluded that the fairness of rewards was a lack of significance to the effects of turnover intention because of online support communities provided. However, in another turnover study conducted by US researchers among IT workers, the fairness of rewards was posited to mitigate turnover intention (Ahuja, Chudoba, Kacmar, McKnight, and George, 2007). Moreover, sub-aspects of justice (e.g. distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice) were demonstrated significant on the turnover intention by different authors. For example, according to a South Korea study, Son, Kim, and Kim (2014) studies 158 samples and suggested that perceived interpersonal justice by employees was negatively related to turnover intention, which indicates a reduction of employees' intention to leave. Campbell, Im, and Jeong (2014) did a study on the role of efficiency emphasis played in South Korean local government to turnover intention, gathering 228 samples, they found that high emphasis on efficiency positively associated with intention to leave, whereas the level of perceived procedural justice lessen the strength of the relationship. Cho and Lewis (2012) studied the relationship of turnover intention and turnover behaviours and collected 26,926 records of data from the US federal employees to verify that employees are more likely to be retained when they perceive the fair and accurate performance appraisals.

Considering that the implication of different sub-types of justice on turnover intention was suggested by prior studies (Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022; Gharbi et al., 2022). It is reasonable to argue that the overall perception of organizational fairness

is significantly associated with turnover intention. Cannon and Herda (2016) pointed out that auditors' lower level of intention to leave comes in the response to their perception of firm fairness, which was also understood as overall fair treatment. As a result, this study hypothesizes that:

H5: Perceived organizational fairness by employees is negatively related to turnover intention

2.5. Perceived Organizational Fairness, Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

The organization is responsible for the fair evaluation process and rewards, and it is a relevant source of fairness and exchange partner for employees, and in this relationship, how fairly the employees perceive they are treated (perceived organizational fairness) may reflect the level of support employees feel that the firm cares about them (perceive organizational support). Similarly, the fairness of rewards was found positively related to organizational support and organizational commitment (Ahuja et al., 2007). Consequently, since the fairness of rewards is one aspect of fairness, it is not difficult to link perceived organization fairness with POS. Fair treatment is a symbol of being valued and respected by organizations, and it conveys a sense of belongings. Organizational fairness is proved to be a strong predictor of work outcomes (Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022; Gharbi et al., 2022). For example, Cannon and Herda (2016) mentioned that fair treatment and support received by employees lead to a higher level of commitment and lower level of burnout and turnover intention. Son et al. (2014) found that perceived interpersonal justice is associated with turnover intention. Campbell et al. (2014) explained that the perception of procedural justice is an antecedent of job outcomes, such as organizational commitment.

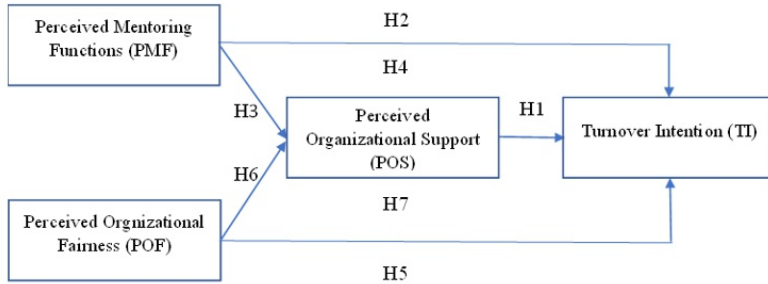
Apparently, plenty research have pointed out the relationship between perceived organizational fairness and work outcomes including turnover intention (Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022;

Mulang, 2022), however, the process of how perceived organizational fairness influences turnover intention is rarely studied. Social exchange theory suggests that how employees perceived they are fairly treated is associated with levels of social exchange relationships (Son et al., 2014). Accordingly, Son et al. (2014) from South Korea posited that LMX can partially mediate interpersonal justice and turnover intention. This study focuses on the organization as a whole, including the supervisors and co-workers from other teams, not only the specific relationship with leaders. According to social exchange theory, when employees benefit from the organization they seem to reciprocate. More specifically, if employees believe that the organization treats them in a positive way, they are more likely to feel supported and stay in the organization. Conversely, if employees feel that the organization treats them in a negative way, they are less likely to feel supported and stay in the organization. In their research, Herda and Lavelle (2012) supported that, employees will experience a sense of support and value when they think they are fairly treated by the organization regarding the procedural justice and fairness of resource allocation, for example, the fairness of rewards, and they are less likely to quit. Apparently, the fact that perceived organizational fairness is positively related to perceived organizational support (Son et al., 2014) and perceived organizational support is negatively related to turnover intention (Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Medina and Prieto, 2022; Fu et al., 2020; Self et al., 2020; Wickramasinghe and Wickramasinghe, 2011) leads to the assumption that perceived organizational support mediates perceived organizational fairness and turnover intention. Consequently, it is hypothesised as follows:

H6: Perceived organizational fairness is positively related to perceived organizational support

H7: Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between perceived organizational fairness and turnover intention

Figure 1: Research Framework



3. Data and Research Method

Figure 1 shows the research framework of the study. The study adopted a quantitative research design where primary data in the form of an online questionnaire was collected in Mainland China. The questionnaire was in Chinese and a back-translation procedure was adopted (Brislin, 1980) to ensure the conceptual equivalence of instruments between the English and Chinese versions. Two (2) professional translators were involved in the back-translation process. The instruments were translated into Chinese by one professional translator in the first step. Another professional translator translated them back into English in the second step. And the original and translated versions were compared to ensure the consistency of the contents. The questionnaire contained 32 questions to measure the model variables. Respondents were invited to answer these questions using a seven-point Likert scale, which was from 1 "Strongly Disagree" to 7 "Strongly Agree".

To ensure the reliability and validity, all the measurements were adopted from prior studies. Noe’s (1988) 21-item scale was adopted to measure perceived mentoring functions. Items of perceived mentoring functions include “Mentor has shared history of his/her career with you.”, “My mentor has conveyed feelings of respect for me as an individual.”, “My mentor has demonstrated good listening skills in our conversations.”, and “Mentor reduced unnecessary risks that could threaten the possibility of receiving a promotion.”. The measurements of

perceived mentoring functions were adopted from Lynch et al. (1999). The 3 items of perceived mentoring functions include asking respondents to rate how fairly they were treated by the organization. E.g., “Overall, I’m treated fairly by my organization.” and “In general, I can count on the organization to be fair.”. Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) perceived organizational support scale were adopted to measure perceived organizational support. The items of perceived organizational support include “The organization values my contribution to its well-being.” and “The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.”. For turnover intention, The Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann et al., 1979) was adopted to measure turnover intention. E.g., “I often think about quitting” and “I will actively look for a new job in the next year.”.

The population of the study is the employees who were working in mainland China. Due to the limited capacity and resources of Covid 19 pandemic, a convenience sampling method, one type of non-probability sampling, was adopted. Although convenience sampling may run the risks of sampling bias, the sample widely represented the population because respondents were the employees from different industries and cities in China, and they were also holding different levels of position with a wide range of age and company tenure. Their jobs varied from sales and marketing, finance, Human Resource and admin to R&D. And their organizations were catalogued to various sectors, for example, State-owned firms, foreign-invested firms, private-owned firms or firms of mixed form. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 384 is sufficient for a population which is more than 100,000. This study obtained 526 responses from various organizations 18 responses were removed due to incomplete data. Remaining 508 responses were used in data analysis which is more than the sample size of 384 required.

4. Findings

4.1. Demographic profile

The responses were obtained from 30 provinces in mainland China, which widely represented employees in China. Of all responses

collected, mostly came from east China. The top five (5) provinces that contribute most of the survey data were Jiangsu, Shanghai, Henan, Guangdong, and Zhejiang, with a percentage of 29%, 23%, 12%, 8%, and 7% respectively. And more than half of the data came from Jiangsu and Shanghai. Table 1 shows the geographic distribution of the respondents, where only the places contributing more than 1% of the samples are displayed. The 10 provinces contribute 91% of respondents in total, and other 20 province contribute 9% in total, which were not shown in table 1.

Table 1: Geographic Distribution of the Respondents

Province	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Jiangsu	145	29%	29%
Shanghai	115	23%	51%
Henan	59	12%	63%
Guangdong	39	8%	70%
Zhejiang	35	7%	77%
Beijing	30	6%	83%
Hubei	20	4%	87%
Shandong	7	1%	89%
Hunan	6	1%	90%
Anhui	6	1%	91%

Note: Only provinces that contribute more than 1% of the samples are listed.

4.2. Respondents Profile

As shown in table 2, 249 respondents out of 508 respondents were male and 259 respondents were female, with the percent of 49% and 51% respectively. 304 respondents were in the age group of 31 to 40 years old, which was 60% of all samples, representing most of the labor force in China. And 89% of the respondents were below 40 years old.

Table 2: Respondents Profile

Profile	Items	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	249	49%
	Female	259	51%
Age	Below 18	3	1%
	18~25	58	11%
	26~30	86	17%
	31~40	304	60%
	41~50	51	10%
	51~60	5	1%
	Above 60	1	0%
Service Year with Current Company	0-3Y	197	39%
	4-6Y	115	23%
	7-10Y	116	23%
	11-20Y	67	13%
	Above 20	13	3%
Company Sector	State-owned	105	21%
	Foreign	143	28%
	Private	142	28%
	Mixed	22	4%
	Others	96	19%
Job level	Individual Contributor	218	43%
	Entry Level Management	127	25%
	Middle Level Management	97	19%
	High Level Management	26	5%
	Others	40	8%

As for the year of tenure, 197 respondents were with their current firms for less than 3 years, which consisted of 39% of total responses. More than half of the respondents were with the companies for less than 6 years, which accounted for 62%.

Table 2 also reveals that most of the respondents (143) came from foreign-invested firms with a percentage of 28%, followed by 142 respondents from private firms and 105 respondents from State-owned firms, with the percentage of 28% and 21% respectively. Nearly half of

the respondents (21%+28%) were from local firms compared to foreign-invested firms (28%).

In addition, 508 respondents were in various job levels, including 208 individual contributors, 127 junior managers, 97 middle managers, and 26 executives, which contributed 43%, 25%, 19% and 5% of the data respectively. The number of respondents gradually decreased from entry-level positions to higher-level positions.

4.3. Validity and Reliability

The confirmatory factor analysis was adopted to measure the factor loading of items of variables (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) since the measurements for all the variables were adopted from well-established sources. As shown in Table 3, the factor loadings of all items are exceeding the threshold of 0.6 (Chin, Gopal and Salisbury, 1997), which is acceptable.

Convergent validity is the degree to which the measurement correlates with the alternative measurement the same construct (Hair et al., 2017). The average variance extracted (AVE) is one of the pointers to check the convergent validity. The accepted threshold of AVE score is greater than 0.5 (Avkiran, 2008). The result AVE for this study is shown in Table 3, which are all greater than 0.5 and achieved the convergent validity.

Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which a measurement is distinct from other measurements that are supposed to measure different constructs. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), if the square root of the AVE for each variable is greater than the correlation value of the same construct, discriminant validity is achieved. As displayed in Table 4, the square root of AVE is higher than the correlation values that shown in the same column and row, For example, the square root of AVE for perceived mentoring functions (0.763) is greater than correlation values with other variables (i.e. 0.559, 0.630, -0.273), the square root of AVE for perceived organizational fairness (0.919) exceeds correlation values with other variables (0.559, 0.834, -0.386), the square root of AVE for perceived organizational support (0.899) is larger than the correlation values (i.e. 0.630, 0.834, -0.368), and the

square root of AVE for turnover intention (0.912) is more than the correlation values (i.e. -0.273, -0.386, -0.368). Thus, DV is confirmed adequate.

Table 3: Factor loading, CR and AVE

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Perceived Mentoring Functions (Average Loading: 0.761)	PMF1	0.692	0.963	0.582
	PMF2	0.757		
	PMF3	0.717		
	PMF4	0.771		
	PMF5	0.648		
	PMF6	0.759		
	PMF7	0.807		
	PMF8	0.779		
	PMF9	0.788		
	PMF10	0.775		
	PMF11	0.835		
	PMF12	0.797		
	PMF13	0.827		
	PMF14	0.771		
	PMF15	0.769		
	PMF16	0.663		
	PMF17	0.700		
	PMF18	0.804		
	PMF19	0.792		
	PMF20	0.768		
	PMF21	0.764		
Perceived Organizational Fairness (Average Loading: 0.919)	POF1	0.930	0.907	0.844
	POF2	0.900		
	POF3	0.926		
Perceived Organizational Support (Average Loading: 0.898)	POS1	0.899	0.940	0.808
	POS2	0.933		
	POS3	0.916		
	POS4	0.878		
	POS5	0.867		
Turnover Intention (Average Loading: 0.911)	TI1	0.882	0.900	0.831
	TI2	0.915		
	TI3	0.936		

In conclusion, all the constructs of the model variables have achieved sufficient convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Table 4: Discriminate validity (Fornell and Larcker criterion)

	1	2	3	4
PMF	<i>0.763</i>			
POF	.559	<i>0.919</i>		
POS	.630	.834	<i>0.899</i>	
TI	-.273	-.386	-.368	<i>0.912</i>

Note: Italic bond values on the diagonal are the square root of AVE and other values are the correlations.

Composite reliability is defined as the degree of the overall consistency of the measure (Kerlinger, 1986). Table 3 shows the Cronbach's Alpha of the model variables. The Cronbach's Alpha of the model variables are more than 0.7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1978). Thus, all measurements are reliable.

4.4. Correlation

Correlation analysis provided a general view of the relationships between variables, which illustrate both magnitude and direction of the relationship. The results of correlation analysis performed on perceived mentoring functions, perceived organizational fairness, perceived organizational support and turnover intention are shown in Table 5. All the model variables are statistically significant correlated to each other at $p < 0.01$ level. The model variables do not suffer from multicollinearity effect as the correlation of the variables are less than 0.85.

Table 5: Correlation coefficients

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
PMF	5.37	1.02	1			
POF	5.11	1.22	.558**	1		
POS	4.99	1.19	.628**	.833**	1	
TI	3.73	1.59	-.264**	-.374**	-.354**	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ level

4.5. Perceived Mentoring Functions, Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Table 6 presents the findings of the indirect effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship between perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention. As shown in table 6, H3 (Model 1), H2 (Model 2) and H1 (Model 3) were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The models did not suffer from autocorrelation problem since the D-W value was around 2 (D-W=2.168). And there were no multicollinearity problem because F was less than 10.

The mediation effects of perceived organizational support were tested by the product-of-coefficient approach (the Sobel test). As shown in model 4, the Beta coefficient for perceived mentoring functions to turnover intention is no longer significant ($p = 0.195 > 0.05$) after perceived organizational support was entered in the model, and the value reduced from 0.264 (Beta=-0.264, $p < 0.001$) to 0.069 (Beta=-0.069, $p > 0.05$). Additionally, the Beta coefficient for perceived organizational support is still significant (Beta=-0.311, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H4 is supported.

Table 6: Perceived Mentoring Functions, Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover intention

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	POS	TI		
	Model 1 (H3)	Model 2 (H2)	Model 3 (H1)	Model 4 (H4)
	Beta	Beta	Beta	Beta
PMF	0.628***	-0.264***		-0.069
POS			-0.354***	-0.311***
F	328.985	38.052	72.7	37.242
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
R Square	0.394	0.070	0.126	0.129
Adjusted R Square	0.393	0.068	0.124	0.125
D-W	2.168	2.096	2.056	2.069
VIF	1	1	1	1.65
Hypothesis	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

4.6. Perceived Organizational Fairness, Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

As revealed in table 7, H1, H6 and H5 were supported, whereas, H7 is rejected. H6 (Model 1) and H5 (Model 2) was supported at $F = 0.000$ ($p < 0.001$). The D-W value were around 2 and VIF value were less than 10, the models did not suffer from autocorrelation problem and multicollinearity problem.

As seen from model 4, the Beta coefficient for fairness to turnover intention is still significant (Beta=-0.257, $P < 0.001$) after perceived organizational support was entered in the model, but the Beta coefficient for perceived organizational support was no longer significant (Beta=-0.140, $p = 0.061 > 0.05$). Thus, perceived organizational support did not mediate the relationship between perceived organizational fairness and turnover intention. Therefore, H7 is rejected.

Table 7: Mediating effects of support on fairness and turnover intention

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable			
	POS		TI	
	Model 1 (H6) Beta	Model 2 (H5) Beta	Model 3 (H1) Beta	Model 4 (H7) Beta
POF	0.833***	-0.374***		-0.257***
POS			-0.354***	-0.140
F	1149.655	82.297	72.700	43.124
Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
R Square	0.694	0.140	0.126	0.146
Adjusted R Square	0.694	0.138	0.124	0.142
D-W	2.109	2.039	2.056	2.046
VIF	1	1	1	3.272
Hypothesis	Supported	Supported	Supported	Rejected

5. Discussion

The study attempts to provide a more comprehensive explanation of how mentoring functions as perceived by employees enhances the perception of organizational support as a mediator influencing turnover intention. The finding supports the hypotheses about the process linking perceived mentoring functions to turnover intention. Specifically, perceived organizational support fully mediates the relationship between perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of Eby et al., 2013; Rastgar, Alikarami and Jabari, 2021; and Firzly et al., 2021, which found that effective mentoring will lead to a reduction of intention to leave between Mentees. This also coincides with previous work, indicating that an effective working relationship with senior members of the organization may result in employees' positive attitude towards the organization due to the enhanced organization support perceived by employees (Self et al., 2020; Medina and Prieto, 2022; Baranik, Roling, and Eby, 2010; Eisenberger et al., 2002).

The study also examined the mediating role perceived organizational support played on the process of how fairness facilitates

reduced turnover intention. The result is not in line with the findings of Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022. It shows no mediating effects of perceived organizational support exist on the process of how fairness facilitates reduced turnover intention, indicating that fairness has a direct impact on turnover intention. It is not surprising because employees in China value more of pay fairness than pay competition (Scarpello and Carraher, 2008). So, it is not difficult to understand that employees tend to leave when they feel not be treated fairly, no matter organizations provide other forms of support or not. Similarly, they are more likely to retain when their perception of fairness is high regardless of low support (Kim, Wang, Chen, Zhu, and Sun, 2019; Bae et al., 2022; Harwanto and Hakim, 2022; Mulang, 2022).

On the other hand, this study addressed the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationships of perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention. The finding suggests that more efforts on mentoring, more organizational support will be perceived by employees (Fu et al., 2020; Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2022; Medina and Prieto, 2022), and it will arouse employees' appreciation and reciprocation to organizations and facilitate with a better relationship with the organization and lower turnover intention (Carrell et al., 2021; Yang, Liu and Xu, 2022).

6. Conclusion

Based on data collected from China, this study examined the indirect effects of perceived organizational support on the relationship between perceived mentoring functions/perceived organizational fairness on turnover intention. It makes several theoretical contributions. Firstly, the extant literature on turnover intention has been expanded through this research. We tested the direct relationship of perceived mentoring functions and perceived organizational fairness on turnover intention. The findings showed that perceived mentoring functions and perceived organizational fairness have impacts on turnover intention in Chinese context. Secondly, the study also tested the direct relationship of perceived mentoring functions and perceived organizational fairness on perceived organizational support. Lastly, the indirect relationships of

perceived organizational support in the relationship were examined. The findings showed that perceived organizational support did mediate the relationship between perceived mentoring functions and turnover intention, but not the relationship between perceived organizational fairness and turnover intention. Overall, the study broadens the knowledge base of turnover intention from perceived mentoring functions, perceived organizational fairness and perceived organizational support which were lacking in prior research.

In term of managerial implications, firms are highly suggested to encourage mentorship or set up mentoring programs to provide support to their employees and produce good organizational outcomes. Managers of employees or a more experienced colleague can act as a mentor on the job. There should be some criteria to become mentors from the organization. Therefore, companies can involve selection processes to identify those who have the potential to be mentors and encourage them to take the roles by providing appropriate training to enable them to provide sufficient support to mentees. Additionally, mentors would be more enthusiastic and engaged to help mentees when they are rewarded by being mentors, for example, their effective mentoring is linked to the positive result of performance appraisal, merit increase, and promotion. Further, companies can highlight the benefits in the mentors-recruiting process, because both parties are benefited from mentoring- the mentor and the mentee. For example, many mentors feel learning from mentees and obtain improved career outcomes than those without mentoring experience (Ghosh and Reio Jr, 2013).

The reality is that the concept of “mentoring” maybe an imported idea for local companies in China. Therefore, the suggestion for these organizations will be cultivating a culture or environment of informal mentoring. In Chinese traditional culture, it is common to establish an interpersonal relationship between a seasoned employee (Xi-fu) and a junior employee. If organizations encourage the naturally-built connection, it will also help with employees' perception of support and thus lower the intention to leave. By encouraging employees to seek help and ask questions from experienced coworkers or supervisors (who are also advocated mentor others), organizations not only provide support to

their employees (both parties- mentors and mentees- will benefit from the relationship) but also obtain positive outcomes. The key to encouraging informal mentoring is that encourage employees to be coachable and eager to learn from others, and willing to provide helps to others as well.

Moreover, the mediating role of perceived organizational support played in the process provides insight into effective mentoring design for organizations. It reminds organizations to carefully consider mentoring as a valid method to ensure employees' perception of support by their company. In order to make employees feel more organizational supported, and reciprocate with outstanding output, mentoring should be highlighted and viewed as organizational resources. For example, on one hand, selecting and encouraging employees that are closely in line with the company's value to be the mentors. On the other hand, encouraging mentees to be coachable and eager to learn. It makes employees link mentoring functions as specific organizational support thus reduce their intention to leave (Baranik et al., 2010).

From the Organizational Fairness perspective, the study has a very practical implication to suggest firms control organizational fairness. Because it can not only increase employees' fairness perceptions but also impact employees' intention to stay. Although, it is ultimately employees who decide how fairly they are treated, there are still several drivers of fairness perception: First, companies should deal with decision-making procedures seriously, especially for those programs closely relating to employees, like procedures of performance appraisal, merit increase, promotion, training, mentoring, compensation, and benefits. Second, companies should set up criteria appropriately and applied consistently. Third, organizations must provide sincere and adequate explanations about the rules for reasons of a certain decision and treat employees respectfully while showing care of their well-being (Brockner, 2006). Throughout communication and explanation can also enhance informational justice while making the process apparent, involving employees in the decision-making process and implementation. The importance of interpersonal justice should also be emphasized by companies and managers to treat each employee fairly

and respectfully. It is very important to be noted that, managers represent organizations in the eye of employees, how they are treated by leaders are viewed as how organizations treat them, so managers should not treat employees out of their own interests. Employees compare treatment they received with co-workers and appreciate the unbiased and undifferentiated treatment by their leaders. All these guidelines will also assist with the increasing distribution fairness perceived by employees. As one aspect of fairness, distributions justice was reported as a better predictor of the turnover intention by Roberts, Coulson, and Chonko (1999). For example, employees concern more about fair pay than the method used in deciding whether to leave or stay. Therefore, the importance of distribution fairness should be addressed while practicing other aspects of justice to increase the overall satisfaction of the fairness treatment.

Similar to prior studies, this study consists of several limitation. First, this study employed convenience sampling method, which might result in selection bias. Future research may apply probability sampling techniques in order to fully alleviate the issue. Second, the data is cross-sectional, which may not capture the dynamic nature of interrelationship among variables (Ployhart and Vandenberg, 2010) and it may result in biased parameter estimates (Maxwell and Cole, 2007). Accordingly, a longitudinal design is suggested for future study.

The fact that perceived organizational support does not mediate the relationship between organizational fairness and turnover intention suggests that other factors may be considered to explain why fairness perception reduces turnover intention. Future studies may test alternative mediators like organizational commitment or leader-member exchange. For example, in their study, Son et al. (2014) addressed the importance of mediating the role of leader-member exchange (LMX) on the relationship between interpersonal fairness and turnover intention in South Korea.

Lastly, future studies may also consider controlling employees' demographic variables, i.e., age and gender to analyse the different effects of various groups. According to Burke and McKeen (1996), though mentoring helped a lot with men's career success, it helped more

for women. In addition, Liang and Gong (2013) also posited that mentoring significantly impact employees in their early career. Thus, it will be good if future research goes deeper on respondents' profiles and explore how determinants predict the work outcome in different position levels, job types, and industries.

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