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Perceived Organizational Support, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intention among Selected BPO Employees in Metro Manila: Basis for a Proposed Employee Retention Program

Jerome J. Tamundong[1], Dr. Rosalia T. Caballero[1]

[1]Graduate School, University of Santo Tomas, City of Manila, Philippines

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction and turnover intention among selected BPO employees in Metro Manila using a quantitative approach through descriptive and predictive research design. The data were collected from 403 BPO employees who were chosen purposively using a researcher-made demographic questionnaire and standardized questionnaires. All collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through Path Analysis. Findings revealed that there is a significant positive effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction, while there is a significant negative effect of perceived organizational support on turnover intention, and likewise, a significant negative effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention. This implies that when employees find their organization supportive and caring, it leads to an increased level of job satisfaction and a decreased level of turnover intention; while when employees find their job satisfying and fulfilling, it leads to a decreased level of turnover intention. The findings were utilized as basis in creating a proposed employee retention program which may help leaders and HR practitioners implement and communicate stronger organizational support designed to retain key talent that is crucial to achieving targeted business outcomes.

Keywords: business process outsourcing, employee retention program, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, turnover intention

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INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive business world, firms continuously develop advanced strategies to achieve superior results. With technology integration, businesses have revolutionized interactions and responsibilities (Thacker, 2021), often outsourcing key activities through Business Process Outsourcing (BPO). This method of outsourcing includes contracting specific business processes to offshore service providers (Sunder & Kunnath, 2020) to save costs, access the latest technologies, and focus on core aspects to increase productivity and efficiency (Baisoya & Mohsin, 2021).

Since its inception in 1992 (Gallimore, 2023), the BPO industry has grown significantly in the Philippines, providing millions of jobs. The industry is a major contributor to the Philippine GDP and foreign exchange earnings, with 2,205 registered establishments in 2021 (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023).

The Philippines holds 10-15% of the global BPO market, serving countries like the USA, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand (Talmage-Rostron, 2021). It is a top outsourcing destination due to the employees' college degrees, English proficiency, courtesy, and hospitality (Aldaba, 2019), along with low talent costs (Johnson, 2011, as cited in Amit et al., 2020). The country ranked ninth in the A.T. Kearney Global Services Location Index in 2021.

However, the Philippine BPO sector faces a high employee turnover rate of 40% (Negros, 2022; Magellan Solutions, 2023), leading to significant financial and productivity losses. High turnover creates a constant need for hiring and training, impacting organizational objectives. The researcher, a human resources practitioner in the BPO industry, has identified gaps contributing to this issue, including a lack of engaging and rewarding work environments. Research indicates that organizations should address turnover intentions to prevent actual turnover.

The above gaps have led the proponent to explore the impact of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction and turnover intention, addressing a gap in existing research, particularly in the BPO industry. Results of the study will be the basis in creating a proposed employee retention program.

Figure 1 below presents the conceptual framework of the study. The research model shows that perceived organizational support serves as the independent variable, while job satisfaction and turnover intention serve as the dependent variables. Through predictive research, it analyzes whether or not there is a significant effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction and turnover intention and whether or not there is a significant effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention.

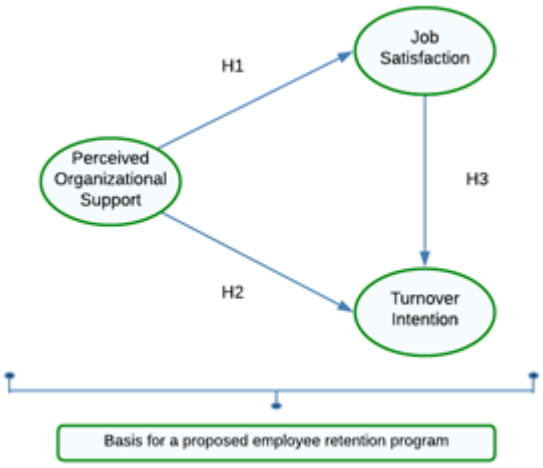

Figure 1
Research Model

To do this, the study will outsource employees currently employed in BPO companies in Metro Manila, Philippines, with at least (6) months of service. Employees who were tendering their resignations, or at a management executive level, are excluded from this study.

The findings may help BPO companies develop strategies to mitigate turnover issues based on current trends and practices. Aside from this, the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP) and the IT & Business Process Association of the Philippines (IBPAP) can develop guidelines to foster a healthy work environment, reducing turnover rates. The study also serves as supplementary research for academia, particularly in human resources management, aiding curriculum development. Lastly, it contributes to existing literature on organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention, guiding future researchers in these fields.

LITERATURES

Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction. Increasing global competition and a complex work environment pose challenges to organizations. Employees seek a work environment that promotes appreciation and recognition, making perceived organizational support (POS) crucial in motivating employee behavior (Cao et al., 2020, as cited in Özkan et al., 2022), as it makes the employee feel valued (Matande et al., 2022).

POS is influenced by the relationship between the organization and its employees. Greater support from leaders boosts employee enthusiasm and their belief in being rewarded for exceeding expectations (Ates & Unal, 2021; Aprilani et al., 2021). Recognition from leaders is important, but how it is delivered affects employee perception.

Paul (2020) noted that the main drivers of POS include the organization's obligations to employees, involvement in decision-making, fair treatment, people-centered leadership, a motivating culture, and autonomy. High POS motivates employees to reciprocate positively towards the organization. POS increases when employees feel acknowledged and supported, viewing support from supervisors and managers as support from the organization itself. Leaders should treat employees with respect and courtesy, modeling the values they wish to instill. It is crucial for leaders to be approachable and respected rather than feared. Polat and Terzi (2020) studied the impact of POS on job satisfaction among 655 medical employees at a hospital in Istanbul. Their quantitative research found that positive feedback and rewards from the hospital

increased job satisfaction. They recommended that the hospital should also provide training sessions to further enhance employee knowledge, skills, and job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention. Having a fulfilling job is essential to employees' well-being and productivity, which makes it important for organizations to foster a work environment that targets employee growth and development. Job satisfaction is crucial for organizational success, reflecting how favorably employees view their jobs (Gyebi & Bonsu, 2023). Factors influencing job satisfaction include advancement opportunities, respect from colleagues, relationships with supervisors, working conditions, financial rewards, and workload (Hill, 2019).

Meeting employee expectations fosters positive feelings, enhancing performance and reducing turnover intention (Judge et al., 2001, as cited in Pimentel & Pereira, 2022; Saragih et al., 2020). Conversely, dissatisfaction leads to burnout, stress, and higher turnover intention (Wang et al., 2017; Blaauw, 2013, as cited in Wang et al., 2020).

Lack of self-development opportunities and unfair salary policies contribute to lower job satisfaction and organizational performance (Sugiarto, 2020). Higher job satisfaction is associated with lower attrition rates (Ferdian et al., 2020). Regular turnover surveys can help organizations identify issues and implement preventive measures. Gebregziabher et al. (2020) found that better working conditions reduce turnover intention and enhance critical-thinking skills among nurses, highlighting the importance of career development and positive work environments.

Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention. Employee turnover has become a challenge for organizations, driven by both voluntary and involuntary factors (Olubiyi et al., 2019). A voluntary turnover happens when an employee decides to quit, while an involuntary turnover happens when a company dismisses an employee on its own initiative (Duffeld et al., 2014, as cited in Gebregziabher et al., 2020).

Turnover intention, the decision to seek another job, is a key predictor of employee turnover (Robbins & Judge, 2017, as cited in Jamil et al., 2022; Boxall et al., 2003; Ngo-Henha, 2017, as cited in Thin et al., 2021). Employee turnover significantly affects the organization, as it is costly and disrupts business processes due to recruitment and training (Mughal & Busari, 2015, as cited in Kundi et al., 2021). With this, it is important for organizations to understand the factors affecting turnover intention (Rigter, 2017, as cited in Ganji et al., 2021). Employees who plan to quit have a high absence rate, lack of motivation, changes in behavior, and increasing workplace violations (Sugiarto, 2020).

Perceived organizational support helps mitigate burnout and turnover intention among employees (Wang & Wang, 2020). Supporting employees effectively can lower turnover intention and enhance organizational performance by alleviating work stress and burnout (Wang & Wang, 2020; Satardien et al., 2019). Developing retention programs is recommended to address turnover intention proactively (Satardien et al., 2019).

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling. Respondents were purposively selected from employees in any department, role, and position currently employed in BPO companies in Metro Manila, with at least six (6) months of service and no specific gender preference. Employees tendering resignation or at a management executive level were excluded. The sample size of 403 respondents was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator based on a total BPO employee population of 1,270,000 in Metro Manila.

Instrumentation. The study utilized a researcher-made demographic questionnaire along with three standardized questionnaires. The socio-demographic profile includes age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, job title, length of service in the company, and work arrangement. To measure the employees' perceived organizational support, the study made use of the Survey of Perceived

Organizational Support (SPOS), developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). It is an 8-item, 7-point Likert scale with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.93. To measure employees' job satisfaction, the study made use of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), developed by the University of Minnesota (2022). It is a 20-item, 5-point Likert scale with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87-0.92 and a median of 0.90. Lastly, to measure turnover intention, the study made use of the Turnover Intention Scale (TIS), developed by Roodt (2004). It is a 5-point Likert scale with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91. Table 1 below shows the scale and verbal interpretation of the respondents' level of perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention.

Table 1
Scale and Verbal Interpretation of Factors

Scale	Verbal Interpretation
1.00 - 1.80	Very low
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Moderate
3.41 - 4.20	High
4.21 - 5.00	Very high

Data Gathering Procedure. Permission to use the standardized questionnaires was obtained from the respective authors, and ethical approval was secured from the University of Santo Tomas Graduate School-Review Ethics Committee. Pilot testing with 20 employees validated the reliability of the survey instruments, yielding Cronbach's alphas of 0.912 for SPOS, 0.930 for MSQ, and 0.789 for TIS. Data collection took place in 2023 via Google Forms.

Data Analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to assess levels of perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. Inferential statistics, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), structural equation modeling (SEM), and path analysis were employed to explore causality among variables using Microsoft Excel, IBM SPSS version 28, and IBM Amos version 24.

RESULTS

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Organizational Support

Indicators/Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The organization values my contribution to its well-being.	4.196	0.788	High
2. The organization really cares about my well-being.	4.097	0.874	High
3. The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.	3.988	0.882	High
4. The organization would ignore any complaint from me. (R)	3.950	0.955	High
5. The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	3.906	0.915	High
6. The organization shows very little concern for me. (R)	3.846	1.006	High
7. Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice. (R)	3.831	1.001	High
8. The organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. (R)	3.777	1.017	High
Perceived Organizational Support	3.949	0.678	High

Table 2 above exhibits the results of descriptive statistics for perceived organizational support from highest to lowest mean score. The results showed that the respondents have a high level of perceived organizational support, with a mean score of 3.949, which implies that they feel their organization supports them and values their contributions. The negatively worded items, such as "The organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me," "The organization would ignore any complaint from me," "Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice," and "The organization shows very little concern for me," were reversed coded (R) to show consistency with the overall scale.

Table 3 below shows the results of descriptive statistics for job satisfaction from highest to lowest mean score. The results showed that the respondents have a high level of job satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.978, which implies that they feel a sense of fulfillment and contentment in their job.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Job Satisfaction

Indicators/Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The way my co-workers get along with each other.	4.293	0.775	Very High
2. The way my job provides for steady employment.	4.164	0.851	High
3. The working conditions.	4.161	0.841	High
4. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.	4.127	0.799	High
5. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.	4.084	0.812	High
6. The chance to do things for other people.	4.084	0.762	High
7. The way company policies are put into practice.	4.084	0.818	High
8. The chance to work alone on the job.	4.057	0.804	High
9. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.	4.057	0.933	High
10. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.	4.035	0.860	High
11. The way my boss handles his/her workers.	4.025	0.956	High
12. The freedom to use my own judgment.	4.020	0.816	High
13. The praise I get for doing a good job.	3.960	0.905	High
14. The chance to do different things from time to time.	3.940	0.856	High
15. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience.	3.868	1.049	High
16. The chance to be "somebody" in the community.	3.864	0.797	High
17. Being able to keep busy all the time.	3.804	0.794	High
18. The chance to tell people what to do.	3.739	0.837	High
19. The chances for advancement on this job.	3.598	0.981	High
20. My pay and the amount of work I do.	3.588	1.053	High
Job Satisfaction	3.978	0.577	High

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Turnover Intention

Indicators/Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. How often are your personal values at work compromised?	2.060	1.073	Low
2. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	2.069	1.228	Low
3. How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	2.335	1.088	Low
4. To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	2.390	1.142	Low
5. How frequently do you scan the newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	2.457	1.155	Low
6. How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	2.573	1.073	Low
7. How often have you considered leaving your job?	2.682	1.137	Moderate
8. How often do you look forward to another day at work? (R)	2.727	0.982	Moderate
9. How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?	2.737	1.172	Moderate
10. How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs? (R)	2.789	1.066	Moderate
11. To what extent does the "fear of the unknown," prevent you from quitting? (R)	2.851	1.213	Moderate
12. How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?	3.176	1.242	Moderate
13. To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job? (R)	3.303	1.257	Moderate
14. To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job prevent you from quitting your job? (R)	3.320	1.167	Moderate
15. How often do you think about starting your own business?	3.514	1.206	High
Turnover Intention	2.736	0.698	Moderate

Table 4 on the other side presents the results of descriptive statistics for turnover intention from lowest to highest mean score. The results showed that the respondents have a moderate level of turnover intention, with a mean score of 2.736, which implies that they feel uncertain whether they have a complete desire to leave the organization. The positively worded items, such as "How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs? (R)," "How often do you look forward to another day at work? (R)," "To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job? (R)," and "To what extent does the 'fear of the unknown,' prevent you from quitting? (R)" were reversed coded (R) to show consistency with the overall scale, provided that turnover intention connotes to a negative value.

Table 5 below shows the results of path analysis for perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. With a p-value of <0.001, it indicates that null hypothesis 1 – There is no significant effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction – is rejected. Whereas the results revealed that there is a significant positive effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction, which implies that when employees find their organization supportive and caring, it leads to an increased level of job satisfaction. This is also consistent with the study of Ateş and Ünal (2021), which found that when the organization supports teachers in working on the area of their interest, their job satisfaction increases.

Table 5
Path Analysis for Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Std. Error	Std. Coefficient	P-value	Interpretation
Perceived Organizational Support	Job Satisfaction	0.575	0.067	0.849	<0.001**	Significant

**. Significant at the p-value less than or equal to 0.05.

Table 6

Path Analysis for Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Std. Error	Std. Coefficient	P-value	Interpretation
Perceived Organizational Support	Turnover Intention	-0.622	0.174	-0.411	<0.001**	Significant

**. Significant at the p-value less than or equal to 0.05.

Table 6 above reflects the results of path analysis for perceived organizational support and turnover intention. With a p-value of <0.001, it indicates that null hypothesis 2 – There is no significant effect of perceived organizational support on turnover intention – is rejected. Whereas the results revealed that there is a significant negative effect of perceived organizational support on turnover intention, which implies that when employees find their organization supportive and caring, it leads to a decreased level of turnover intention. This is also consistent with the study of Suarez-Albanchez et al. (2022), which found that when the organization provides employees with adequate support, their turnover intention decreases.

Table 7

Path Analysis for Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient	Std. Error	Std. Coefficient	P-value	Interpretation
Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention	-0.669	0.25	-0.299	0.007**	Significant

**. Significant at the p-value less than or equal to 0.05.

Table 7 above indicates the results of path analysis for job satisfaction and turnover intention. With a p-value of 0.007, it indicates that null hypothesis 3 – There is no significant effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention – is rejected. Whereas the results revealed that there is a significant negative effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention, which implies that when employees find their job satisfying and fulfilling, it leads to a decreased level of turnover intention. This is also consistent with the study of Hussain et al. (2023), which found that when the organization provides employees with training, mentoring, and counseling services, their turnover intention decreases.

According to Maalouf et al. (2023), the purpose of an employee retention program is to maintain a skilled workforce and foster a positive work environment. The Forbes Human Resources Council (2023) emphasizes that the Human Resources department plays a key role in promoting employee retention activities. Management must support departmental program changes, as their involvement is crucial for the program's success. Carr et al. (2023) highlight that effective leadership involves creating a work environment that supports the organization's strategic activities and aligns with its vision and mission.

Proposed Employee Retention Program. The proposed employee retention program is derived from the study's results, addressing respondents' lowest mean scores in perceived organizational support and job satisfaction and highest mean scores in turnover intention.

1. *Simple employee appreciation.* When employees are motivated to exceed organizational expectations, it shows their commitment to the organization's success. However, appreciation for employees' efforts is often overlooked by supervisors or managers. Employees who work hard and go the extra mile often end up with more work as a "reward," which can feel like punishment. Instead, supervisors and managers should express gratitude and appreciation for employees' efforts and contributions (Gotian, 2021). It is also crucial to keep employees informed about the status of their ideas or suggestions, reinforcing that their contributions are valued and heard, thus fostering open communication between employees and supervisors.

2. *Regular employee recognition.* Pavlou (2023) argues that some organizations mistakenly believe the 'employee of the month' award is the only form of recognition that matters to employees. She notes that employees also appreciate recognition for progress and project completion. Supervisors and managers should consider praising employees directly or in front of their team, or through a handwritten note. These simple gestures can significantly boost employees' morale and sense of value. Additionally, surprising employees by celebrating milestones with a gift card or lunch can be effective. Aite (2024) supports these

recognition strategies as ways to show care for employees. The method of recognition is often more impactful than its cost.

3. *Periodic review of employees' compensation and workload.* BPO companies must ensure employees receive competitive salaries through periodic reviews of pay rates and workloads. Initially, a formal discussion between the supervisor or manager and the department head should assess the employee's workload. The Human Resources (HR) head should review current market rates via salary benchmarking and discuss findings with management, considering the high salary competition in the labor market. These reviews can be conducted annually or semi-annually, depending on the agreement between the HR head and management, allowing the organization to keep pace with industry-wide pay increases (Chron, 2021). If an employee's workload regularly increases beyond the established responsibilities, the manager should assess whether their current salary is appropriate. If not, the manager should discuss this with the department head, who will consult the HR head for effective salary alignment. Additionally, the department head should track overall compensation costs to manage expenses efficiently (Schooley, 2023). This approach ensures employees feel they are treated fairly, regardless of their roles.

4. *Learning Management System as a tool for continuous learning and development.* Training helps employees perform better and prepares them for more significant roles. Implementing a Learning Management System (LMS) is convenient for staying updated with current trends and emerging technologies, especially for remote employees. Marson (2023) stated that LMS is crucial for upskilling and reskilling employees by offering personalized learning paths and blended learning, including presentations, quizzes, and simulations. LMS pricing varies based on the organization's size and needs. With management approval and a dedicated budget, the HR manager can find an external LMS provider tailored to the organization's requirements. Integrating LMS into the onboarding process allows easy access and completion of training for new and active employees. LMS can generate reports and analytics, including completion rates, assessment scores, and time spent on learning activities (Marson, 2023). Supervisors or managers should track employees' progress and results to identify improvement areas. This continuous learning and development approach helps employees grow while enabling organizations to utilize learning initiatives more efficiently.

5. *Employee stock options.* Many employees aim to start their own businesses and find ways to invest their money, making employee stock options a valuable benefit. Stock options allow employees to buy shares at a pre-determined price within a specified period (Zajac, 2024), with prices depending on the market value and the organization's financial performance. Human Resources, along with the Legal and Finance department, should review this benefit to retain employees and attract new applicants. BPO companies must comply with legal requirements and set clear guidelines for stock option eligibility. They might consider setting stock expiration dates from 2 to 5 years or more, based on financial capabilities. This motivates employees to work productively, as the future value of the stocks depends on the organization's performance (Becker, 2023). This can boost employee morale by aligning their goals with the organization's growth and success.

6. *Free gym membership and mental health services.* The benefits package companies offer provides employees with value beyond their salary. Harvard Business Review (2017, as cited in Charaba, 2023) noted that wellness benefits are highly desired by employees. BPO companies might enhance their current benefits by offering free gym memberships, helping employees save money and improve their physical health while engaging in activities outside work. With management approval and a dedicated

budget, the HR manager can find gyms with multiple branches near employees' residences. Additionally, free mental health services, including onsite or online therapy sessions, is a viable option as it helps mitigate stress and burnout. Services could include mental health assessments, counseling, and other treatments (Khoja, 2023). BPO companies could implement free gym memberships and mental health services through reimbursements.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are important for BPO companies seeking to enhance perceived organizational support and job satisfaction to reduce employee turnover intention. A significant positive effect of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction was revealed, consistent with Polat and Terzi (2020). Additionally, the study showed a significant negative effect of perceived organizational support on turnover intention, aligning with Wang and Wang (2020). Similarly, job satisfaction was found to have a significant negative effect on turnover intention, supported by Gebregziabher et al. (2020).

For BPO companies, maintaining high perceived organizational support and job satisfaction requires a proactive approach to strengthening the employee support system. Complacency can hinder progressive development, so consistent monitoring and reassessment of the employee retention program are essential. The proposed program helps reduce hiring and training costs by minimizing the need to replace employees who resigned. Establishing strategic plans and best practices for long-term development helps sustain the program's effectiveness.

Understanding employees' needs and consistently supporting and valuing their contributions foster a positive work environment. When employees feel genuinely cared for, job satisfaction and commitment increase. Addressing turnover intention is as important as reducing actual turnover since it is a reliable predictor of employee departure. An effective retention program leads to significant long-term benefits and a stronger support system.

To further enhance organizational culture, BPO companies should implement consistent key activities that foster appreciation and gratitude among employees. Collaboration between administrative departments and Human Resources is essential for efficient and productive program development. Activities should accommodate different work setups and schedules, considering the diversity of work arrangements. Regular monitoring and reassessment of the program, through employee surveys, ensure its alignment with evolving employee needs and organizational strategies.

The CCAP and IBPAP should support BPO companies by creating policies that strengthen employee retention programs. Collaborating with academia to improve work guidelines can help reduce turnover intention across the industry.

Future research endeavors should extend this study beyond Metro Manila, perhaps, to other regions with significant BPO concentrations, such as Central Luzon (Pampanga), Central Visayas (Cebu), and Southern Mindanao (Davao), to investigate regional differences. Additionally, examining other organizational factors like citizenship behavior, communication, and justice could provide valuable insights into reducing turnover intention. Integrating socio-demographic profiles (e.g., age, length of service, work arrangement) into the research model may also reveal their impact on turnover intention.

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