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Available online at www.sciencedirect.com**ScienceDirect**journal homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/international-journal-of-nursing-sciences/2352-0132>**Original Article****The impact of work support and organizational career growth on nurse turnover intention in China****Yang Yang, Yan-Hui Liu*, Jing-Ying Liu, Hong-Fu Zhang**

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The paper aimed to explore the impact of work support and potential for career advancement on the nurse turnover intention in order to find an effective approach to curb high turnover.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey of 526 nurses from eight teaching hospitals in Tianjin, China, was conducted to test the hypothesized multilevel model. The organizational career growth scale, work support scale, and the nurse turnover intention scale were used to measure the effect of organizational career growth and work support on nurse turnover intention. Finally, SPSS 17.0 and AMOS 17.0 software were used to analyse the relationship of these variables.

Results: The score of the three scales nurse turnover, organizational career growth, and work support were 1.98 ± 0.60 , 2.40 ± 0.50 , and 4.06 ± 0.98 , respectively. The total and direct effects of work support on turnover intention were -0.361 ($p < 0.01$) and -0.147 ($p < 0.01$), respectively. The indirect effect was -0.169 with a 95% bootstrap confidence interval of -0.257 to -0.102 .

Conclusion: The study showed a lack of work support negatively and directly associated with nurse turnover intention. Additional opportunities for career growth within the organization may strengthen the effect of work support and consequently increase the retention of qualified nursing staff.

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1. Introduction

Nurse staff and their experience level are an important part of the medical health system that can directly affect the quality of care [1]. Shortage of nurses has become an increasingly urgent priority in the recent decades and has brought a series

of challenges to hospitals across the world [2]. Recent studies suggested that the high rate of nurse turnover may be due to the work overload, long work shifts, complex work relationships, and lack of opportunities for career advancement [3,4]. A report in 2014 showed that in New Zealand, the United States of America, Canada, and Australia, nurse turnover rate reached 44.3%, 26.8%, 19.9% and 15.1%, respectively [5]. The

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high nurse turnover rate not only affected the care quality, but it also brought severe economic losses to these countries. Waldman et al. [6] found that the total cost for low retention of nursing staff, including productivity loss and costs of hiring and training new staff, could reach up to more than 5% of the annual operating budget in a major medical centre in Mexico.

The initial intention of the nursing staff to leave the position (turnover intention) is recognized as a pre-variable before the actual demission, which has a good predictive power of the actual turnover behaviour [7]. In 2012, 40.4% nurses intended to leave their current nursing position in China [8]. Therefore, it is important to determine the factors influencing the nurse's desire to remain, hence eliminate the nurse intention to leave. Organizational and personal factors together can be used to predict the rate of nurses considering leaving their current position [9]. On the organization level, work support, such as the flexible schedule, career advancement opportunities has shown to sway directly the nurses from leaving their position [10]. Furthermore, other studies also found a correlation between the employee-driven career growth within the organization and the retention rate most likely due to increase in overall job satisfaction [11].

Organizational career growth is the core of the career development theory. The theory emphasizes the importance of the speed of employee career growth within their current organization [12]. According to Weng et al. (2010), the four dimensions of organizational career growth include the speed of professional skill acquisition, the speed of career goal realization, the speed of promotion, and the speed of salary increase [13]. Organizational career growth needs the cooperation of both the employer and the employee. Organizations that provide nurses with opportunities to advance their career who then pursue the opportunities can, as a result, see employee-led organizational improvements [14]. Therefore, organizations may see an increase in loyalty from the nurses by providing them with the opportunities for career growth [12].

The value of organizational career growth has been indicated [15], however, there is few study considered organizational career growth as a personal factor and work support as an organizational factor to explore their relationship and their function on reducing nurse intention of leaving their current position. It is important to understand the extent at which work support influences nurse turnover intention and how accelerating organizational career growth may add to that. Nurse managers may play an important role in establishing the guidelines for professional growth within an organization potentially increasing the nurse retention rate.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Study objectives and design

We conducted a cross-sectional survey. This study aimed to explore the impact of work support and organizational career growth on nurse intention to leave their current workplace to find an effective approach to retain the nursing staff. A hypothesis model was built which regarded work support as an exogenous latent variable, turnover intention an endogenous

latent variable, and organizational career growth an endogenous latent variable and a mediator.

2.2. Research sites and sample

A total of 650 registered nurses were recruited from eight teaching hospitals in Tianjin, China, from Oct 2013 to Nov 2014. All of these hospitals have >500 beds. A cluster sampling design was used to choose the sample. All of the participants were registered nurses with a direct contact with patients. Questionnaires were distributed and collected during morning or evening meetings in the nursing departments. A total of 565 feedbacks were received, a response rate of 86.9%. After eliminating incomplete questionnaires, a final number of 526 questionnaires were included in the study.

2.3. Characteristics of the participants

The characteristics of the participants are in the Table 1. Only two nurses were male (0.004%). The age distribution was as follows: 53.0% (279/526) between 20 and 29 years, 31.7% (167/526) between 30 and 39 years, and 14.8% (78/526) participants > 40 years. Concerning the educational level 50.6% of the participants had a junior college degree, and 46.2% had a bachelor degree. Most participants (69.0%) were married or lived with a partner. Of work experience ranged from 1 to 5

Table 1 – The participants' characteristics.

Characteristics	Number	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	2	99.6
Female	524	0.4
Age (year)		
<20	2	0.4
20–29	279	53.0
30–39	167	31.7
>40	78	14.8
Educational level		
Secondary nursing education	13	2.5
Junior college education	266	50.6
Undergraduate education	243	46.2
Graduate education	4	0.8
Marital status		
Single	163	31.0
Married	363	69.0
Personnel		
Government staff	312	56.3
Contract nurse	214	40.7
Working time (years)		
<1	27	5.1
1–5	191	36.3
6–10	134	25.5
11–20	96	18.3
>20	78	14.8
Income (RMB/month)		
<1000	6	1.1
1000–1999	17	3.2
2000–2999	95	18.1
3000–3999	181	34.4
4000–4999	114	21.7
>5000	113	21.5

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