

Article

Satisfaction with Internal Communication and Hospitality Employees' Turnover Intention: Exploring the Mediating Role of Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract: Managing employee turnover is a key function in human resource management (HRM) that has become especially relevant given current staff shortages. The travel and tourism industry has been strongly affected, with many organizations having difficulty attracting and retaining workers. Portugal, as a prominent player in tourism, is no exception, and the workforce shortage crisis has been discussed in various forums and has attracted media attention. The present study examined hotel employees' turnover intention and its relationship with their job satisfaction and positive perceptions of internal communication and organizational support. The proposed theoretical model included that internal communication contributes to the quality of employee–organization relationships by increasing perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, which in turn serve as sequential mediators of hotel workers' diminished intent to leave their employer. Multiple regression analyses were performed using data collected from 12 hotels (number = 370 workers). The results support the model as they confirm that a statistically significant negative relationship exists between employees' satisfaction with internal communication and their turnover intention. These variables are both directly and indirectly connected through perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Implications for HRM are discussed including the importance of refining internal organizational communication to strengthen employee–organization ties.



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1. Introduction

The right balance between staff entries and exits is critical to smooth organizational functioning and business success (Feeley et al. 2010; Mohsin et al. 2023; Porter and Rigby 2021). Turnover must be managed by organizations to ensure a workforce that can cope with production and service provision fluctuations, to dismiss less competent employees, or to bring “new blood, energy, and ideas to an organization” (Feeley et al. 2010, p. 169). However, turnover's potentially detrimental effects are well known and feared. These negative impacts include, among others, lower efficiency, the cost of hiring and training new employees, and decreased service quality and customer satisfaction (Hinkin and Tracey 2000; Hom et al. 2017; McCartney et al. 2022; McElroy et al. 2001). In particular, employee exits can result in the loss of individuals who are productive and critical to crucial operations. Managing employee turnover is thus a key function and concern in human resource management (HRM).

The current labor shortage in developed countries makes turnover management even more critical, especially in industries more heavily affected by the unavailability of workers

(Han 2022; World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC 2021)). The travel and tourism industry is a case in point as its organizations report having difficulty attracting and retaining staff. This industry is known for having a high turnover rate (Davidson and Wang 2011; Ineson et al. 2013), and chronic staff shortages make maintaining the necessary workforce an almost herculean task for managers. The WTTC predicted that staff shortfalls in 2021 would range from 9% to 18% based on data from the United States, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal. This trend could hamper the industry's post-pandemic recovery and future expansion, which would have a major economic impact as travel and tourism are among the largest sectors globally, accounting for 1 in 10 jobs around the world (WTTC 2018).

Portugal is a southern European country listed in the top 20 by the Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021 (World Economic Forum 2022). Staff shortages have been discussed in various forums and attracted media attention. As in other countries, some workers found alternative job opportunities during the coronavirus disease-19 pandemic and remain unavailable to work in the industry. The media has predicted a shortfall of around 50,000 employees based on the WTTC's (2021) estimates for Portugal (i.e., 53,000 workers). This figure represents a shortage of nearly 12% of the workforce in an industry that in 2017 was responsible for 9% of this country's total employment (i.e., 401,500 jobs) (WTTC 2018) and 15.8% of the gross domestic product in 2022 (Tourism of Portugal Institute 2023). Portugal has become a prominent player in tourism, winning varied destination awards in the last decade (e.g., Europe's Leading Tourism Destination 2022; Tourism of Portugal Institute 2022), so this shortfall is a tremendous challenge for its travel and tourism organizations.

The present study was motivated by these concerns to focus on the hospitality sector in order to analyze hotel employees' turnover intention and its relationship with these workers' satisfaction with internal communication, organizational support, and their current job. The latter two variables are well-established predictors of withdrawal cognitions and actual voluntary turnover (e.g., Han 2022; Hom et al. 2017), but internal organizational communication's role has received less attention (Ćorić et al. 2020; Gomes et al. 2023). More specifically, the current research aimed to test a theoretical model proposing that workers' satisfaction with internal communication can be crucial to preventing voluntary turnover because the former variable can increase employees' perception of organizational support. Their contentment with their workplace then diminishes their willingness to leave their present job. The literature provides theoretical support for this sequential mediating effect, but the proposed model had not previously been subjected to empirical research. Testing the model allows us not only to replicate previous findings in the context of the Portuguese hospitality but also to advance knowledge about the ability of variables to predict employees' turnover intention. This study's results support the posited chain of effects.

The findings should also help HRM professionals and hotel managers understand how satisfactory internal communication reduces employees' withdrawal intentions. By improving this communication, hotels can boost perceived organizational support among their workers, which generates higher satisfaction with their workplace and reduces desires to leave for another job. Internal communication can thus be an important strategy for organizations seeking to cultivate strong employee–organization relationships and, ultimately, employee retention.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The next section presents a review of the pertinent literature and theoretical framework underlying the research model, as well as the hypotheses' development. In the third and fourth sections, the methodology is described, including sample, procedures, and measures, after which the statistical analyses and results are presented. The final section discusses the findings' theoretical and practical implications.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Satisfaction with Internal Communication and Turnover Intention

Internal communication refers to managed interactions between stakeholders within organizations (Welch and Jackson 2007), including all communication of ideas and information that occurs within companies. Effective internal communication can shape employee–organization relationships in diverse ways. Employees' involvement in their firm has been identified as one of internal communication's functions (Westphalen 1998), and desirable outcomes are associated with high-quality communication. For example, stronger employee engagement (Karanges et al. 2015; Lee et al. 2022; Soupata 2005; Špoljarić and Verčič 2021; Verčič and Vokić 2018), better individual performance (Ortega et al. 2023), increased happiness at work (Ravina-Ripoll et al. 2022), and reduced burnout symptoms (Atouba and Lammers 2020).

Workers' satisfaction with various aspects of communication is a significant factor in the positive outcomes achieved through internal communication strategies (Downs and Hazen 1977). The cited authors suggest that these aspects include improving corporate information, organizational integration, communication climate, personal feedback, media quality, and supervisor, subordinate, and coworker communication. Satisfaction with internal communication thus reflects employees' satisfaction with relationships and information flow variables within their company (Downs and Hazen 1977).

Positive perceptions of internal communication have been linked to reduced voluntary turnover. The latter construct can be defined as the "voluntary cessation of membership in an organization [...] by an individual who receives monetary compensation for participation in that organization" (Hom and Griffeth 1995, p. 5). A gap has been detected between intention and behavior, but turnover is still best predicted by employee turnover intention (Hom et al. 2017; Rubenstein et al. 2018)—the central variable examined by the present study. This intention refers to workers' desire to leave their employer (Rosse and Hulin 1985).

The literature indicates that employees who are more satisfied with internal communication report lower turnover intention. More specifically, Tsai et al.'s (2009) study showed that satisfaction with internal communication is negatively related to service industry workers' turnover intention. Carrière and Bourque (2009) found a similar relationship in land ambulance service contexts. Company communication was identified by Milman (2003) as one of the most important reasons behind amusement park and attraction industry employees' intention to stay in their job.

Internal communication, in general, facilitates the development of respect, trust, and understanding between organizations' members (Argenti 2003; Verčič et al. 2012). In addition, communication within companies fosters coordination and cooperation processes (Kochan et al. 2019), so it can contribute to effective task integration, stronger work relationships, and a sense of belonging. Multiple studies have also highlighted the importance of human interactions in the workplace to building loyalty and a desire to stay (Ineson et al. 2013; Moncarz et al. 2009; Ng et al. 2006). The above research was integrated into the current research's first hypothesis:

H1. *Employees' satisfaction with internal communication is negatively related to their turnover intention.*

2.2. Satisfaction with Internal Communication, Perceived Organizational Support, and Turnover Intention

Little is known about the processes underlying how internal communication shapes employee–organization relationships and, more specifically, employees' turnover intentions. One process may involve perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al. 1986). Argenti (2003) posits that improved communication within organizations, for instance, between managers and their workers, will make the latter feel more supported by their firm. The flow of information needs to include company culture, values, policies, and goals, as well as feedback on performance, so that the overall workplace climate ensures employees can fit better into their organization and cope with job demands and role expectations. This support increases workers' job efficacy. If communication is limited, unclear, and

unsatisfactory, employees may feel isolated and unsupported by their organization (Yoon and Thye 2002). These perceptions are especially significant in periods of change and tension in their work environment (Argenti 2003; Gomes et al. 2021; Liu-Lastres et al. 2023).

Perceived organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al. 1986) defines this construct as workers' perception that their company values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Various studies have compiled empirical evidence of a positive relationship between different internal communication features and perceived organizational support. For instance, Allen (1992, 1995) found that good communication at diverse levels is positively related to employees' feelings of being supported and cared for by their firm in both higher education and consultancy settings. Building on Allen's (1992, 1995) research, Neves and Eisenberger (2012) confirmed that good communication has similar effects in social services organizations. Vieira-dos-Santos and Gonçalves (2018) also verified that this impact grows stronger when universities use internal marketing to foster stronger perceptions of support received from these institutions. More recently, Verčič et al. (2021) found that satisfaction with internal communication leads to enhanced engagement and employer attractiveness through increased perceived organizational support.

Perceived organizational support affects employees' emotional bond to their employer (Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002) and satisfaction with their work environment (Eisenberger et al. 1997; Yoon and Thye 2002). This support reinforces staff members' sense of personal importance, comfort, and confidence (Eisenberger et al. 2020). In addition, original research and meta-analyses have found that perceived organizational support is positively related to individual performance levels and organizational citizenship behaviors. It is also negatively related to withdrawal cognitions (e.g., turnover intention) and behaviors (e.g., absenteeism) (Han 2022; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002; Rubenstein et al. 2018; Stofberg et al. 2022). The negative connection between perceived organizational support and turnover intention has been verified by various studies (Akgunduz and Sanli 2017; Allen et al. 2003; Duarte et al. 2015; Huang et al. 2019; Huning et al. 2020; McCartney et al. 2022). Finally, Eisenberger et al. (1986) suggest that staff members with stronger perceived organizational support are less likely to search for and accept jobs in other companies.

The reviewed literature indicates that employees' satisfaction with internal communication fosters perceived organizational support, which in turn is related to decreased turnover intention. Prior research thus sustains the argument that this support mediates the relationship between workers' satisfaction with internal communication and their turnover intention. The present study's second hypothesis was developed to reflect the above findings:

H2. *The relationship between employees' satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention is mediated by perceived organizational support.*

2.3. Satisfaction with Internal Communication, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intention

Job satisfaction can also be part of the psychosocial processes that produce internal communication's impact on employee–organization connections and the subsequent positive effect on turnover intention reduction. This satisfaction has been defined as “the degree to which a person reports satisfaction with intrinsic and extrinsic features of [. . . his or her] job” (Warr et al. 1979, p. 133). Job satisfaction also consists of a “positive (or negative) evaluative opinion of [. . .] one's job or work situation” (Weiss 2002, p. 175), which is based on workers' assessment of their workplace environment. This term can additionally be defined as the extent to which people like (i.e., experience satisfaction with) or dislike (i.e., voice dissatisfaction with) their jobs (Spector 1997). The latter conceptualization suggests that job satisfaction is a generalized or global affective reaction that individuals have to their job.

A review of the literature revealed that a clear relationship exists between internal communication and job satisfaction, with researchers reporting a positive link between these variables (e.g., Bakanauskiene et al. 2010; Carrière and Bourque 2009; Kong et al. 2018; Lee et al. 2022; Mehra and Nickerson 2019; Nikolić et al. 2013; Pincus 1986; Steele and Plenty 2015; Verčič et al.

2021). Milman (2003), Lee and Way (2010), and Tanković et al. (2022) specifically confirmed that workplace communication is significantly related to hotel employees' job satisfaction. Overall, this satisfaction has been found to be higher when internal communication includes information sharing, transparency, climate building, constructive feedback, and appropriate disclosure. These results indicate that, in addition to technical or instrumental aspects (Price and Mueller 1981), communication's relational features play a vital role in enhancing job satisfaction (Giri and Kumar 2010; Tanković et al. 2022), so quality relationships are crucial to job satisfaction (Kong et al. 2018; Qiu et al. 2015).

This kind of satisfaction is, in turn, related to staff members' increased customer orientation (Al Samman and Mohamed 2021; Duarte et al. 2019), customer-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (Tang et al. 2023), individual performance (Giri and Kumar 2010; Pincus 1986; Wright and Cropanzano 2000), and organizational citizenship behavior (Bowling 2010; Foote and Tang 2008), among other outcomes. Hom et al.'s (2017) narrative literature review covered 100 years of research on turnover, revealing that job satisfaction occupies a central place in turnover prediction as reduced turnover intention has been linked with stronger job satisfaction (Allen et al. 2003; Chen et al. 2011; Ferreira et al. 2017; Mobley 1977; Rubenstein et al. 2018). McCartney et al. (2022) found this effect in hotel workers in Macao. Based on the above studies, the current research's third hypothesis proposed that job satisfaction mediates the association between workers' positive perception of internal communication and their desire to leave their organization voluntarily:

H3. *The relationship between employees' satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention is mediated by their job satisfaction.*

2.4. Satisfaction with Internal Communication, Perceived Organizational Support, Job Satisfaction, and Turnover Intention

This study's theoretical model included that both perceived organizational support and job satisfaction can increase if workers' subjective assessment of the communication flows within their organization is positive. These interconnections in turn can help explain these employees' weaker desire to quit their jobs. A positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction has been confirmed by various researchers (Ahmed and Nawaz 2015; Allen et al. 2003; Rhoades and Eisenberger 2002; To and Huang 2022), so a sequential mediation effect was added to the present study's model. That is, hotel workers' satisfaction with internal communication should reinforce their perception of organizational support, thereby resulting in greater satisfaction at work, which then reduces turnover intention.

Figure 1 displays the theoretical model with the predicted chain of effects. Previous research has examined some interactions between these variables, but the literature provides no clear evidence of studies that have examined the full proposed model. For example, Price and Mueller (1981) demonstrated that nurses' perception of instrumental communication is significantly related to their job satisfaction and thus to their withdrawal cognitions and behaviors. Allen et al. (2003) also showed that perceived organizational support leads to decreased turnover intention and actual turnover behavior through increased job satisfaction, based on two samples of salespeople and insurance agents, respectively. Ghani et al. (2022), in turn, observed that job satisfaction and the resulting reduced turnover intention are contingent on hotels' effective internal communication.

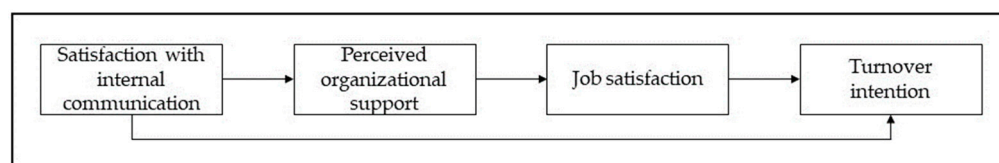


Figure 1. Theoretical model.

The present study sought to add to the literature by analyzing the chain of effects between the four aforementioned variables in the context of Portuguese hospitality. The above findings were integrated into the final hypothesis:

H4. *The relationship between satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention is sequentially mediated by perceived organizational support and job satisfaction.*

3. Method

3.1. Procedure and Sample

A non-probability sample was drawn from employees of hotels located in Lisbon and Madeira, Portugal's two main tourism areas, and used to conduct empirical research to test the proposed model. A list was made of 3- to 5-star hotels operating in both areas, and emails were sent to these establishments asking them to participate in the study. A brief explanation was given of the project's aims and the data collection procedure. Of the 106 hotels contacted, 12 confirmed their willingness to take part in the research.

The data were gathered with a paper-and-pencil survey distributed in person in the hotels' reception area by a research assistant. The Declaration of Helsinki's principles were followed, including giving a guarantee of the answers' anonymity and confidentiality to the participants, who voluntarily agreed to take part in the survey. The informed consent form also provided information about the research aims and participation criteria (i.e., working for the hotel in question for at least one year). An envelope was provided to each participant, in which the completed questionnaire could be sealed.

After incomplete surveys were discarded, a sample of 370 participants remained. Most respondents were Portuguese (93.2%) or citizens of Portuguese-speaking countries (Brazil: 3.5%; São Tomé and Príncipe: 0.6%; Cape Verde: 0.5%; Angola: 0.3%). The participants were between 18 and 64 years old (mean = 35.18; standard deviation [SD] = 8.74), and slightly more than half were female (55.9%). When asked about education, 17.6% reported having up to 9 years of schooling and 40.2% between 10 and 12 years of schooling, while 42.2% had attended university.

The job tenure responses produced a mean of 6.52 years (SD = 5.60; minimum 1, maximum 24). Around a third of the participants had a managerial position (35.4%). Most respondents had a permanent formal employment contract with their hotel (61.1%), while the remainder had a fixed-term employment contract (35.4%) or they were in internship programs (3.5%). Most participants had jobs dealing with food and beverages (22.2%), reception (20.2%), and cleaning services (14.3%).

3.2. Measures

The survey was structured into three main sections: informed consent, measurement scales assessing the selected variables, and socioprofessional information. All items were taken from the relevant literature as described in the subsections below.

3.2.1. Predictor Variable: Satisfaction with Internal Communication

The participants' perception of internal communication in their hotels was evaluated using 12 items from the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by [Downs and Hazen \(1977\)](#). Five items assessed employees' opinion of their hotel's communication climate (e.g., "Extent to which I receive in time the information needed to do my job"). Five items covered corporate information (e.g., "Information about company policies and goals"), and two items focused on supervisor communication (e.g., "Extent to which my supervisor offers guidance for solving job-related problems").

The respondents rated each item on a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Totally dissatisfied") to 5 ("Totally satisfied"). The responses were combined into a composite score for each participant by averaging the items' values. Higher scores correspond to greater satisfaction with internal communication. The Cronbach's alpha for the combined scale is 0.81.

3.2.2. Mediator One: Perceived Organizational Support

Employees' perception of organizational support was assessed using 4 items from Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support. For example, one item reads, "The organization values my contribution to its well-being". The respondents scored the items using a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Totally disagree") to 5 ("Totally agree"). Each participant's composite score was obtained by averaging the items' points. Higher values indicate more perceived organizational support. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.87.

3.2.3. Mediator Two: Job Satisfaction

The employees' satisfaction with their job was measured with an 11-item scale adopted from Warr et al.'s (1979) study (e.g., "Cooperation and relationships with coworkers" and "The work performed"). The respondents indicated their degree of satisfaction with each job facet on a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Very dissatisfied") to 5 ("Very satisfied"). Each participant's overall job satisfaction score was also estimated by averaging their responses to all the scale's items so that higher scores represent greater job satisfaction. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale is 0.90.

3.2.4. Criterion Variable: Turnover Intention

The employees' intention to leave their hotel job voluntarily was measured using two items from Bozeman and Perrewé (2001) (i.e., "I'm actively searching for an opportunity to leave this company" and "Within a year, I hope to be in another job, in a different company"). The respondents indicated their level of agreement with each item on a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree"). The two items have a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.71 ($p < 0.01$). The participants' composite scores were calculated by averaging the two items' values, with higher scores indicating a stronger desire to leave their hotel.

3.2.5. Control Variable: Type of Employment Contract

Employees' type of formal employment contract can influence their willingness to leave their organization (Bernhard-Oettel et al. 2008; Manolopoulos et al. 2022), so this variable was set as a covariate in the analysis. A dummy variable was created, with 0 corresponding to respondents with a temporary employment contract (38.9%) and 1 indicating employees with permanent employment contracts (61.1%).

3.3. Assessment of Common Method Variance (CMV) and Measures' Convergent and Discriminant Validity

The data were collected from a single source all at the same time, so CMV could weaken the results' validity (Bozionelos and Simmering 2022; Podsakoff et al. 2003). Various preventive measures were taken in the survey construction phase including protecting the participants' anonymity and diminishing evaluation apprehension (e.g., "There are no right or wrong answers"). In addition, different rating scales were used. Overall, these techniques have been found to help reduce lenient, acquiescent, and socially desirable answers (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

Harman's single factor test was run after the data had been collected. This statistical technique is based on unrotated exploratory factor analysis, which showed that the first factor explains less than 50% of the variance. More specifically, 42.23% can be attributed to the first factor (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin = 0.94; Bartlett's test (528) = 8307.47; $p < 0.001$). The results suggest that CMV does not significantly weaken the findings' validity and thus distort their interpretation.

Confirmatory factor analysis was also conducted to check whether the four variables' items capture distinct constructs as opposed to reflecting common source bias. The four-factor model fit the data well (i.e., root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.058; Tucker–Lewis index [TLI] = 0.927; comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.936), while the single-factor model

presented unacceptable fit statistics (i.e., RMSEA = 0.108; TLI = 0.749; CFI = 0.779) (Hu and Bentler 1999; Marsh et al. 2004). These results indicate that the four constructs have discriminant validity and again that no serious CMV is present in the data.

Next, a latent factor model was created by adding an unmeasured latent method factor to the four-factor model. All the items were allowed to load on their theoretical constructs and the latent variable. The results indicate a good fit to the data (RMSEA = 0.055; TLI = 0.936; CFI = 0.949). The two models' goodness of fit was then compared using a CFI difference test. The CFI changed by 0.013 between the models, which is below the recommended cut-off value of 0.05 (Bagozzi and Yi 1990) and which implies that including a latent method factor in the present model would not significantly improve its overall fit. This finding further decreases the chances that CMV is present.

The variables' composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were then estimated (Table 1). The CR values range from 0.83 to 0.90, so they are above the accepted cut-off point of 0.70 (Hair et al. 2010). The AVE values vary from 0.62 to 0.71, which means they are also above the threshold of 0.50 recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), except for job satisfaction (0.45). Fornell and Larcker (1981, p. 46) suggest that researchers can "conclude that the convergent validity of the construct is adequate, even though more than 50% of the variance is due to error", when the variable's CR values are above the recommended minimum. The construct's convergent validity was considered acceptable for the present study's subsequent data analysis because the CR results support this conclusion.

Table 1. Mean (M), standard deviation (SD), Spearman's correlation, Cronbach's alpha, squared correlation, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) values.

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	CR	AVE
1. Type of employment contract ¹	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2. Satisfaction with internal communication	3.65	0.57	0.26 ^{2,**}	(0.81)	0.17 ³	0.49	0.20	0.85	0.65
3. Perceived organizational support	3.50	0.87	0.18 *	0.41 **	(0.87)	0.20	0.20	0.87	0.62
4. Job satisfaction	3.87	0.62	0.33 **	0.70 **	0.44 **	(0.90)	0.33	0.90	0.45
5. Turnover intention	2.01	0.97	−0.38 **	−0.44 **	−0.45 **	−0.58 **	(0.71) ⁴	0.83	0.71

¹ Type of employment contract: 0 = temporary, 1 = permanent; ² Spearman's correlations below the diagonal; ³ squared correlations in bold above the diagonal; ⁴ Cronbach's alphas in parentheses; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Finally, the AVE values and squared correlations between all pairs of variables were compared to check for discriminant validity. As recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the AVE is greater than the shared variance between the variables (Table 1). The various statistical techniques' results thus confirm that the four constructs have convergent and discriminant validity and that CMV is absent.

4. Results

Table 1 lists the means, SDs, and Spearman's correlation coefficients. Except for turnover intention, all the mean values fall above the mid-point of the response scale. The scores thus indicate that turnover intention is relatively low and employees are moderately satisfied with internal communication, their work situation, and the support provided by their hotel.

The correlation analysis produced coefficients that indicate the main variables are all significantly correlated with each other. As expected, the correlations with turnover intention are negative, while other variables are intercorrelated in a positive direction. The correlations are moderate to strong (i.e., between 0.41 and 0.70), but the probability of collinearity among the variables is low because the tolerance values are above 0.399 and the variance inflation factor values are below 2.508 (Hair et al. 2010). Type of employment contract is significantly correlated with the variables of interest. Hotel workers with permanent employment contracts express greater satisfaction with internal communication

and perceived support, as well as more job satisfaction and lower intention to leave their current job.

PROCESS macro for IBM SPSS version 26 software (Hayes 2018) was used to evaluate the mediation effects. The type of formal employment contract was set as a covariate. Table 2 presents the sequential mediation analysis results for Model 6.

Table 2. Non-standardized regression coefficients (Bs), standard errors (SEs), summary information, and indirect effects for serial mediation model.

Variables	Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (Mediator 1)		Job Satisfaction (JS) (Mediator 2)		Turnover Intention (TI) (Criterion Variable)	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Total Effects</i>						
Constant	–	–	–	–	–4.94 ***	0.27
Satisfaction with internal communication (SIC)	–	–	–	–	–0.72 ***	0.08
Type of employment contract ¹	–	–	–	–	–0.53 **	0.09
					F (2, 367) = 83.23; p < 0.001 R ² = 0.31 ²	
<i>Direct effects</i>						
Constant	1.48 ***	0.27	0.83 **	0.13	–5.94 ***	0.27
SIC	0.54 ***	0.08	0.72 ***	0.04	–0.05	0.10
POS	–	–	0.09 ***	0.03	–0.20 ***	0.05
JS	–	–	–	–	–0.73 ***	0.10
Type of employment contract	0.08	0.09	0.16 ***	0.04	–0.39 ***	0.08
		F (2, 367) = 28.96; p < 0.001 R ² = 0.14		F (3, 366) = 183.99; p < 0.001 R ² = 0.60		F (4, 365) = 73.86; p < 0.001 R ² = 0.45
<i>Indirect effects</i>						
	Effect	BootLLCI ³		BootULCI ⁴		
Total	–0.67	–0.87		–0.48		
SIC → POS → TI	–0.11	–0.19		–0.05		
SIC → JS → TI	–0.52	–0.71		–0.35		
SIC → POS → JS → TI	–0.04	–0.07		–0.01		

¹ Type of employment contract: 0 = temporary, 1 = permanent; ² R² = coefficient of determination; ³ LLCI = lower-level confidence interval; ⁴ ULCI = upper-level confidence interval; TI = turnover intention; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.

The first hypothesis (i.e., H1) proposed that a negative relationship exists between hotel workers' satisfaction with internal communication and their willingness to leave their job. Table 2 above shows that satisfaction with internal communication has a statistically significant total effect on turnover intention (non-standardized coefficient (B) = –0.72; p < 0.001). This result indicates that employees' perception of their hotel's efforts to ensure better internal communication decreases these individuals' turnover intention. H1 thus has empirically robust support. Satisfaction with internal communication and type of employment contract explain around one third of turnover intention's unique variance (coefficient of determination [R²] = 0.31; F[2, 367] = 83.23; p < 0.001).

The second hypothesis (i.e., H2) posits that the link between satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention is mediated by perceived organizational support. The results confirm that a positive assessment of internal communication significantly predicts workers' perception of meaningful support from their company (B = 0.54; p < 0.001) and that the latter variable also significantly predicts reported levels of turnover intention (B = –0.20; p < 0.001). In addition, satisfaction with internal communication's indirect effect is statistically significant, which provides evidence of a mediating effect (B = –0.11; lower-level confidence interval [LLCI] = –0.19; upper-level confidence interval [ULCI] = –0.05). H2 was thus confirmed by the data.

The third hypothesis (i.e., H3) posited that job satisfaction also has a mediation effect on the connection between satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention. The analyses' results indicate that employees' positive perception of internal

communication helps explain their contentment with their work ($B = 0.72$; $p < 0.001$), and the latter satisfaction has a significant negative impact on staff members' desire to leave their hotel job ($B = -0.73$; $p < 0.001$). This indirect effect is statistically significant ($B = -0.52$; $LLCI = -0.71$; $ULCI = -0.35$), thereby verifying that a substantial mediating effect exists. These findings provide empirically robust support for H3.

Finally, the fourth hypothesis (i.e., H4) stated that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction serially mediate the relationship between hotel employees' satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention. Positive perceptions of internal communication have a substantial indirect effect on turnover intention through perceived organizational support, and job satisfaction's mediation is also statistically significant ($B = -0.04$; $LLCI = -0.07$; $ULCI = -0.01$). The results thus show that stronger internal communication is associated with workers' perception of stronger support from their company ($B = 0.54$; $p < 0.001$), which then generates more job satisfaction ($B = 0.09$; $p < 0.001$) and, after that, contributes to diminishing any intention to leave their job ($B = -0.73$; $p < 0.001$). These findings support H4, so all the hypotheses were confirmed.

The covariate (i.e., type of employment contract) was found to have a significant negative effect on turnover intention ($B = -0.39$; $p < 0.001$). This result indicates that hotel staff members with permanent employment contracts have weaker intention to leave their current job than employees with temporary contracts. Overall, the model explains 45% of turnover intention's unique variance ($F[4, 365] = 73.86$; $p < 0.001$). Figure 2 presents the main findings.

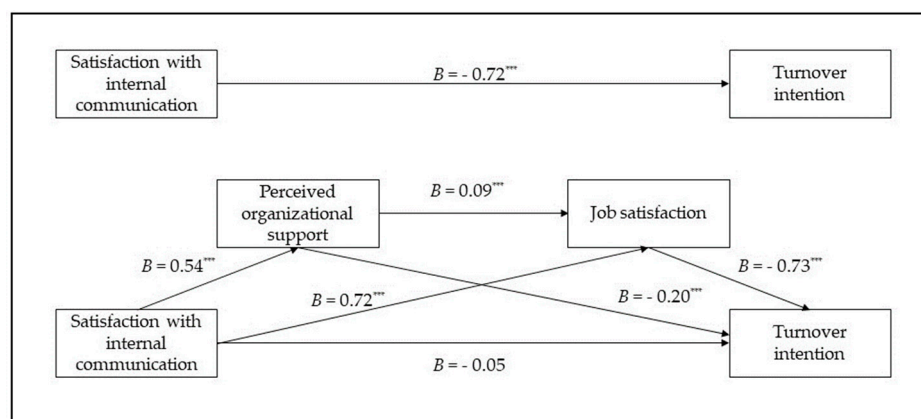


Figure 2. Satisfaction with internal communication's influence on turnover intention through perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Workers' type of employment contract as covariate; number = 370; B = non-standardized regression coefficient; *** $p < 0.001$.

5. Discussion

5.1. Main Findings

This study sought to determine how employees' turnover intention can be explained by their satisfaction with internal communication, which is considered to be an enabler of stronger perceived organizational support and thus increased job satisfaction. The research focused specifically on Portugal's hospitality sector because it has been deeply affected by the current staff shortage worldwide (W TTC 2021). The present study's results expand the knowledge about internal communication as an important factor affecting employee–organization relationships, especially voluntary turnover intention. This communication has been found to be a key predictor of voluntary turnover behavior (Han 2022; Hom et al. 2017; Rubenstein et al. 2018)—a phenomenon that inhibits companies' efforts to manage staff entries and exits more efficiently.

The current findings support the proposed sequential mediation model as all four hypotheses were confirmed by the data collected from hotel workers. As H1 suggested, these employees' satisfaction with internal communication is negatively related to their intention to leave their company in the near future. This result coincides with previous

research (Carrière and Bourque 2009; Tsai et al. 2009) and underlines that satisfactory internal communication is a significant reason hotel staff members choose to stay with their employer (Milman 2003). In addition, the current findings include that positive perceptions of internal communication start the distal process that leads to decreased turnover intention through increased organizational support and job satisfaction.

H2, in turn, proposed that perceived organizational support significantly mediates the negative relationship between workers' satisfaction with internal communication and their intention to quit their company voluntarily. Prior studies have linked better internal communication to increased reported organizational support (Allen 1992, 1995; Neves and Eisenberger 2012; Verčič et al. 2021; Vieira-dos-Santos and Gonçalves 2018), and the latter variable has been connected to decreased turnover intention (Akgunduz and Sanli 2017; Allen et al. 2003; Duarte et al. 2015; Huang et al. 2019; Huning et al. 2020; McCartney et al. 2022).

Thus, satisfactory internal communication was expected to ensure hotel employees feel more valued and respected by their employer and thus report less turnover intention. The present study's results support H2 as good internal communication facilitates the development of positive bonds with the employing organization (Argenti 2003), which are crucial to workers' desire to stay in their job (Argenti 2003; Ineson et al. 2013; Moncarz et al. 2009; Ng et al. 2006).

H3 also received empirically robust support since job satisfaction proved to be a significant mediator of the negative relationship between hotel staff members' satisfaction with internal communication and their turnover intent. This result is unsurprising as previous research has established that job satisfaction is a key predictor of reduced turnover intentions and behaviors (Ferreira et al. 2017; McCartney et al. 2022; Rubenstein et al. 2018). The current finding goes one step further and confirms internal communication's crucial role in increased job satisfaction (Bakanauskiene et al. 2010; Carrière and Bourque 2009; Giri and Kumar 2010; Lee and Way 2010; Mehra and Nickerson 2019; Milman 2003; Pincus 1986; Steele and Plenty 2015). Internal communication has a positive impact on hotel employees' assessment of their work situation, thereby reducing their desire to leave their job.

Finally, H4 posited that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction would have a sequential mediating effect on the negative link between workers' satisfaction with internal communication and turnover intention, which was also supported by the present results. The findings include that internal communication strengthens perceived organizational support, thereby increasing employees' job satisfaction and ultimately reducing their intention to quit their job. These results expand on prior studies' analysis of how some but not all of the variables incorporated into the current proposed model intercorrelate with each other (Ahmed and Nawaz 2015; Allen et al. 2003; Ghani et al. 2022; Price and Mueller 1981; To and Huang 2022).

The chain of effects between these variables was found to be statistically significant as it explains almost half of the variance in hotel workers' willingness to leave their current employer. This effect supersedes the variance explained by type of employment contract, which is a significant socioprofessional variable affecting staff members' willingness to abandon their organization (Bernhard-Oettel et al. 2008; Manolopoulos et al. 2022). Type of contract was set as a covariate in the current research's analyses. Overall, little information is available about the process underlying how companies' internal communication shapes employee–organization relationships, especially with regard to employees' turnover intention, so these findings provide added value to this field of study.

5.2. Theoretical Contributions and Implications for Management

The results strengthen the existing literature on organizations' internal communication by focusing on hotel workers' satisfaction with communication flows within their company, as well as perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention in the hospitality industry. Studies have taken various approaches to the individual-level outcomes of internal communication, such as symmetric internal communication (Grunig

1992) and instrumental communication (Price and Mueller 1981), but researchers have less frequently concentrated on employees' subjective evaluations of communication flows. The present investigation found that hotel workers' positive perceptions of internal communication affect their assessment of the support provided by their organization and thus influence their job satisfaction and, in the end, intention to leave their employer. Internal communication, therefore, has an important role as a predictor of turnover intention. This connection appears to have been overlooked by prior research as internal communication is absent from recent meta-analyses and narrative reviews on employee turnover (e.g., Han 2022; Hom et al. 2017), with the exception of Rubenstein et al.'s (2018) work. More attention needs to be paid to this relationship in academic research.

From a practical perspective, the above findings indicate that Portuguese hospitality organizations should refine their internal communication strategies to increase their workers' satisfaction with workplace communication flows. Hotels that improve this type of communication can strengthen their staff members' perceptions of organizational support and thus enhance employees' job satisfaction and, ultimately, diminish their desire to leave for a new position elsewhere. Internal communication can be an effective way to cultivate stronger employee–organization relationships and, in turn, employee retention.

This study assessed workers' satisfaction with internal communication using Downs and Hazen's (1977) approach based on three dimensions: communication climate, corporate information, and supervisor communication. These three areas can guide improvements in hotels' internal communication. The first dimension refers to the extent to which internal communication motivates and stimulates employees' enthusiasm for meeting organizational goals and encourages workers to identify with the company and/or feel a vital part of it. In addition, staff members develop their own ability to communicate and receive in time the information needed to do their jobs, and conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels.

To achieve these results, hotels need to invest in professional development focused on communication skills (e.g., recruiting communication specialists who can assist hoteliers and human resource managers), as well as providing training in effective conflict resolution. Training programs should target all of the organization's members, including managers at all levels since supervisor communication is another important dimension of internal communication. This area comprises the extent to which company leaders listen and pay attention to their followers, provide the right amount of supervision, and offer guidance for solving job-related problems, including being open to new ideas and trusting their team members.

Finally, corporate information covers communication about companies' policies, goals, ongoing changes, financial standing, and accomplishments and/or failures. Ensuring this information is shared in sufficient detail with workers is also important for their satisfaction with internal communication flows.

Downs and Hazen (1977) identified other dimensions that hotels can focus on to improve their communication processes, for example, personal feedback, coworker communication, and organizational integration. Overall, firms need to invest in communication among all internal stakeholders to ensure a better understanding of organizational culture, values, policies, and procedures, as well as facilitating better coordination and cooperation between workers (Kochan et al. 2019). The latter contributes to stronger relationships at work and a deeper sense of belonging (Argenti 2003). Employees are less predisposed to leave their jobs if these close ties exist. These ties can be particularly relevant in contexts where people place greater value on personal relations and prefer group work, as happens in Portugal. The country's national culture is characterized by low masculinity and high collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, with paternalistic human resource practices still prevailing in hospitality companies (Silva and Martins 2016). In conclusion, good internal communication can be an effective strategy that fosters strong employee–organization ties and ultimately better employee retention in the hotels.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research

The above findings provide significant added value, but they must be interpreted with care given this study's limitations in three main areas: the research design and data collection procedure, measures, and the sample. First, a risk of CMV exists given the correlation analyses and gathering of data from the same source (i.e., individual workers) at one time (i.e., all measures in one survey), which also limits definitive conclusions about causal relationships. The limitations of correlational design are extensively discussed in the literature (Podsakoff et al. 2003), so these restrictions should be kept in mind even though the present study included preventive and statistical techniques providing some assurance that CMV is not a problem in the dataset.

Second, the questionnaire needed to be relatively parsimonious to encourage participation and the completion of all the items, which meant that only three of the eight dimensions identified by Downs and Hazen (1977) could be included. Broader results could have been obtained by using the full Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire. Last, the sample was non-probabilistic, so the results' generalizability is limited. Future studies could use more representative samples to increase the findings' stability.

Further research is needed in many related areas as satisfaction with internal communication has received little attention as a predictor of the employee–organization relationship, especially voluntary turnover. Studies can focus on overcoming the above limitations by assessing all internal communication dimensions' effects on turnover intention and collecting data at more than one time from representative samples of the research population. Researchers can also measure different communication dimensions' relative effectiveness as predictors of workers' turnover intent. For instance, Verčič and Vokić's (2018) recent study concentrated on positive perceptions of internal communication's impact on life satisfaction. The results show that all dimensions have a positive effect on workers' life satisfaction but that satisfaction with both informal communication and communication climate has the strongest links with the criterion variable. The present research's variables could be associated with similar effects. Their identification may help hoteliers to prioritize their investment in internal communication dimensions to maximize returns in the form of perceived organizational support, work satisfaction, and above all turnover intention.

Equally interesting findings could be generated by examining internal communication's impact on collective employee turnover, namely, "the aggregate levels of employee departures that occur within groups, work units, or organizations" (Hausknecht and Trevor 2011, p. 353). Oh and Chhinzer (2021) found that collective turnover can transmute turnover intentions into turnover behavior in the workplace. Raising the quality of internal communication may buffer turnover contagion's effects, which would facilitate more effective employee turnover management.

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