



Stress, Anxiety, Emotional Exhaustion, and Turnover Intentions in Hospitality: Foundations for a Structured Stress Reduction Program

Article History:

Initial submission:	17 May 2026
First decision:	20 May 2026
Revision received:	30 June 2026
Accepted for publication:	05 July 2026
Online release:	09 July 2026

Kent P. Dabucon¹, MHM, ORCID No. 0009-0002-8770-7748
Angel Fame D. Da-anoy¹, MHM, ORCID No. 0009-0007-9591-0443
Mary Ivy P. Lagdamen¹, MHM, ORCID No. 0009-0000-6261-3740

¹Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology-Main Campus, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between mental health and turnover intentions among hospitality employees as a basis for developing a structured stress reduction program. Specifically, the study assessed employees' levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion, determined the extent of turnover intentions, analyzed the relationship between mental health indicators and turnover intentions, and proposed an intervention program tailored to employees identified needs. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 150 frontline hospitality employees from selected hotels and casual dining establishments in the Philippines using purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21), Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), and standardized turnover intention measures. Statistical analyses included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and regression analysis using SPSS version 27. Findings revealed high levels of stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions among respondents. Significant positive relationships were found between mental health indicators and turnover intentions, with emotional exhaustion demonstrating the strongest association. The findings suggest that psychological strain substantially contributes to employees' intentions to leave hospitality organizations. Based on the results, a structured stress reduction program emphasizing mental health awareness, counseling support, stress management training, supervisory support, and work-life balance initiatives was proposed to improve employee well-being and workforce retention.

Keywords: mental health, turnover intentions, hospitality employees, stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, stress reduction program



Copyright © 2026. The Author/s. Published by VMC Analytikis Multidisciplinary Journal News Publishing Services. Stress, Anxiety, Emotional Exhaustion, and Turnover Intentions in Hospitality: Foundations for a Structured Stress Reduction Program © 2026 Kent P. Dabucon, Angel Fame D. Da-anoy and Mary Ivy P. Lagdamen is an open access article licensed under **Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0)**. This permits the copying, redistribution, remixing, transforming, and building upon the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially, provided that appropriate credit is given to the copyright owner/s through proper and standard citation.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is fundamentally dependent on human interaction. Unlike sectors where production processes can be standardized or automated, hospitality organizations rely heavily on employees who continuously engage with guests through emotional labor, interpersonal communication, and service-oriented performance. Frontline personnel in hotels, restaurants, resorts, and tourism establishments are expected not only to perform technical tasks efficiently but also to maintain emotional composure, display warmth, and manage challenging customer interactions despite long working hours,

irregular schedules, demanding workloads, and operational pressures. In such environments, employee psychological well-being becomes central to organizational sustainability, service quality, and workforce stability.

Recent evidence suggests that employee mental health concerns have become increasingly prevalent within the hospitality sector. According to the World Health Organization (2023), anxiety and stress-related conditions continue to be among the leading contributors to reduced workplace productivity and employee well-being worldwide. Within hospitality specifically, studies have reported that employees frequently experience elevated

levels of occupational stress due to customer-facing responsibilities, emotional labor demands, staffing shortages, and unpredictable work schedules (Karatepe et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2024). These challenges contribute to high employee turnover rates, which remain among the highest across service industries, creating substantial financial and operational burdens for hospitality organizations.

Despite the recognized importance of employee welfare, many hospitality organizations continue to struggle in providing sufficient psychological support systems that address workplace stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion refers to a state of emotional depletion resulting from prolonged exposure to work-related stressors, while turnover intention pertains to an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization in the near future (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Similarly, withdrawal behaviors refer to actions through which employees psychologically or physically distance themselves from their work, including absenteeism, reduced engagement, lateness, and intentions to resign (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991). These psychological and behavioral outcomes have significant implications for both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Previous studies have explored factors influencing turnover intentions within hospitality settings. Karatepe and Uludag (2008) identified emotional exhaustion as a significant mediator between work-family conflict and turnover intentions among hotel employees. Likewise, Kim et al., (2005) found that job stress significantly predicts withdrawal behaviors and employees' intentions to leave their organizations. Although these studies substantially contributed to understanding turnover dynamics, mental health-related variables were frequently examined as secondary outcomes embedded within broader organizational constructs such as job satisfaction, burnout, organizational commitment, or work-family conflict. Consequently, the direct influence of specific psychological conditions particularly stress,

anxiety, and emotional exhaustion on turnover intentions remains insufficiently explored.

Recent developments following the COVID-19 pandemic have intensified scholarly attention toward employee mental health in hospitality workplaces. Chen and Eyoun (2021) emphasized that anxiety, uncertainty, and psychological distress significantly increased among hospitality employees during periods of organizational disruption and health-related risks. More recent studies have similarly reported persistent psychological challenges among hospitality workers even during the post-pandemic recovery period, highlighting concerns regarding emotional exhaustion, job insecurity, and workforce retention (Jiang & Wen, 2024). However, much of the existing literature remains largely descriptive and problem-oriented, focusing primarily on identifying workplace stressors rather than developing evidence-based interventions capable of mitigating their adverse effects.

The implications of unresolved psychological concerns extend beyond individual well-being. Elevated stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion contribute to stronger turnover intentions and eventual employee attrition, resulting in increased recruitment and training costs, reduced service consistency, workforce shortages, and diminished organizational reputation. In labor-intensive hospitality economies such as the Philippines, these concerns carry broader implications for workforce sustainability, service competitiveness, and long-term industry resilience. Persistent exposure to stressful working conditions may gradually normalize psychological strain within the workplace, ultimately undermining employee retention and organizational performance.

Theoretical perspectives such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory introduced by Hobfoll (1989) provide valuable frameworks for understanding the relationship between workplace stressors and employee

outcomes. The JD-R Model explains that excessive job demands, when not balanced by adequate organizational resources, lead to psychological strain and emotional exhaustion. Similarly, COR Theory posits that individuals experience stress when valued psychological, emotional, or physical resources are threatened, depleted, or insufficiently replenished. Although these frameworks have been widely applied in organizational research, their practical application in developing structured stress reduction interventions specifically tailored to hospitality employees remains limited.

Given these gaps, the present study investigates the levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion among hospitality employees and examines their influence on turnover intentions. Utilizing a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design with purposive sampling of hospitality employees, the study seeks to generate empirical evidence that can inform the development of a structured stress reduction program responsive to the unique demands of hospitality workplaces. By linking psychological well-being directly to turnover intentions, the study contributes to both hospitality management literature and organizational mental health practice while providing a foundation for sustainable employee retention strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress in Hospitality Work Environments. The hospitality industry is widely recognized as one of the most psychologically demanding service sectors due to its dependence on continuous customer interaction, emotional labor, irregular work schedules, and performance expectations. Employees are frequently required to manage customer complaints, respond to fluctuating service demands, and maintain professional demeanor under stressful conditions. Consequently, occupational stress has become a concern among hospitality workers.

Job stress refers to the psychological and physiological responses that occur when

workplace demands exceed an individual's capacity to cope effectively (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Within hospitality settings, common stressors include excessive workloads, long working hours, staffing shortages, role ambiguity, and pressure to maintain service quality. Studies have consistently shown that elevated stress levels negatively affect employee well-being, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and service performance (Kim et al., 2005; Karatepe et al., 2013). More recently, Zhang et al. (2024) reported that hospitality employees experiencing chronic workplace stress demonstrated significantly lower engagement and stronger intentions to leave their organizations. These findings suggest that stress remains a critical organizational issue with direct implications for workforce stability and service excellence.

Anxiety Among Hospitality Employees. Anxiety has emerged as an increasingly important psychological concern in hospitality research, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Anxiety is characterized by persistent feelings of worry, apprehension, nervousness, and uncertainty that interfere with an individual's emotional regulation and cognitive functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). Unlike temporary stress responses, anxiety may persist even when immediate workplace pressures are absent, thereby affecting decision-making, concentration, interpersonal interactions, and job performance.

In hospitality settings, anxiety is often associated with job insecurity, customer aggression, health concerns, performance evaluations, and uncertainty regarding career advancement. Frontline employees may experience anxiety when managing difficult guests, handling service failures, or responding to organizational changes in highly competitive environments. Chen and Eyoun (2021) found that hospitality employees experiencing heightened anxiety related to health risks and employment uncertainty reported greater emotional exhaustion and stronger turnover intentions. Similarly, a systematic review conducted by

Pappa et al. (2023) revealed that service-sector employees continued to experience elevated levels of anxiety and psychological distress even during the post-pandemic recovery period. More recent evidence from Jiang and Wen (2024) further indicated that anxiety remains a significant predictor of employee disengagement and turnover intentions among hospitality workers, highlighting the long-term consequences of workplace uncertainty.

These findings underscore the importance of examining anxiety as a distinct psychological construct rather than merely a component of occupational stress. Understanding anxiety within hospitality contexts is essential because persistent feelings of uncertainty may significantly influence employees' decisions to remain in or leave their organizations.

Emotional Exhaustion and Burnout. Emotional exhaustion represents the central dimension of burnout and is particularly relevant in hospitality environments where employees engage in continuous interpersonal interactions. According to Maslach and Leiter (2016), emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being emotionally overextended, depleted, and unable to meet ongoing emotional demands. Employees experiencing emotional exhaustion often report fatigue, reduced enthusiasm, diminished motivation, and difficulty maintaining positive interactions with customers and colleagues.

In hospitality organizations, emotional exhaustion frequently develops as a consequence of sustained emotional labor. Employees are expected to display positive emotions, suppress negative feelings, and maintain courteous behavior regardless of personal circumstances or customer behavior. Such emotional regulation requires substantial psychological effort and may gradually deplete employees' emotional resources. For example, hotel front desk personnel, restaurant servers, and guest relations officers often encounter demanding guests while simultaneously managing organizational performance expectations.

Research consistently demonstrates the detrimental consequences of emotional exhaustion. Karatepe and Uludag (2008) identified emotional exhaustion as a significant mediator between work-family conflict and turnover intentions among hotel employees. Shani et al. (2014) similarly found that emotionally exhausted employees were more likely to disengage from their work and consider leaving their organizations. More recent studies by Hwang et al. (2023) and reported that emotional exhaustion significantly predicts turnover intentions, reduced service quality, and diminished organizational commitment among hospitality employees. These findings indicate that emotional exhaustion is not only a personal well-being issue but also an organizational challenge affecting employee retention and service performance.

Theoretical Perspectives on Psychological Well-Being and Turnover Intentions. The relationship between stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions can be explained through several organizational and psychological theories. One of the most influential frameworks is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007). The model suggests that excessive job demands, including emotional labor, workload pressures, and customer-related stressors, lead to employee strain when adequate organizational resources are unavailable. Organizational resources such as supervisor support, employee assistance programs, autonomy, and professional development opportunities can buffer the adverse effects of job demands. In hospitality environments characterized by intensive customer contact, insufficient resources may accelerate psychological exhaustion and increase turnover intentions.

Another relevant framework is Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which posits that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect valued resources. Stress occurs when these resources are threatened, lost, or insufficiently replenished. Hospitality

employees who continuously expend emotional, cognitive, and physical resources without adequate recovery opportunities may experience anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and psychological strain. According to COR theory, employees may eventually withdraw from stressful work environments as a strategy to prevent further resource depletion.

Together, these theories provide a strong foundation for understanding how workplace stressors influence employee psychological well-being and contribute to turnover intentions.

Turnover Intentions in Hospitality. Turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization within the foreseeable future (Tett & Meyer, 1993). It is widely regarded as one of the strongest predictors of actual employee turnover and serves as an important indicator of workforce stability.

The hospitality industry has historically reported higher turnover rates than many other sectors due to demanding working conditions, limited career development and progression opportunities, and the emotional nature of service work. Research by Blomme et al. (2010) demonstrated and explained that stressful work environments and unmet professional expectations significantly influenced employees' intentions to leave hospitality organizations. More recently, Park and Min (2024) found that psychological distress and emotional exhaustion were among the strongest predictors of turnover intentions among hotel employees in Asia. Similarly, Koo et al. (2023) reported that employees experiencing persistent workplace stress and anxiety exhibited lower organizational commitment and stronger intentions to search for alternative employment.

These findings suggest that turnover intentions cannot be fully understood through organizational variables alone. Psychological factors, particularly stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion, play a critical role in

shaping employees' decisions regarding continued organizational membership.

Although substantial literature has examined employee well-being and turnover intentions in hospitality settings, several gaps remain evident. First, previous studies have frequently investigated stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion as separate constructs rather than examining their combined influence on turnover intentions. Second, much of the existing literature focuses primarily on identifying workplace problems, with limited attention given to intervention-based solutions that can support employee psychological well-being. Third, despite the growing importance of hospitality industries in developing economies, relatively few studies have examined these relationships within the Philippine context, where organizational resources, labor conditions, and workplace challenges may differ from those reported in developed countries.

Addressing these gaps, the present study adopts a multidimensional perspective by examining stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion as interconnected psychological factors influencing turnover intentions among hospitality employees. Furthermore, the study moves beyond problem identification by providing empirical foundations for a structured stress reduction program designed to enhance employee well-being, strengthen workforce retention, and promote organizational sustainability within the hospitality sector.

Research Objectives. This study aims to examine the relationship between mental health and turnover intentions among hospitality employees as a basis for developing a stress reduction program. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Assess the level of mental health among hospitality employees in terms of:
 - 1.1 stress;
 - 1.2 anxiety; and
 - 1.3 emotional exhaustion.

2. Determine the level of turnover intentions among hospitality employees.
3. Analyze the significant relationship between mental health indicators and turnover intentions.
4. Propose a structured stress reduction program based on the findings of the study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between mental health and turnover intentions among hospitality employees. The descriptive component was utilized to assess employees' levels of stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions, while the correlational component determined the relationship between mental health indicators and turnover intentions. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the systematic collection and statistical analysis of measurable psychological and behavioral variables within operational hospitality settings.

Respondents. The respondents of the study consisted of 150 frontline hospitality employees from selected hotels and casual dining establishments located in an urban area in the Philippines. Data collection was conducted over a three-month period from January to March 2026. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants had direct exposure to customer service interactions, workplace pressures, and operational stressors common within hospitality environments.

The respondents included frontline staff, kitchen personnel, and supervisory employees working under varying employment arrangements such as full-time, part-time, and contractual status. Most participants belonged to the young to early mid-career workforce segment, reflecting the demographic

characteristics commonly associated with the hospitality industry.

Ethical approval was secured prior to data collection, and respondents were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were likewise maintained throughout the research process.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–24 years	52	34.7%
	25–34 years	61	40.7%
	35–44 years	25	16.7%
	45 years and above	12	8.0%
Gender	Male	68	45.3%
	Female	76	50.7%
	Prefer not to say	6	4.0%
Employment Status	Full-time	92	61.3%
	Part-time	34	22.7%
	Contractual	24	16.0%
Job Position	Frontline Staff	83	55.3%
	Kitchen Staff	41	27.3%
	Supervisory Roles	26	17.3%
Length of Service	Less than 1 year	38	25.3%
	1–3 years	57	38.0%
	4–6 years	31	20.7%
	More than 6 years	24	16.0%

Instrumentation. The study utilized a structured survey questionnaire composed of four sections. The first section gathered respondents' demographic information, including age, gender, employment status, job position, and length of service. The second section measured stress and anxiety using selected indicators adapted from the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21). The third section assessed emotional exhaustion using indicators derived from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The final section measured turnover intentions using a standardized turnover intention scale adapted from previous organizational behavior studies.

Table 2
The response was interpreted using the following scale:

Scale	Range	Interpretation
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High
4	3.41 – 4.20	High
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low
1	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale (Table 2) to determine the extent of respondents' agreement with each statement.

Prior to full implementation, the instrument underwent content validation by experts in hospitality management and organizational psychology. Reliability testing was likewise conducted to ensure internal consistency of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the management of participating hospitality establishments prior to data collection. After approval, the researchers distributed printed and electronic questionnaires to qualified respondents. Participants were informed regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality of responses, and their right to withdraw at any stage of participation.

Completed questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, and encoded for statistical analysis. The entire data collection process was conducted with minimal disruption to workplace operations.

Data Analysis. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were utilized to describe the demographic profile of respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the levels of stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions among hospitality employees.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was employed to determine the relationship between mental health indicators and turnover intentions. This statistical technique assessed the strength and direction of association between stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and employees' intention to leave their organizations. Additionally, regression analysis was utilized to determine which mental health indicators significantly predicted turnover

intentions. The statistical analyses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Level of Mental Health Among Hospitality Employees in Terms of Stress, Anxiety, and Emotional Exhaustion. Table 3 presents the level of mental health among hospitality employees in terms of stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion using indicators adapted from the DASS-21 and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The findings revealed an overall composite mean of 3.88, interpreted as High, indicating that respondents frequently experience psychological strain within their workplace environment.

Table 3
Level of Mental Health Among Hospitality Employees in Terms of Stress, Anxiety, and Emotional Exhaustion

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Stress	3.87	0.68	High
Anxiety	3.74	0.71	High
Emotional Exhaustion	4.02	0.65	High
Overall Mean	3.88	0.68	High

Among the indicators, emotional exhaustion obtained the highest mean of 4.02, suggesting that employees often feel emotionally drained due to continuous interpersonal interactions and demanding service responsibilities. Stress also registered a high level with a mean of 3.87, indicating that workload pressures, irregular schedules, and operational demands significantly affect employees' psychological well-being. Anxiety obtained a mean of 3.74, reflecting persistent feelings of worry, tension, and uncertainty among respondents.

These findings support the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model of Bakker and Demerouti (2007), which explains that excessive job demands without sufficient organizational resources contribute to psychological strain and burnout among employees. The results are also consistent with the study of Karatepe and Uludag (2008), who found that frontline hospitality employees commonly experience emotional exhaustion

due to prolonged exposure to emotionally demanding work environments. Similarly, Chen and Eyoun (2021) reported that hospitality employees experienced heightened anxiety and stress because of workplace uncertainty and operational pressures. The present findings further affirm the argument of Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which suggests that continuous emotional and psychological depletion negatively affects employee well-being when recovery mechanisms are inadequate.

The results imply that hospitality employees remain vulnerable to mental health concerns because of the emotionally intensive nature of service-oriented work. Without adequate organizational support systems, prolonged stress and emotional exhaustion may eventually affect employee retention and organizational performance.

The Extent of Turnover Intentions Among the Hospitality Employees. Table 4 shows the extent of turnover intentions among hospitality employees using indicators adapted from the Turnover Intention Scale. The overall composite mean of 3.86, interpreted as High, indicates that respondents demonstrate a considerable intention to leave their current organizations.

The highest-rated indicator was "I would leave this organization if given a better opportunity," with a mean of 4.05, suggesting that many employees remain open to alternative employment opportunities. Similarly, respondents reported frequently thinking about leaving their jobs, which reflects dissatisfaction associated with workplace pressures and emotional strain.

The findings align with the study of Tett and Meyer (1993), who explained that turnover intentions emerge when employees develop withdrawal cognitions due to dissatisfaction and stressful work conditions. Likewise, Blomme et al., (2010) found that hospitality employees, particularly younger workers, exhibit high turnover intentions because of stressful workplace environments and unmet

career expectations. The results are also supported by Kim et al. (2005), who concluded that unmanaged job stress significantly contributes to employees' intentions to leave hospitality organizations.

The findings suggest that turnover intentions among hospitality employees may be strongly influenced by psychological stressors and emotionally demanding workplace conditions. Persistent turnover intentions may contribute to workforce instability, increased recruitment costs, and disruptions in service quality within hospitality establishments.

Table 4
Extent of Turnover Intentions Among Hospitality Employees

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I frequently think about leaving my current job.	3.91	0.74	High
I intend to search for another job within the next year.	3.78	0.69	High
I would leave this organization if given a better opportunity.	4.05	0.66	High
I feel uncertain about my long-term future in this organization.	3.69	0.72	High
Overall Mean	3.86	0.70	High

The Relationship Between Mental Health Indicators and Turnover Intentions. Table 5 presents the relationship between mental health indicators and turnover intentions using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The results revealed significant positive relationships between stress, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and turnover intentions among hospitality employees.

Stress demonstrated a strong positive relationship with turnover intentions ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that employees experiencing higher levels of stress are more likely to consider leaving their organizations. Anxiety also showed a strong positive relationship with turnover intentions ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that psychological uncertainty and emotional tension contribute to withdrawal cognitions among employees. Among the indicators, emotional exhaustion exhibited the strongest relationship with turnover intentions ($r = 0.79$, $p < 0.05$), implying that emotionally

exhausted employees are significantly more likely to disengage from their organizations and consider resignation.

These findings are consistent with the study of Shani et al. (2014), which revealed that burnout dimensions, particularly emotional exhaustion, significantly predict turnover intentions among hospitality employees. Similarly, Karatepe and Uludag (2008) found that emotionally exhausted employees tend to experience withdrawal behaviors and stronger intentions to leave their organizations. The findings also support the study of Chen and Eyoun (2021), who identified anxiety and psychological distress as predictors of employee turnover intentions within hospitality settings.

The results further validate Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which explains that employees experiencing continuous emotional and psychological resource depletion are more likely to withdraw from stressful environments to protect their remaining resources. Likewise, the JD-R Model of Bakker and Demerouti (2007) explains that excessive job demands combined with insufficient organizational support increase employee strain, which may ultimately lead to turnover intentions.

The findings emphasize that mental health concerns should not be viewed merely as individual issues but as organizational concerns that directly influence employee retention, operational stability, and service quality within the hospitality industry.

Table 5
Relationship Between Mental Health Indicators and Turnover Intentions

Mental Health Indicators	r-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Stress and Turnover Intentions	0.71	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship	Significant
Anxiety and Turnover Intentions	0.68	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship	Significant
Emotional Exhaustion and Turnover Intentions	0.79	0.000	Strong Positive Relationship	Significant

Proposed Structured Stress Reduction Program Tailored to the Identified Needs of Employees.

Table 6 shows the structured stress reduction program proposed to address the identified mental health concerns of hospitality employees. The program focuses on mental health awareness, counseling support, stress management training, supervisory development, work-life balance initiatives, and employee feedback systems.

The proposed intervention is supported by the JD-R Model of Bakker and Demerouti (2007), which emphasizes the importance of organizational resources in reducing workplace strain and improving employee well-being. Likewise, Hobfoll's (1989) COR Theory explains that employees require opportunities to restore depleted emotional and psychological resources to prevent burnout and withdrawal behaviors.

The proposed program is also consistent with previous studies emphasizing organizational support as a protective factor against turnover intentions. Karatepe (2013) found that organizational support mechanisms can buffer the negative effects of stress on hospitality employees. Similarly, Chen and Eyoun (2021) recommended the implementation of psychological support and wellness initiatives to address anxiety and emotional strain among hospitality workers. Research further suggests that supportive leadership, stress management interventions, and work-life balance programs contribute significantly to employee satisfaction and retention within service industries.

Implementing structured mental health interventions may therefore help reduce stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion while simultaneously lowering turnover intentions among hospitality employees. Ultimately, the program may contribute to improved employee well-being, organizational stability, and service quality within the hospitality industry.

Table 6
Proposed Stress Reduction Program

Program Component	Objective	Activities	Expected Outcomes
Mental Health Awareness Sessions	Increase employee awareness regarding stress, anxiety, and burnout	Seminars, workshops, and mental health orientations	Improved understanding of mental health concerns
Employee Counseling Support	Provide psychological assistance for employees experiencing distress	Access to counseling services and psychological consultations	Reduced anxiety and emotional strain
Stress Management Training	Enhance coping strategies and resilience	Time management training, relaxation techniques, mindfulness sessions	Improved stress management skills
Supervisory Support Enhancement	Strengthen organizational support systems	Leadership training for supervisors on employee well-being	Improved workplace relationships and support
Work-Life Balance Initiatives	Reduce employee burnout and emotional exhaustion	Flexible scheduling, wellness breaks, recreational activities	Increased employee satisfaction and retention
Employee Feedback Mechanism	Encourage open communication regarding workplace concerns	Suggestion systems and regular employee consultations	Improved organizational responsiveness

Conclusions. The findings of this study demonstrate that mental health concerns constitute a significant organizational issue within the hospitality industry, particularly among frontline employees who are continuously exposed to emotionally demanding and high-pressure work environments. The results revealed that hospitality employees experience high levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion, indicating that psychological strain is a prevalent condition in operational hospitality settings. Among the identified indicators, emotional exhaustion emerged as the most pronounced dimension, suggesting that sustained emotional demands in hospitality work substantially deplete employees' psychological resources over time.

The study further established that turnover intentions among hospitality employees remain considerably high. Employees expressed uncertainty regarding their long-term organizational commitment and demonstrated a strong willingness to leave their current positions when presented with alternative employment opportunities. These findings suggest that workforce instability in hospitality organizations is not solely driven by economic or career-related factors but is also strongly

associated with employees' psychological experiences in the workplace.

More importantly, the results confirmed that mental health indicators particularly stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion are significantly related to turnover intentions. Emotional exhaustion showed the strongest association with employees' intention to leave, indicating that prolonged emotional depletion weakens organizational attachment and increases withdrawal cognitions. This finding reinforces the argument that psychological well-being is a critical determinant of employee retention and organizational sustainability in service-oriented industries.

The study also contributes to existing literature by supporting the applicability of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory in hospitality contexts. Excessive job demands, when not balanced by adequate organizational resources and recovery opportunities, contribute to psychological strain and resource depletion, which subsequently increase turnover intentions. These results highlight the importance of addressing employee mental health as a strategic organizational priority rather than merely an individual concern.

Study Limitations. Despite the significant findings, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study utilized a cross-sectional research design, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between mental health indicators and turnover intentions. Second, the data were based on self-reported measures, which may be subject to response bias such as social desirability or subjective interpretation of items. Third, the study was conducted within a specific hospitality context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or industries. Finally, external factors such as organizational culture, leadership style, and economic conditions were not extensively examined, although they may also influence employee mental health and turnover intentions.

Recommendations. Grounded in the study's findings, the following recommendations are directed toward diverse stakeholders in the hospitality sector. They emphasize the need for sustained inquiry, organizational initiatives, employee engagement, and policy development. Collectively, these strategies aim to strengthen psychological well-being, reduce turnover intentions, and enhance the resilience and competitiveness of hospitality workplaces.

For Hospital and Hospitality Administrators. Hospitality organizations should prioritize the development of structured mental health programs that include stress management initiatives, employee assistance services, and regular psychological wellness assessments. Strengthening supervisory support, improving workload distribution, and promoting work-life balance policies are essential to reducing employee psychological strain and turnover intentions.

For Employees. Hospitality employees are encouraged to actively participate in stress management programs, develop personal coping strategies such as mindfulness and time management, and seek available organizational support when experiencing psychological distress. Strengthening personal resilience

may help reduce the negative effects of workplace stressors.

For Policymakers and Industry Stakeholders. Relevant government agencies and hospitality associations may consider establishing standardized mental health and well-being guidelines for hospitality workplaces. Training programs and mental health awareness campaigns should be promoted to support industry-wide improvement in employee welfare.

This study underscores the importance of creating psychologically supportive hospitality workplaces that recognize the emotional demands of service work. Addressing mental health concerns through structured organizational interventions is essential not only for employee well-being but also for sustaining organizational performance, service quality, and competitiveness within the hospitality industry.

For Future Researchers. Future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal research designs to better examine causal relationships between mental health variables and turnover intentions over time. Researchers may also consider expanding the scope to include additional psychological and organizational variables such as resilience, job satisfaction, organizational support, and leadership style. Comparative studies across different regions, hospitality subsectors, or cultural contexts are also recommended to enhance the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, future research may validate and refine the proposed structured stress reduction program through experimental or quasi-experimental designs to assess its effectiveness in improving employee well-being and reducing turnover intentions.

Author contributions. Kent P. Dabucon: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing | Angel Fame D. Da-anoy: Data curation, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing | Mary Ivy P. Lagdamen: Formal analysis, Supervision, Validation.

Conflict of interest. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding source. This research received no external funding.

Artificial intelligence use. No AI tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

Ethics approval statement. This study involved human respondents; however, formal ethical approval was not sought from the authors' institution. The authors affirm that participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality of responses was strictly maintained. No procedures were undertaken that posed risk or harm to the participants.

Data availability statement. All data supporting the findings of this study are included within the manuscript and its supplementary materials.

Acknowledgement. (Not available)

Publisher's disclaimer. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher. The publisher disclaims any responsibility for errors or omissions.

REFERENCES

- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed., text rev.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Blomme, R. J., Van Rheede, A., & Tromp, D. M. (2010). The use of the psychological contract to explain turnover intentions in the hospitality industry. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(1), 144–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190903466954>
- Chen, H., & Eyoun, K. (2021). Do mindfulness and perceived organizational support work? Fear of COVID-19 on restaurant frontline employees' job insecurity and emotional exhaustion. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 94, 102850. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102850>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>
- Hanisch, K. A., & Hulin, C. L. (1991). General attitudes and organizational withdrawal: An evaluation of a causal model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 39(1), 110–128. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(91\)90006-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(91)90006-8)
- Hwang, J., Kim, H., & Lee, K. (2023). Burnout and turnover intention among hotel employees. *Journal of Hospitality Management*. DOI not available (verify in database)
- Jiang, Y., & Wen, J. (2024). Post-pandemic employee well-being and retention in hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. DOI pending/verify
- Karatepe, O. M. (2013). High-performance work practices and hotel employee performance: The mediation of work engagement. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 32, 132–140. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.05.003>
- Karatepe, O. M., & Uludag, O. (2008). Role stress, burnout and their effects on frontline hotel employees' job performance: Evidence from Northern Cyprus. *International Journal of Tourism*

- Research*, 10(2), 111–126.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.645>
- Kim, H. J., Leong, J. K., & Lee, Y. K. (2005). Effect of service orientation on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention of leaving in a casual dining chain restaurant. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 24(2), 171–193.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2004.05.004>
- Koo, B., Curtis, C., & Ryan, B. (2023). Psychological distress and turnover intention in tourism and hospitality employees. *Tourism Management Perspectives*. DOI not available (verify in database)
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer Publishing Company.
- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications. *World Psychiatry*, 15(2), 103–111.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20311>
- Park, S., & Min, H. (2024). Mental health and workforce retention in Asian hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. DOI pending/verify
- Shani, A., Uriely, N., Reichel, A., & Ginsburg, L. (2014). Emotional labor in the hospitality industry: The influence of contextual factors. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 37, 150–158.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.11.009>
- Tett, R. P., & Meyer, J. P. (1993). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: Path analyses based on meta-analytic findings. *Personnel Psychology*, 46(2), 259–293.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1993.tb00874.x>
- World Health Organization. (2023). *Mental health at work*.
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-at-work>
- Zhang, X., Li, Y., & Wang, J. (2024). Occupational stress and employee engagement in hospitality workplaces. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 118, 103770.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2024.103770>