

# The Influence of Psychological Distress and Work-Life Conflict on Employees' Departure Intention in the IT Sector: The Moderating Role of Mindfulness

Drishti Singh, Dr. Divya Singh

**Abstract:** *This empirical research focuses on examining the impact of psychological distress and work-life conflict on employee turnover intentions in the IT Sector. This study aims to analyse the influence of work-family conflict or family-work conflict on employees' departure intentions. The present research extensively reviews the existing literature using these variables, such as Psychological Distress, Work-Life Conflict, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, and Employee Departure Intention. The primary findings highlight how work-life conflict, along with psychological distress, can prompt an individual to depart and change their roles immediately. Additionally, Mindfulness plays a significant role as a moderator in focusing on an individual and helps them stay with the organisation. The study concludes while reinforcing the role that Mindfulness plays in securing employees' jobs.*

**Keywords:** Psychological distress, Work-Life Conflict, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, Employee Departure Intention, Mindfulness.

## Introduction

*"When you have balance in your life, work becomes an entirely different experience. There is a passion that moves you to a whole new level of fulfilment and gratitude, and that's when you can do your best, for yourself and others." —Cara Delevingne*

For multiple individuals, the most important domains are work and life. Specifically, due to increase in dual-earner households and non-traditional gender-roles and partially to an expansion in the numbers of hours an individual work (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998; Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000). However, since years, people have been juggling with keeping work-life balance. And, ultimately due to family, individual's mental health has degraded. Wherein, due to work, they are impacting their family life. Work-Life Conflict turns out to be the real concern in totality. The impact of psychological distress and work-life conflict

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Drishti Singh, Research Scholar, School of Management and Commerce, K. R. Mangalam University, Sohna, Haryana 122103, India.

Dr. Divya Singh, Assistant Professor, School of Management and Commerce, K. R. Mangalam University, Sohna, Haryana 122103, India.

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motivates an employee towards departure intentions. An employee when feels demotivated due to work life conflict often makes a shift from current organization to another organization. Ultimately, research analysing the relationship between work and family has steadily expanded over the past few decades (Bond et al.,1998; Ebay, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Much of this research had emphasized on the conflict between the domains, primarily demonstrating this conflict to have harmful effects on necessary individual outcomes such as depression, hypertension, stress and anxiety (Burke & Greenglass; Frone, 2000; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997), and necessary organizational outcomes like employee turnover intentions (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Simultaneously, this research has led to enhanced initiatives among employers, as well as public policy initiatives, aimed toward reducing the conflict between work and family domains (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999).

Accordingly, it is a necessary aspect to have a clear understanding of the variables that cause work-family conflict in order to provide direction for research and application. The purpose of this study is to provide a brief study on all the variables, like Psychological Distress, Work-Life Conflict, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Work Conflict, Employee Departure Intention, and Mindfulness. And, to link the variables and exclude the final best results. "Psychological distress" is a multifaceted emotional state characterised by symptoms such as anxiety, depression, restlessness, irritability, and cognitive disturbances that result from an individual's perceived inability to cope with external stressors (Ovsiannikova et al., 2024).

"Work-life conflict" is important because it is associated with various attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in both the workplace and the family. It covers both variables, such as work-family conflict and family-work conflict. Wherein, "Work-Family Conflict" is defined as a form of role conflict between work responsibilities and domestic life wherein the two things mutually cannot get equated in multiple aspects. Darmawati (2019) defends that this usually occurs when a person tries to fulfill the demands of a role in work and the effort gets influenced by the ability of the person concerned to meet the requirements of his family, or vice versa, wherein fulfilling the demands of a role in the family gets influenced by the ability of the person concerned in meeting the demands of his job. Asbari et al (2021) mentioned that work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict, namely the pressure of imbalanced roles in work and roles in the family.

"Family-Work Conflict" (also called as family interference with work or FIW) arises when the pressures from the family and work domains are mutually incompatible, and as a result, while participating in the work role is made more difficult through the virtue of participating in the family role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The definition of departure is the process through which an employee who has an employment relationship with an organisation breaks that relationship and decides to leave (Mobley, 1982).

Mindfulness is defined as "the awareness that emerges while paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (Kabat, Zinn 2003 p. 145). It is seen and estimated as per research that Mindfulness works as a solution against all variables and helps individual to work in the right direction.

## **Literature Review**

Ruppanner (2013) examined the relationship between work conflict with family and family with work and appropriate family-friendly policies. The research method used is qualitative and quantitative. Existing literature ensures that psychological distress and work-life conflict are among the most crucial predictors of employees' departure intention, specifically in demanding and high-pressure industries like information technology. Psychological distress, involving anxiety, emotional exhaustion, depression, and workplace stress, has been consistently held with lower job satisfaction, diminished organizational commitment, and increased turnover intention (Hobfoll, 1989; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen, 2009; Shoss, Jiang, & Probst, 2018). Similarly, work-life conflict occurs when professional responsibilities interfere with personal and family life, often resulting in stress, burnout, and employee disengagement, while contributing to employees' intention to quit (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Allen et al., 2000; Haar et al., 2014). In the IT sector, due to long working hours, tight deadlines, and continuous technological adaptation, employees frequently experience heightened psychological strain and work-life imbalance, increasing vulnerability to turnover (Ahuja et al., 2007; Tarafdar et al., 2015).

Furthermore, mindfulness has gained scholarly attention as a psychological resource that effectively helps employees regulate emotions, boost resilience, and cope with workplace stress; however, empirical findings regarding its moderating role remain inconsistent. While some studies suggest mindfulness reduces stress and improves workplace outcomes (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hülshager et al., 2013; Good et al., 2016), other evidence indicates that individual mindfulness alone may not sufficiently buffer the adverse effects of organizational stressors on employees' intention to leave (Greeson, 2009; Querstret et al., 2020). Therefore, the existing literature highlights the need to further examine the interplay between psychological distress, work-life conflict, and mindfulness in shaping employees' departure intention within the IT sector.

### ***Psychological Distress and its Dimensions***

Psychological Distress is defined as a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that affects individuals with multiple emotional and mental health challenges (Ridner, 2004). It showcases a state of emotional suffering and discomfort that can manifest in various forms, like anxiety, depression, and a sense of unease (Winefield et al., 2012). Multiple factors, including work-related stressors and work-family conflict, can trigger the experience of psychological distress (Huang et al., 2021). It is a pervasive issue that affects people of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life, transcending cultural, geographical, and socioeconomic boundaries.

Psychological distress can have profound and lasting consequences on an individual's mental, emotional, and physical health and overall quality of life (Martin and Lopes et al., 2023). In this context, it is crucial to recognise and address psychological distress and its antecedents within the workplace to promote employees' well-being and prevent the escalation of symptoms.

### **Dimensions of Psychological Distress**

#### *Burnout*

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Psychological Distress is associated with burnout, and cognitive and behavioural difficulties. Burnout is a multifaceted construct through various degrees of emotional exhaustion (the feeling of not being able to offer the best, both physically and psychologically), depersonalization (a negative or distance attitude towards other people, also defined as a disbelief or Cynicism), and a low sense of personal accomplishment (the tendency of feeling incompetent) (Jaume-Miquel March-Amengual,2023).

Burnout does not only depend on individual predisposing factors, like emotional expression or inadequate coping strategies for stress, but it is also associated with external factors like the educational system. It acquires adverse effects through increasing distress and lowering academic engagement, and it can be a good predictor of poor academic performance. (Paola Galbany-Estragues, 2023)

Law 2013 & Patil 2015 say that virtually all college students experience academic stress at some level. This academic stress leads towards psychological distress and burnout. This leads students to leave school before the completion of their degree. The relationship between psychological distress and academic burnout has been explored. For instance, studies have found that protracted exposure to academic stressors results in exhaustion, cynicism, and lower levels of self-efficacy in the affected students. Psychological Distress is positively associated with emotional exhaustion, cynicism and academic inefficacy.

### *Stress*

The stress generated by work-family conflicts may lead the workers to consider leaving their profession, their job or the organization that they work for so as to resolve the conflict and lower the stress they currently experience. (Luis Manuel Blanco-Donoso, 2021). Stress is being identified globally as one of the most common psychological distresses among employees. Stress contributes towards physical and mental illnesses, along with adverse effects on the heart, immune system, brain-acting hormones and metabolic functions. According to research, some of the behavioural and emotional indicators of stress overlap with psychological distress, like anxiety and depression. Stress causes behavioural changes that cause guilt, feelings of shame, and irritation. Also, exposure towards psychological stressors may lead to post-traumatic stress in the long term, which has been linked to organic brain changes leading towards neurocognitive symptoms. Some of the symptoms of stress are worn-out, insomnia, physically exhausted or tired, enhanced palpitations/perspiration/ sweaty hands and racing heartbeat.

### *Depression*

Depression is seen as a common psychological distress that causes people to experience loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt, low self-esteem, poor sleep, loss of appetite, low energy and lack of concentration. Being a mental disorder, depression occurs out to be a mental disorder that can influence everything a person does in daily life and every aspect of one's life impact on a person's life and on their physical and mental health. People who are depressed represent issues like injury and hurt, exaggerate unfairness, brood over previous harm or insults and label or blame others for their problems. Depression also occurs when the expectations of one are not met, the needs of the job do not match one's capabilities, or there is a lack of or limited resources required by the employee to do a job.

### *Anxiety*

An emotional response towards perceived risk or danger, is referred to as “Anxiety” being a psychological distress. Through being scared, chronic anxiety lowers a person’s effective cognitive functioning and may influence one’s quality of life. However, Anxiety is best known for behavioural changes, it may also have serious consequences on one’s physical health. People turn out to be anxious and experience acute fear, tension, discomfort, mood swings, nervous ticks, stage fright, trembling, butterflies in the stomach and often urinate too. Anxiety is a negative psychological state that is incongruent with an individual’s conscious reality. (Fordjour G.A., Chan A.P.C et al 2020)

## **WORK-LIFE CONFLICT**

Home life and work life are two factors that impact each other. In research, it was considered that work life gets influenced by variables related to the family (number and age of children and support of the spouse) and, simultaneously, home life gets affected by the essential needs of work life (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Kossek and Ozeki, 2001). Furthermore, Kossek and Lee (2017) hypothesise that work-life conflict represents an expansion of the work-family conflict construct, while acknowledging that professional obligations can overlap with an individual’s diverse personal life roles and interests. Individuals who conformed to elevated levels of work-life conflict indicated that their occupational responsibilities obstruct their ability to emphasize salient family or personal matters. Furthermore, they report experiencing insufficient temporal or energetic resources for personal relationships because of work demands, and perceive their professional roles as undermining their capacity to fulfil domestic responsibilities (Kossek and Lee (2017).

### **Work-Family Conflict and Family-Work Conflict**

#### ***Work-Family Conflict***

Within today’s fast-paced and demanding work environments, achieving a harmonious balance between work-related obligations and family responsibilities has become increasingly challenging (Michel et al, 2011). Work-family conflict (WFC) begins when the demands, pressures, or commitments held with one domain (i.e. work) interfere with an individual’s ability to fulfil responsibilities in the other domain (i.e. family) (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). This conflict furthermore manifests in multiple forms: time-based, strain-based, and behaviour-based (Frone et al, 1992).

The concept of WFC gains prominence in the context of work stress and its repercussions on employees' well-being (Huo and Jiang, 2023). It provides a pivotal mechanism through which workplace stressors can influence an individual's personal life and vice versa. The bidirectional nature of WFC underscores its significance while understanding the interplay between work stress and psychological distress (Oshio et al, 2017).

#### ***Family-Work Conflict***

Work-family problems are represented to exist and to have a favourable correlation with the intention of leaving one’s job. Ghayyur and Jamal, (2012). Work-Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict have a favourable and substantial effect on the desire to leave. According to Alsam et al(2013), organisations need to take into account the impact of work-family conflict so as to decrease the desire to leave the company.

#### ***Employees Departure Intentions***

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Departure Intentions have turned out to be one of the best-established areas of research that dates back to the early 20th century. There are two main ways to define departure turnover: broad and narrow. Broadly, departure intention is defined as a change in an individual's status like a member of an organization, involving inflow, Journal of International Business and Management, demotion, transfer, and outflow of employees. On the other hand, the narrow definition of departure is the process through which an employee who has an employment relationship with an organisation breaks that relationship (Mobley, 1982).

Hence, the narrow definition would be adopted. Departure Intention can be classified into voluntary, involuntary, and natural turnover. Departure Intention is an organisation's decision to terminate the employment and labour relationship, specifically by dismissal or layoff (Mcelroy et al, 2001). Natural Turnover is the termination of organisational membership due to a force majeure, like retirement or death.

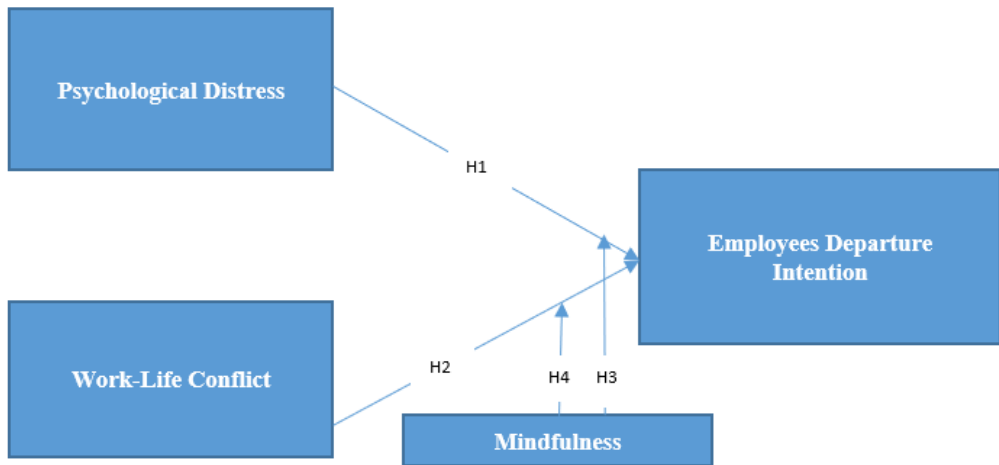
## *Mindfulness*

Mindfulness refers to a meditation technique whose main goal includes maintaining a calm mind and training attention while emphasizing only on a single thing (the support) at a time; this support is usually the practitioner's breathing (Bernárdez, B., Panach,2023). The practice of mindfulness aims to enhance concentration and attention, which has proven useful in knowledge intensive and stressful work environments like technological companies.

Mindfulness, that is also understood as "an enhanced attention to and awareness of current experience or present reality" (Brown & Ryan, 2003,p.822), has been brought to attention in recent years, specifically within an organisational context. Hence, multiple benefits of mindfulness-involving stress reduction, effective job satisfaction, and effective performance (Good et al.,2016; Sutcliffe et al., 2016), have encouraged scholars and practitioners alike to devote enhanced effort to investigate its application in the workplace.

The two-component model of mindfulness (Bishop et al, 2004) explains that mindfulness needs 1) self-regulation-based attention, awareness, and presence in moment-to-moment observations of immediate thoughts, feelings, and sensations and (2) Curiosity, openness, and acceptance of present events without elaboration or preoccupation with thoughts, feelings, or sensations. Mindfulness practice boosts state mindfulness, or the extent to which people manage their attention as specified, and so promotes trait mindfulness (Bishop et al., 2004; Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). Good psychology interventions are 'treatment procedures or deliberate actions that attempt to foster good attitudes, behaviours, or cognitions'. MBIs adhere to these principles while motivating mindfulness practice (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017) to promote mental and physical health, enhance cognition and influence (Creswell, 2017), and ensure healthy well-being, relationships, and work performance (Good et al., 2016). Numerous meta-analyses (Bartlett et al., 2019; Lomas et al., 2019; Virgili, 2015) and reviews (Allen et al., 2015; Eby et al.)

## **Conceptual Framework of the Study**



Source: Primary Data

### Hypothesis

**H1:** There is a significant influence of Psychological Distress on Employee Departure Intentions.

**H2:** There is a significant influence of Work-Life Conflict on Employee Departure Intentions.

**H3:** There is a moderating role of Mindfulness between Psychological Distress and Employees Departure Intentions.

**H4:** There is a significant moderation role of mindfulness between Work-Life Conflict and Employee Departure Intentions.

### Objectives of the Study

- 1.To Assess the Impact of Psychological Distress on Departure Intention:
- 2.To Evaluate the Relationship Between Work-Life Conflict and Turnover Intention
- 3.To Analyze the Moderating Role of Mindfulness

### Research Methodology

This study will be completely based on Primary data. And, data will be collected from employees working in the IT Industry. We are targeting 170 employees for data collection. And, extracting good results. This research emphasizes on using different tools like SPSS and Smart PLS. Henceforth, convenience and snowball sampling techniques would be used.

### Results

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**Results**

**Respondents' Profile**

Table 1 gives the demographic data of respondents. The sample is moderately dominated by females (57.06), and men make up 42.94. The majority of the participants are young with the largest proportion of 23-27 age group (31.18%) then 18-22 years old (21.76%), which means that the sample is relatively youthful. Respondents are well educated with most of those with a Master degree (45.88%), then with a Bachelor degree (27.65%). Work experience is well distributed with 1-3 years (23.53) and less than 1 year (20) being conspicuous. About work hours, a majority of respondents are working 46-50 hours per week (28.24%), which indicates moderate to high working load intensity among the respondents.

**Table 1: Respondents' Profile**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	97	57.06
	Male	73	42.94
Age (Years)	18-22	37	21.76
	23-27	53	31.18
	28-32	23	13.53
	33-37	10	5.88
	38-42	12	7.06
	43-47	14	8.24
	48-52	11	6.47
	53-57	10	5.88
Education	Higher Secondary (12th)	20	11.76
	Bachelor's Degree	47	27.65
	Master's Degree	78	45.88
	Professional Qualification	9	5.29
	Doctorate (PhD)	15	8.82
	M.Phil.	1	0.59
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	34	20
	1-3 years	40	23.53
	4-6 years	31	18.24
	7-10 years	21	12.35
	11-15 years	9	5.29
	More than 15 years	35	20.59
Work Hours/Week	Less than 35 hours	36	21.18
	35-40 hours	38	22.35
	41-45 hours	24	14.12
	46-50 hours	48	28.24

	More than 50 hours	24	14.12
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**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics will give a general idea of the data dispensation, the central tendency and variability as well as reveal the appropriateness of the data to be further analyzed in multivariate analysis. Table 5 includes descriptive statistical findings of all the measurement items. The average construct scores are spread in the range of 2.794 to 3.647, which means that the general level of response is moderate. Namely, the mean score of items under psychological factors (PSY1-PSY6) and work-personal conflict (WPC1-WPC10) is near the mean line, indicating that the perceptions are neutral or slightly positive. In contrast, work-personal management (WPM1-WPM7) shows relatively higher mean values, reflecting stronger agreement among respondents, while turnover intention (TI1-TI5) remains comparatively lower, indicating moderate inclination toward leaving. The values of standard deviation between 0.987 and 1.178 point out to a reasonable distribution of the responses without overthrowing dispersion, in which the variability in the data is quite acceptable. The skewness values lie within the acceptable range of +1, and this suggest that the data distribution is relatively symmetric (Hair et al., 2010). Interestingly, the skewness of WPM items has a negative value, indicating that items with a negative value tend to have stronger agreement whereas the skewness of the TI items is slightly positive indicating that the items have relatively low levels of agreement. The values of excess kurtosis are mainly negative which implies a platykurtic distribution where the peaks are more flatter than the values of a normal distribution (West et al., 1995). The Cramer von Mises p-values however are significant (p = 0.000) to all items, which means that they are not normally distributed. Nonetheless, these deviations occur frequently in large samples, and they do not typically present an issue to structural equation modeling, especially when it is robustly estimated (Byrne, 2016). The findings indicate that the results show that there are acceptable distributional properties to be analysed.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

Name	Mean	MI N/MAX	Standard deviation	Excess kurtosis	Skewness	Cramer-von Mises p value
PSY1	3.018	1/5	1.037	-0.529	-0.004	0.000
PSY2	3.053	1/5	1.053	-0.816	-0.107	0.000
PSY3	3.200	1/5	1.093	-0.745	-0.133	0.000
PSY4	2.929	1/5	1.135	-0.94	0.091	0.000
PSY5	3.088	1/5	0.987	-0.469	-0.105	0.000
PSY6	2.935	1/5	1.112	-0.957	-0.001	0.000
WPC1	3.135	1/5	1.168	-1.016	0.024	0.000
WPC2	3.129	1/5	1.06	-0.855	0.037	0.000
WPC3	3.071	1/5	1.156	-0.977	-0.093	0.000

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4	WPC	3	1/5	63	1.0	-	0.1	0.0
		.076				0.795	72	00
5	WPC	3	1/5	4	1.1	-	-	0.0
		.241				0.934	0.077	00
6	WPC	3	1/5	61	1.0	-	0.0	0.0
		.147				0.822	3	00
7	WPC	3	1/5	45	1.0	-	0.1	0.0
		.047				0.753	86	00
8	WPC	3	1/5	17	1.1	-	-	0.0
		.106				1.059	0.007	00
9	WPC	3	1/5	04	1.1	-	0.0	0.0
		.071				0.822	44	00
10	WPC	2	1/5	42	1.0	-	0.1	0.0
		.959				0.792	77	00
1	WPM	3	1/5	07	1.1	-	-	0.0
		.524				0.42	0.572	00
2	WPM	3	1/5	52	1.0	-	-	0.0
		.459				0.473	0.609	00
3	WPM	3	1/5	85	1.0	-	-	0.0
		.453				0.167	0.756	00
4	WPM	3	1/5	79	1.0	-	-	0.0
		.559				0.029	0.805	00
5	WPM	3	1/5	72	1.0	0.	-	0.0
		.576				057	0.792	00
6	WPM	3	1/5	36	1.0	-	-	0.0
		.500				0.022	0.64	00
7	WPM	3	1/5	54	1.0	0.	-	0.0
		.647				12	0.804	00
	TI1	2	1/5	78	1.1	-	0.2	0.0
		.794				0.747	55	00
	TI2	2	1/5	46	1.1	-	0.1	0.0
		.929				0.856	63	00
	TI3	2	1/5	52	1.1	-	0.1	0.0
		.953				0.778	39	00
	TI4	3	1/5	38	1.1	-	0.0	0.0
		.000				0.869	97	00
	TI5	2	1/5	81	1.0	-	0.1	0.0
		.806				0.442	97	00

### Measurement Model

#### *Convergent Validity*

Testing of the measurement model, Figure 1, is conducted on the basis of indicators reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and multicollinearity testing. The findings of these assessments are given in Table 3. The external loading of all items is above the standard value at 0.70, which shows high reliability of the indicators (Hair et al., 2019). Specifically, loadings range from 0.832 to 0.907 for Psychological Distress, 0.895 to 0.952 for Turnover Intention, 0.843 to 0.922 for Workplace Conflict, and 0.863 to 0.925 for Workplace Mindfulness, confirming that all indicators adequately represent their respective constructs.

Cronbachs alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) is used to determine internal consistency reliability. The values of CA vary between 0.932 and 0.969, and those of CR *Enterprise Development & Microfinance Vol. 36 No. 2s*

between 0.934 and 0.982, which are all above the recommended value of 0.70, which proves that they are highly reliable (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2019). The average variance extracted (AVE) is used to determine convergent validity and all the constructs record a value of between 0.747 and 0.850 which is higher than the minimum value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) which means that the constructs explain a significant amount of variance.

The multicollinearity is analyzed by using the variance inflation factor (VIF) values. The VIF values are all less than the conservative level of 5, which is an indicator that there are no serious multicollinearity problems (Kock, 2015). The measurement model has been shown to have good reliability and validity, and this indicates that it is good to be used in the future in the structural model analysis.

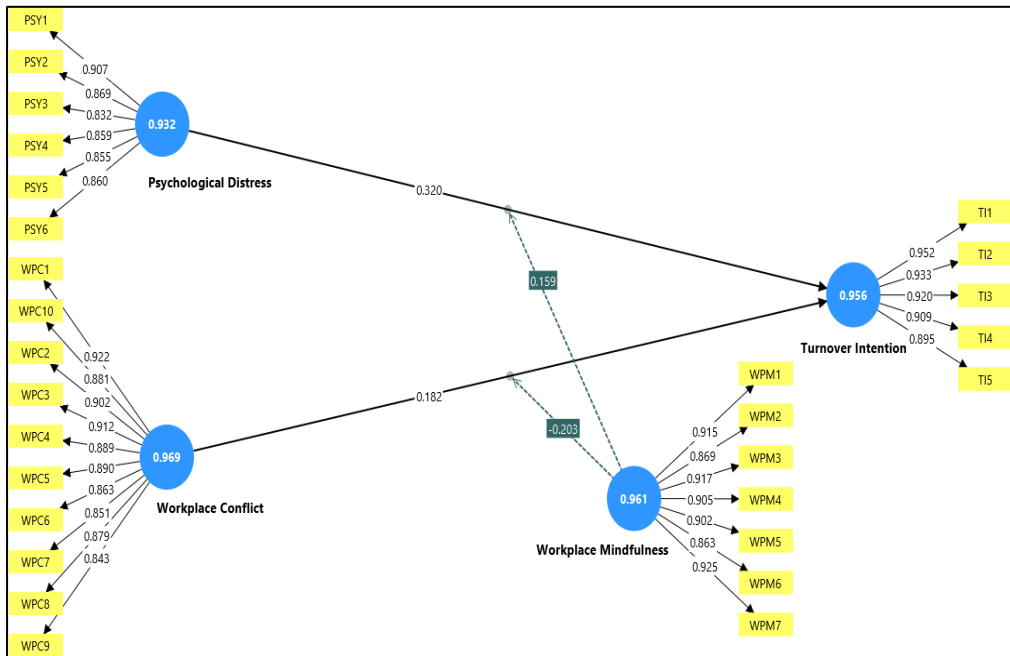


Figure 1: Measurement Model

Table 3: Convergent Validity and Reliability

Constructs	Code	Outer Loadings	VIF	CA	CR	AVE
Psychological Distress	PSY1	0.907	1.012	0.932	0.934	0.747
	PSY2	0.869	1.206			
	PSY3	0.832	2.576			
	PSY4	0.859	2.888			
	PSY5	0.855	2.771			
	PSY6	0.86	2.726			
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.952	1.842	0.956	0.963	0.85
	TI2	0.933	1.261			
	TI3	0.92	1.887			
	TI4	0.909	1.446			
	TI5	0.895	2.327			
Workplace Conflict	WPC1	0.922	1.635	0.969	0.982	0.781
	WPC10	0.881	1.895			
	WPC2	0.902	2.67			

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	WPC3	0.912	1.611			
	WPC4	0.889	1.464			
	WPC5	0.89	1.998			
	WPC6	0.863	2.088			
	WPC7	0.851	2.081			
	WPC8	0.879	1.883			
	WPC9	0.843	1.734			
Workplace Mindfulness	WPM1	0.915	1.335	0.961	0.962	0.809
	WPM2	0.869	1.77			
	WPM3	0.917	1.697			
	WPM4	0.905	1.365			
	WPM5	0.902	2.108			
	WPM6	0.863	2.145			
	WPM7	0.925	1.211			

*Discriminant Validity*

Discriminant validity will determine the degree to which constructs are empirically differentiated between one another such that every construct represents a different concept in the model. The heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios of this assessment are available in Table 4. The value of all HTMTs also falls below the conservative value of 0.85, which represents adequate discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Specifically, the highest value is observed between Psychological Distress and Workplace Conflict (0.687), followed by Psychological Distress and Turnover Intention (0.547). Lower values are noted between Workplace Mindfulness and Workplace Conflict (0.137), suggesting clear distinction. These values confirm that the constructs are conceptually and statistically different.

Table 4: HTMT Criterion of Discriminant Validity

	Psychological Distress	Turnover Intention	Workplace Conflict	Workplace Mindfulness
Psychological Distress				
Turnover Intention	0.547			
Workplace Conflict	0.687	0.429		
Workplace Mindfulness	0.260	0.475	0.137	

**Structural Model Results**

The structural model, shown in Figure 2, hypothesis testing tests the meaning and direction of construct relationship significance, thus, presenting empirical evidence of the theoretical framework proposed. The path analysis results are in table 5. The relationship between Psychological Distress and Turnover Intention (H1) is positive and significant ( $\beta =$

0.32,  $t = 3.724$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), indicating that higher psychological distress increases employees' intention to leave. Therefore, H1 is accepted. Similarly, Workplace Conflict demonstrates a positive and significant effect on Turnover Intention (H2) ( $\beta = 0.182$ ,  $t = 2.177$ ,  $p = 0.030$ ), supporting the hypothesis that conflict contributes to higher turnover intention; thus, H2 is accepted.

In contrast, Workplace Mindfulness shows a significant negative relationship with Turnover Intention (H3) ( $\beta = -0.344$ ,  $t = 4.624$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), suggesting that higher mindfulness reduces employees' intention to leave. Accordingly, H3 is accepted. The moderating effect of Workplace Mindfulness on the relationship between Psychological Distress and Turnover Intention (H4) is positive but not statistically significant at the 5% level ( $\beta = 0.159$ ,  $t = 1.833$ ,  $p = 0.067$ ), indicating insufficient evidence to support moderation; hence, H4 is rejected. However, Workplace Mindfulness significantly moderates the relationship between Workplace Conflict and Turnover Intention (H5) ( $\beta = -0.203$ ,  $t = 2.220$ ,  $p = 0.026$ ), with a negative interaction effect suggesting that mindfulness weakens the impact of conflict on turnover intention. Therefore, H5 is accepted. These results are consistent with the rules of assessing structural path in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2019).

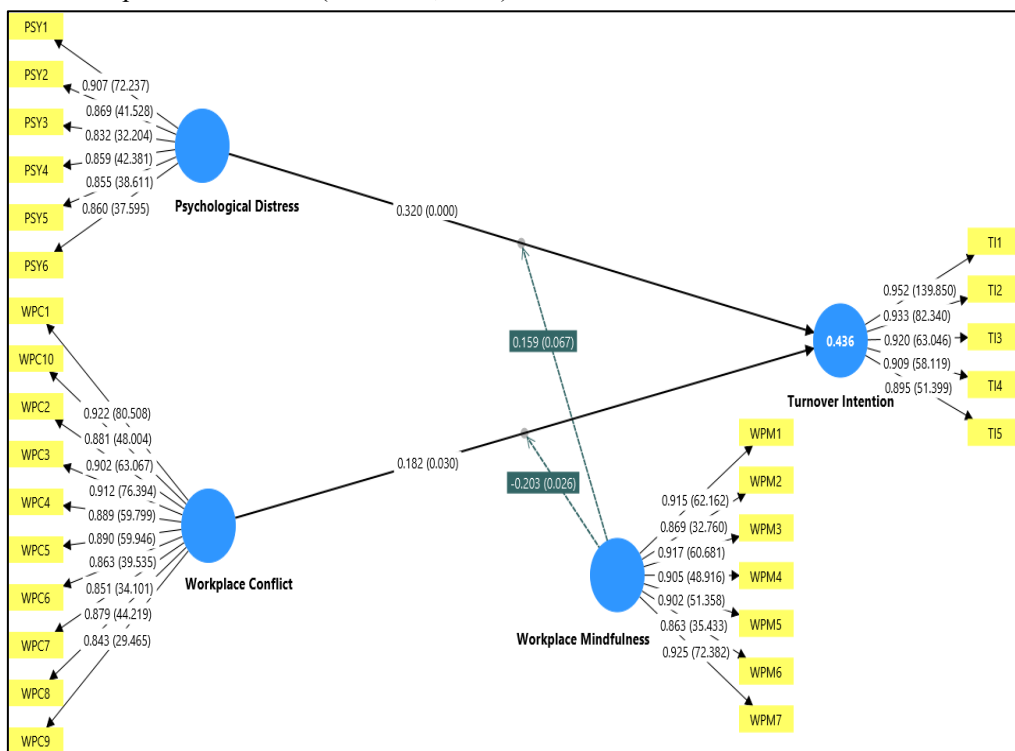


Figure 2: Structural Model

Table 5: Results of Structural Model

ypot heses	Path	O iginal sample (O)	S ample mean (M)	Stan dard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STD EV )	valu es
1	Psychological Distress -> Turnover Intention	.32	.326	0.08	3.7	.000

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2	Workplace Conflict -> Turnover Intention	0 .182	0 .183	4	0.08	77	2.1	.030
3	Workplace Mindfulness -> Turnover Intention	- 0.344	- 0.344	4	0.07	24	4.6	.000
4	Workplace Mindfulness x Psychological Distress -> Turnover Intention	0 .159	0 .143	7	0.08	33	1.8	.067
5	Workplace Mindfulness x Workplace Conflict -> Turnover Intention	- 0.203	- 0.193	2	0.09	2	2.2	.026

**Explanatory and predictive power of structural model**

Predictive relevance and assessment of explanatory power is also critical in judging the quality of structural model in PLS-SEM. Table 6 presents these metrics for Turnover Intention. The R-square value of 0.436 indicates that approximately 43.6% of the variance in turnover intention is explained by the predictor variables, reflecting moderate explanatory power (Chin, 1998). Stability of the model is also confirmed by adjusted R- square (0.419). The value of Q-square is not less than 0.365 which proves that the model is sufficiently predictive (Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1975). Also, the values of the RMSE (0.807), and the MSE (0.626) imply that the predictive error of the model is tolerable, and the model has been advantageous in prediction.

Table 6: Explanatory and predictive power of structural model

	R-square	R-square adjusted	Q-square	RMSE	MSE
<b>Turnover Intention</b>	0.436	0.419	0.365	0.807	0.626

**The importance performance map analysis**

The importance performance map analysis (IPMA) is a further development of the PLS-SEM results, as it analyzes the overall effects (importance) and mean latent variable scores (performance) in one analysis, and thus provides actionable managerial information (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016). These results are represented in Table 7 and Figure 3. Psychological Distress demonstrates the highest positive total effect (0.320) on Turnover Intention, indicating its critical role as a key driver, while its performance score (50.895) remains moderate, suggesting scope for improvement. Workplace Conflict shows a lower yet meaningful importance (0.182) with slightly higher performance (52.598), indicating a secondary but relevant influence. In contrast, Workplace Mindfulness exhibits a negative total effect (-0.344), implying its mitigating role in reducing turnover intention, while achieving the highest performance level (63.249). This combination implies that the negative results can be balanced by improving the processes of mindfulness. On the whole, high-importance constructs that have moderate performance should be addressed by managers through specific interventions.

Table 7: Construct total effect and performance for turnover intention

	<b>Construct Total Effect</b>	<b>Construct Performance</b>
<b>Psychological Distress</b>	0.320	50.895
<b>Workplace Conflict</b>	0.182	52.598
<b>Workplace Mindfulness</b>	-0.344	63.249

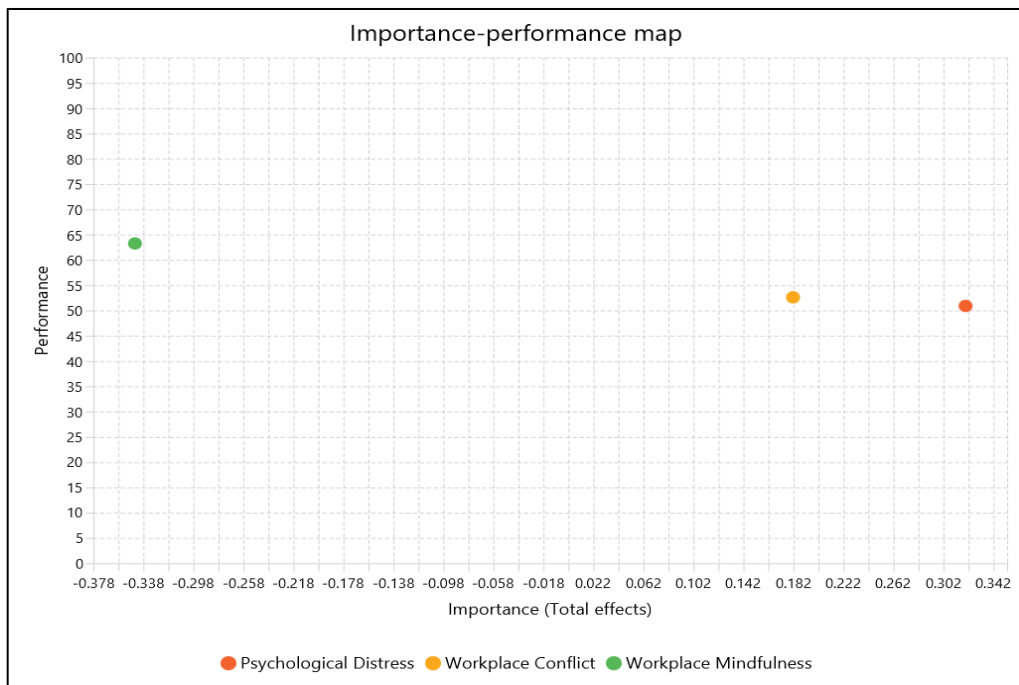


Figure 3: Importance performance Map

### Limitations and Future Research

The present study is subject to certain limitations that may be acknowledged while interpreting the findings. First, the study is limited to employees working in the IT sector, which may confine the generalizability of the results to other industries like healthcare, education, manufacturing, or banking, where workplace stressors and organizational environments may differ significantly. Additionally, the study may rely on cross-sectional data, which captures employee perceptions at a single point in time and limits the ability to establish causal relationships between psychological distress, work-life conflict, mindfulness, and departure intention. Longitudinal research designs could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these variables evolve over time (Creswell, 2014; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Another limitation of the study is the dependence on self-reported responses, which may introduce response bias, social desirability bias, or common method variance, potentially affecting the accuracy of the findings. Employees may underreport psychological distress or overstate mindfulness due to workplace image concerns. Furthermore, while mindfulness is considered a moderating variable in this study, other relevant moderators or mediators such as organizational support, leadership style, job satisfaction, and employee resilience have not been

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incorporated, which may also influence departure intention. Lastly, geographical and demographic limitations, including variations in organizational culture, age, gender, and work experience, may influence the applicability of the findings across diverse employee populations (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hobfoll, 1989; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The Future research may expand the scope of this study while determining additional psychological and organizational variables that influence employees' departure intention in the IT sector. Variables like job burnout, organizational commitment, emotional intelligence, perceived organizational support, and employee engagement may be incorporated to provide a more comprehensive understanding of turnover-related behavior. Moreover, future studies may explore the mediating role of job satisfaction and workplace well-being in the relationship between psychological distress, work-life conflict, and employees' intention to leave organizations. Since the IT sector is highly dynamic and technology-driven, researchers may also investigate the impact of remote work arrangements, digital fatigue, and artificial intelligence-based work monitoring on employee mental health and turnover intention (Allen et al., 2020; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Schaufeli et al., 2009).

Additionally, future researchers may conduct comparative and longitudinal studies across different industries and geographical regions to enhance the generalizability of findings. While the present study focuses on the IT sector, similar investigations in healthcare, education, banking, and manufacturing sectors may reveal sector-specific differences in psychological distress and work-life conflict. Researchers may also examine the moderating and mediating effects of mindfulness using diverse dimensions, such as trait mindfulness and organizational mindfulness, to understand its protective role more effectively. Furthermore, future studies may adopt mixed-method approaches by combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights into employees' lived experiences regarding workplace stress and departure intention (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Hobfoll, 1989).

### **Discussions and Conclusion**

According to the findings of the present study, psychological distress emerged as the most significant determinant influencing employees' departure intention in the IT sector. Employees experiencing elevated levels of emotional exhaustion, anxiety, stress, and mental fatigue were more likely to exhibit withdrawal behaviors and intentions to leave their organizations. Although work-life conflict found a significant association with departure intention, its effect was often overshadowed by the broader influence of employees' psychological discomfort and emotional instability. The finding aligns with prior studies suggesting that workplace stress and psychological strain significantly increase turnover intentions among employees working in high-pressure and technologically intensive environments (Shoss, Jiang, & Probst, 2018;). Furthermore, the IT sector's demanding schedules, long working hours, and constant technological adaptation often intensify work-life imbalance, thereby reducing employee well-being and organizational commitment (Allen et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell et al, 1985. Although mindfulness levels among employees were comparatively high in the present study, mindfulness did not significantly moderate or buffer the harmful effects of psychological distress on retention. This suggests that while mindfulness may improve emotional awareness and self-regulation, its protective influence may be insufficient when employees are exposed to chronic organizational stressors and systemic workplace pressures (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Hülsheger et al., 2013). Similar findings were highlighted by Beatriz Bernárdez, José Ignacio Panach et al. (2023), who argued that

organizational and structural stressors frequently overpower individual coping mechanisms in high-demand industries.

In the fast-paced, highly competitive, and performance-driven environment of the IT industry, the human element continues to remain the most valuable yet vulnerable organizational resource. The findings of this study reveal the substantial influence of psychological distress and work-life conflict on organizational stability, employee commitment, and workforce sustainability. Employees who experience persistent mental exhaustion, role overload, and difficulties in balancing professional and personal responsibilities are more likely to experience reduced job satisfaction and emotional attachment to their organizations, which consequently increases their intention to leave (Maslach & Leiter, 2016; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Karatepe & Karadas, 2015; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

While mindfulness emerged as a beneficial personal characteristic that promotes emotional clarity, self-awareness, and stress management, the evidence indicates that personal coping strategies alone cannot effectively counterbalance institutional or systemic workplace stressors (Greeson, 2009; Hülshager et al., 2013; Glomb et al., 2011). As Greeson (2009) metaphorically suggests, mindfulness may help an employee navigate the storm, but it cannot eliminate the storm itself. Therefore, leadership and organizational management bear the ultimate responsibility for employee retention and well-being. Organizations must move beyond reactive interventions and address the root causes of employee dissatisfaction by creating psychologically healthy workplaces, implementing flexible work-life balance policies, offering mental health support systems, and fostering empathetic leadership cultures (Grawitch, Gottschalk, & Munz, 2006; Nielsen et al., 2017; Cooper & Cartwright, 1994; Avey, Luthans, & Jensen, 2009). By integrating employee-centric workplace practices with proactive psychological support, organizations can transform the IT sector from a high-turnover environment into a space that promotes professional growth, employee engagement, and long-term psychological well-being, thereby significantly reducing employees' intention to leave (Hom et al., 2017; Mobley, 1977; Karatepe & Uludag, 2007).

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