

Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, and Turnover Intention: The Mediating Effect of Work Stress on Female Employees

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Abstract. This research explores the determinants of turnover intention among female employees within the Indonesian cigarette industry, with a specific focus on PT Karya Timur Prima. The industry, a significant contributor to Indonesia's GDP, employs around 5.98 million workers. Female employees in this industry face unique challenges, such as high production target pressure, frequent role conflicts, and role ambiguity, making it an ideal context to study turnover intention. Drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action, this study examines the impact of role conflict, role ambiguity, and work stress on turnover intention. A conceptual framework is developed, and hypotheses are proposed based on existing literature. The study employs a quantitative approach with a sample of 232 female employees in PT Karya Timur Prima's production department. Data is analyzed using PLS-SEM. Results indicate that role conflict and role ambiguity significantly influence turnover intention, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating effect of work stress. The study highlights the vulnerability of female employees to work stress and its impact on turnover intention. Organizational commitment is identified as a potential mitigating factor. The findings emphasize the need for organizations to address role clarity, manage work stress, and foster organizational commitment to reduce turnover intentions among female employees in high-pressure industries like cigarette manufacturing.

Keyword. Turnover Intention, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Work stress, SEM-PLS

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1 Introduction

The cigarette industry in Indonesia, one of the largest industries and contributors to Indonesia's GDP, serves as a unique and intriguing context for this study. The large number of cigarette factories in Indonesia indicates that many people depend on cigarette factories for their livelihoods. The Ministry of Industry noted that the number of workers absorbed by the cigarette industry sector is around 5.98 million. This means that cigarette factories have an essential role in providing jobs for millions of workers, especially in tobacco-producing areas. The unique challenges employees face in this industry, such as high production target pressure, frequent role conflicts, and role ambiguity, make it an ideal and engaging context to study the factors influencing turnover intention. On the other hand, campaigns related to the dangers of smoking also continue to be massive in society. This situation raises a complex dilemma closely associated with the state of the workforce in the cigarette industry. This dilemma worsens with the sector facing less-than-ideal conditions, such as high production target pressure, frequent role conflicts, and role ambiguity affecting employee welfare. The challenges of an increasingly competitive industry often cause high stress for employees, so they intend to change jobs. The turnover intention is usually associated with negative perceptions of the organisation and frequently makes employees want to leave it. Appreciating the cigarette industry's significant role in providing jobs is essential [1]. Turnover intention, a central concept in this research, is defined as an employee's deliberate consideration of leaving their current position in pursuit of alternative employment opportunities. Within the distinct operational context of PT Karya Timur Prima, employees are frequently confronted with the challenge of choosing between enduring a high-pressure work environment and venturing into the uncertainty of new employment. This pressure, predominantly stemming from managerial demands for elevated production targets and stringent product quality standards, often results in diminished job satisfaction and increased turnover intention. Understanding this phenomenon is pivotal to the study, as it underpins the objective of identifying the factors influencing turnover intention and formulating effective strategies to mitigate its occurrence [2].

On the other hand, employees who consider that their work contributes to their life goals and that they enjoy their work tend to reduce their turnover intention [3]. Theoretically, employees' turnover intention does not appear suddenly. In the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), a person's actions to do something are based on three things, namely beliefs, attitudes, and intentions [4]. Intentions lead to how a person behaves in response to beliefs and attitudes. Studies reveal that the turnover intention is closely related to various psychological and organisational factors, which can be analysed from a TRA perspective. In TRA's view, when employees are committed to the organisation (attitude of commitment), the turnover intention among employees decreases. On the other hand, when commitment to the organisation is low, employees will tend to want to change jobs [5].

Turnover intention can be influenced by several factors, including role conflict, role ambiguity, and work stress. Role conflict typically arises when an individual is required to navigate overlapping or incompatible social roles, often resulting from competing demands on their time and psychological resources. This misalignment between expectations can create significant strain, contributing to job dissatisfaction and the intention to leave. [6]. At PT Karya Timur Prima, role conflict often occurs when many female employees must be able to balance work responsibilities with family obligations, such as mothers, wives, or children who have to care for their parents. Coupled with working hours that demand high levels of their presence, it further increases role conflict among female employees. Furthermore, empirical studies also reveal that when employees experience role conflict and fatigue, it will automatically increase employee turnover intentions [7]. Another study also explains that role conflict experienced by employees for years will cause fatigue not only on the physical

side but also on their emotions, which triggers employee turnover intention [8], [9]. Role ambiguity is another factor that increases the potential for turnover intention. Role ambiguity refers to the uncertainty experienced by individuals regarding the responsibilities and expectations of their careers. Role ambiguity is characterised by three main attributes: lack of information, clarity, and uncertainty [10]. The problems related to role ambiguity among female PT Karya Timur Prima employees refer to the ambiguity regarding the responsibilities they must accept, such as sorting raw materials in the early stages of production. The unclear instructions in sorting tobacco raw materials, sometimes quality "X" is not selected in the next stage, but sometimes it is allowed. This is reasonable because the company must also produce according to the target. This kind of ambiguity, if it occurs continuously and in many ways, will cause its level of stress, especially in a work environment with tight work targets. Furthermore, this role ambiguity also reduces the sense of security and triggers the turnover intention.

Based on several study results, role ambiguity is another factor causing turnover intention among female employees, in addition to role overload and conflict [11]. In its role, role ambiguity is often associated with employee emotional tension [12]. When employees feel confused about their role, which causes tension, they will feel worried about their future and start thinking about changing jobs [13]. In addition, emotional exhaustion also worsens when employees feel tired because they are always confused and experience role ambiguity; the turnover intention will also increase. [14], [15], [16].

Work-related stress also serves as a critical factor contributing to employee turnover intention. For female employees, this stress is often compounded by the dual burden of professional responsibilities and familial obligations, making them particularly vulnerable to heightened levels of work stress. In addition, problems in the industry and something that can potentially threaten the company's productivity can trigger stress [17]. Therefore, when employees experience high work stress, turnover intention will increase; on the other hand, high job satisfaction tends to reduce the impact on turnover intention [18]. Female employees at PT Karya Timur Prima are often faced with the physical demands of work and lack of career development opportunities, which consciously make them experience work stress. Over time, this will accumulate, causing emotional exhaustion and an even greater turnover intention. Studies on the impact of work stress confirm that women have a higher impact when compared to male employees [19]. This study highlights the vulnerability of work stress among female employees. This happens because women's emotional side is used more often than their rational side. There needs to be action to address this issue because if this happens continuously, employee job satisfaction will also be affected, resulting in a turnover intention [20]. Furthermore, the dire impact of work stress is also found in psychological pressure that causes problems with job satisfaction and impacts turnover intention [21], [22].

2 Literature review

To investigate our research questions, we draw on the existing literature on turnover intentions to derive hypotheses and construct a conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1.

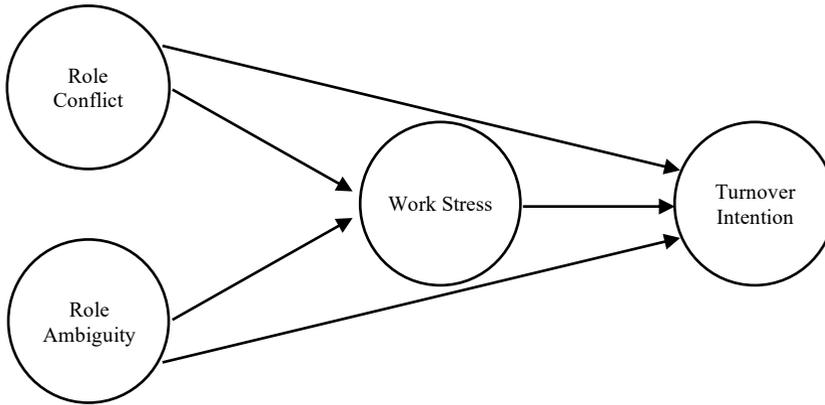


Fig. 1. Framework

2.1 Role Conflict on Turnover Intention

Role conflict exerts a significant influence on employee turnover intention, often arising from the pressures associated with navigating multiple and competing role demands. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a positive relationship between role conflict and turnover intention. Beyond job insecurity, role conflict emerges as a critical factor influencing employees' decisions to leave their workplace, creating notable disparities in turnover rates [23]. Moreover, role conflict contributes to heightened stress levels, adversely affecting job satisfaction and ultimately leading to turnover intention [24]. This association is further supported by findings from the software industry, where increased role conflict and burnout were shown to escalate turnover intentions [7].

In addition to its direct effects, role conflict has profound emotional repercussions. Prolonged exposure to role conflict often results in emotional exhaustion, which serves as a significant predictor of turnover intention [8]. Research underscores the cumulative effect of role conflict and stress, leading to employee fatigue and a higher likelihood of turnover [9]. Notably, while employees facing role conflict may not resign immediately, they tend to reach a critical threshold of emotional exhaustion, which becomes the primary catalyst for their decision to leave.

Studies in various sectors further highlight this relationship. In the hospitality industry, role stressors, including role conflict, are significant contributors to emotional exhaustion, subsequently increasing turnover intentions [25]. Similarly, in the education sector, stressors such as role ambiguity and work-family conflict are key drivers of turnover intention, illustrating how the interaction of multiple stressors amplifies the impact of role conflict [26]. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that:

H1: Role Conflict has a significant effect on Turnover Intention

2.2 Role Conflict on Work Stress

In a high-pressure work environment, work stress is always easy to find. Several aspects trigger it, one of which is role conflict. High expectations of several roles carried out by an employee simultaneously cause stress levels to increase. During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses experienced higher stress levels than doctors due to conflicting expectations and role responsibilities [14], [27]. These results also support other studies showing that role

ambiguity, which always accompanies role conflict, further exacerbates stress levels, leading to burnout and increased turnover intentions among employees [14], [28].

The influence of role conflict on work-related stress is well-documented across various sectors. For instance, research on Chinese local government employees highlights a significant correlation between role conflict, excessive role burden, and elevated levels of work stress and anxiety [29]. Similar findings have been reported in the banking sector, where role conflict positively correlates with work stress, underscoring the adverse effects of high job demands on employee well-being [30], [31]. Employees often face conflicting demands between work and family responsibilities, which exacerbates stress levels significantly [30].

Other variables, such as self-esteem and organizational tenure, also modulate the relationship between role conflict and work stress. Employees with higher self-esteem and longer tenure in an organization tend to manage role conflict more effectively, mitigating its negative effects on stress [32]. Conversely, prolonged exposure to unresolved role conflict, coupled with insufficient support mechanisms, can lead to severe psychological distress, including depression and anxiety [33]. This persistent strain often results in emotional exhaustion, diminished job satisfaction, and an increased likelihood of turnover intention. Based on these references, it can be concluded:

H2: Role Conflict has a significant effect on Work Stress

2.3 Role Ambiguity on Turnover Intention

In addition to role conflict, this study also predicts role ambiguity as a trigger in the emergence of employee turnover intentions. It can be explained that role ambiguity refers to the role uncertainty experienced by employees regarding job responsibilities, expectations, and performance criteria. This role uncertainty can indirectly affect employee turnover intentions. Role ambiguity is an internal factor that significantly affects turnover intentions, role overload and role conflict [11]. Role ambiguity also acts as a factor that further strengthens employee turnover intentions, which focuses on emotional tension in employees [12]. Employees experiencing low levels of role ambiguity are more likely to develop a sense of optimism and positivity regarding their future within the organization, which subsequently reduces their turnover intentions. In contrast, high levels of role ambiguity often lead to uncertainty and concern about their career prospects, thereby increasing the likelihood of turnover intentions [13].

Similar to role conflict, the relationship between role ambiguity and turnover intentions is significantly influenced by emotional exhaustion, which acts as a reinforcing factor. Numerous studies have highlighted emotional exhaustion as a critical mediator in this dynamic, amplifying the impact of role ambiguity on turnover intentions [15], [16]. When employees experience role ambiguity, they experience confusion and unclear job roles. This will trigger stress levels and make them emotionally exhausted. If this happens continuously, it will erode their commitment to the organisation, ultimately leading to an intention to move to a job that they consider to have stability and clarity of roles and responsibilities. Other studies also emphasise that role ambiguity can cause employee emotional exhaustion, especially in high-pressure environments such as health care, thereby increasing turnover intentions [14].

Furthermore, there needs to be an in-depth study related to role ambiguity, such as the dynamics of relationships in the workplace and organisational support for employees. Increasing role ambiguity can trigger the creation of higher perceptions of relationship conflict, which mediates the relationship between role ambiguity and turnover intentions [34]. The study emphasised that role ambiguity also hurts workplace interpersonal dynamics, which worsens employee retention. Therefore, organisations must address the impact of role

ambiguity to reduce its negative impact on employee retention. The study also found a positive correlation between role ambiguity and turnover intentions, emphasising the need for organisations to address role clarity to increase satisfaction and employee retention [35]. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that:

H3: Role Ambiguity has a significant effect on Turnover Intention

2.4 Role Ambiguity on Work Stress

Within organizations, role ambiguity is a significant contributor to work-related stress among employees. Role ambiguity arises when individuals lack clarity regarding their responsibilities, leading to confusion and heightened anxiety. Research consistently demonstrates a positive relationship between role ambiguity and work stress. For instance, a study in the Iranian petrochemical industry revealed that role ambiguity accounted for approximately 15% of employee work stress, significantly impacting both productivity and employee well-being [36]. Role ambiguity is also linked to detrimental work outcomes, such as reduced audit quality, reinforcing the broader understanding that unclear roles exacerbate employee stress [37]. The healthcare sector provides further evidence of this dynamic, where professionals are particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of role ambiguity [27]. This vulnerability often results in fatigue and an increased propensity to consider job changes [14].

Additionally, role ambiguity can indirectly influence unproductive behaviors, such as cyberloafing, by elevating work stress levels. For example, a study indicated that work stress mediated the relationship between role ambiguity, organizational justice, and employee behaviors, contributing to decreased productivity [38]. This highlights the need for organizations to address role clarity as a means of mitigating work stress and fostering more productive employee behaviors. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that:

H4: Role Ambiguity has a significant effect on Work Stress

2.5 Work Stress on Turnover Intention

An in-depth examination of work stress highlights its critical role in the organizational context, particularly regarding its triggers and consequences when not effectively managed. The literature underscores a strong connection between work stress and employee turnover intentions, a relationship that is particularly pronounced among female employees. Research has revealed that the impact of work stress on turnover intentions is greater for female managers than for their male counterparts [19]. This heightened susceptibility may stem from the tendency of women to engage their emotions more frequently than their rational side, leading to emotional fatigue and diminished job satisfaction.

Work stress negatively affects job satisfaction, which, in turn, amplifies turnover intentions [20]. This dynamic is especially evident in the healthcare sector, where studies demonstrate that work stress indirectly influences turnover intentions by lowering job satisfaction levels [39]. Nurses, for instance, often experience significant psychological stress stemming from institutional demands and inadequate knowledge of stress management strategies, resulting in decreased job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions [21], [22]. Moreover, organizational commitment plays a vital role in mitigating the negative effects of work stress on turnover intentions. When organizational commitment is well-maintained, it can buffer the adverse impact of work stress and foster employee retention [40]. Based on this description, it can be concluded:

H5: Work Stress has a significant effect on Turnover Intention

2.6 Role Conflict on Turnover Intention Mediated by Work Stress

The role of work stress in mediating the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention emerges as a critical variable in this study. When employees encounter role conflict, they often experience heightened pressure, which can significantly escalate stress levels. This stress adversely affects their emotional engagement with work, frequently leading to job dissatisfaction. An individual's inability to effectively manage stress exacerbates the situation, prompting them to consider seeking alternative employment. Research indicates that role stressors, including role conflict, are positively correlated with increased work stress, which, in turn, negatively impacts job satisfaction [41]. As role conflict intensifies, work stress increases, leading to diminished job satisfaction and ultimately higher turnover intentions. On a broader scale, the detrimental effects of role conflict extend to both individual well-being and organizational performance. High stress levels contribute to reduced productivity at the individual level and a corresponding rise in turnover intentions [42].

Further studies affirm that employees experiencing elevated levels of role conflict are more likely to feel stressed, which directly increases their intention to leave their current roles [43]. The mediating role of work stress is further substantiated by findings that emphasize its critical function in linking role conflict, work stress, and job satisfaction [28]. Additionally, research highlights the combined positive effect of work stress and role conflict on turnover intentions, underscoring the need for organizations to address work stress as a means of mitigating its adverse impact on employee retention [44]. Based on the above description, it can be concluded that:

H6: Work Stress significantly mediates Role Conflict on Turnover Intention

2.7 Role Ambiguity on Turnover Intention Mediated by Work Stress

The role of work stress as a mediator in the relationship between role ambiguity and turnover intention is interesting to explore in this study. Various studies emphasise that work stress increases the influence of role ambiguity on turnover intention. When role ambiguity occurs at work, it creates uncertainty, which causes employees to consider alternative job options due to reduced job satisfaction and involvement [12]. Decreased job satisfaction and continuous participation can cause high emotional stress for employees. Indirectly, excessive role ambiguity in circumstances like this further exacerbates the condition by increasing work stress among employees, causing employees to feel overwhelmed and encouraging them to leave their current positions [45]. This study also reinforced that role ambiguity and other stressors contribute significantly to work stress and encourage feelings of leaving [46].

Furthermore, work stress was validated as an essential mediator in this relationship. Empirical evidence emphasises that work stress directly impacts turnover intentions and indirectly reduces employee job satisfaction [47]. It has been proven that nurses and frontline health workers have a strong drive towards work exhaustion, which then causes turnover intentions also to strengthen [14], [15]. This is also reinforced by the fact that, empirically, work stress has a significant impact on turnover intentions, with job satisfaction acting as a mediating variable [48]. The same thing is also evidence that reasonable job satisfaction can relieve stress experienced by employees, thereby reducing turnover intentions [49]. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that:

H7: Role Ambiguity has a significant effect on Turnover Intention mediated by Work Stress

3 Research methods

This study employs a quantitative research approach, targeting a population of 550 female employees in the production department of PT Karya Timur Prima, a cigarette manufacturing company. A sample size of 232 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula [50]. The study examines four key variables measured through 21 items or indicators. Turnover intention, the dependent variable, is evaluated using five indicators: desire to seek alternative employment, intention to leave the current job, active job searching, satisfaction with the current role, and long-term plans within the company [51], [52]. The independent variable, role conflict, is assessed using three dimensions proposed by Greenhaus & Beutell (1985): time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based conflict. Role ambiguity is measured with six indicators, including understanding of work plans, goal alignment, clarity of responsibilities, and expectations within the organization [54]. The mediating variable, work stress, is evaluated using seven indicators outlined by Sunyoto (2015): unclear job responsibilities, work-related conflicts, time constraints, insufficient workspace, pressure for immediate task completion, unhealthy workplace conditions, and lack of support services.

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a statistical method suitable for small sample sizes. The analysis included evaluations of external loading, convergent validity, reliability, discriminant validity, the internal structural model, and hypothesis testing. External loading values exceeding 0.5 were considered significant. Convergent validity was assessed with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) threshold of 0.5, while discriminant validity was ensured with Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) values below 0.9. Reliability was deemed satisfactory if the composite reliability value exceeded 0.7 [56].

4 Result and Discussion

4.1 Result

4.1.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. Characteristic of Respondents

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	232	100%
Age (Year)		
Less than 20	32	13.79%
21-30	109	46.98%
31-40	79	34.05%
More than 40	12	5.17%
Year of Service (Year)		
Less than 1	12	5.17%
1-3	27	11.64%
3-5	56	24.14%
More than 5	137	59.05%

Among them, 46.98% fall within the age range of 21-30 years, and 59.05% have accumulated over five years of work experience.

4.1.2 Measurement Model (Outer Model)

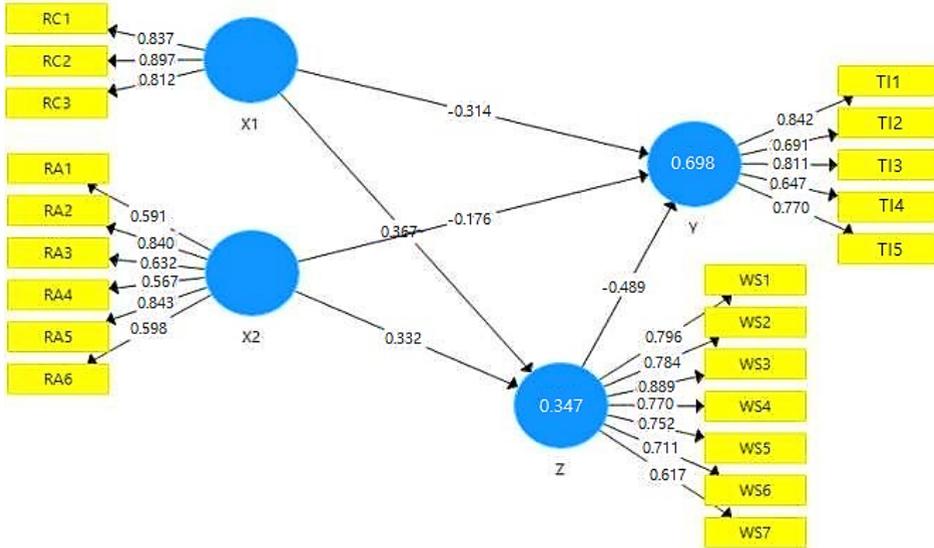


Fig. 2. PLS Analysis Diagram

Remark

- X1 : Role conflict
- X2 : Role Ambiguity
- Z : Work stress (mediator)
- Y : Turnover Intention

Each element or indicator presented in Figure 2 of the PLS analysis diagram demonstrates an external loading value exceeding 0.55, aligning with the predefined criteria. These results are further detailed and supported by the data in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Dimensions	X1	X2	Z	Y
RC1	0.837			
RC2	0.897			
RC3	0.812			
RA1		0.591		
RA2		0.840		
RA3		0.632		
RA4		0.567		
RA5		0.843		
RA6		0.598		

Dimensions	X1	X2	Z	Y
WS1			0.796	
WS2			0.784	
WS3			0.889	
WS4			0.770	
WS5			0.752	
WS6			0.711	
WS7			0.617	
TI1				0.842
TI2				0.691
TI3				0.811
TI4				0.647
TI5				0.770

The external loading table indicates that each element or indicator achieves a loading value exceeding 0.55, meeting the criteria outlined by [56].

4.1.3 Construct Reliability and Validity

The evaluation of construct reliability focuses on assessing the consistency of the latent variables' development. Construct reliability is considered acceptable when the obtained value exceeds 0.70, ensuring the robustness of the measurement. In this assessment, Cronbach's Alpha is used to represent the reliability level, providing an indication of the internal consistency of the constructs.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Construct Validity

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
X1	0.812	0.824	0.899	0.760
X2	0.797	0.819	0.831	0.511
Z	0.882	0.925	0.928	0.652
Y	0.823	0.843	0.856	0.597

Memon et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of consistently assessing the fundamental components of measurement metrics, employing Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability as essential tools. According to Sarstedt et al. (2019), reliability is established when the Composite Reliability value exceeds 0.7 and the Cronbach's Alpha value also surpasses the 0.7 threshold. The presented table confirms that all constructs achieve a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7, thereby validating their reliability. For example, the latent variable X2 exhibits a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.805, surpassing the threshold and demonstrating its reliability. This consistent pattern is observed across all variables, with each meeting the requisite criteria for reliability.

4.1.4 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity requires the factor dimensions to exhibit a sufficient level of correlation, evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and reflex indices. According to Sarstedt et al. (2019), an AVE value of 0.5 or higher is necessary to ensure that at least 50% of the variance in the construct is explained. The table demonstrates that all latent variables possess AVE values above the 0.5 threshold. For instance, the latent variable X2 has an AVE value of 0.511, confirming its convergent validity. This principle applies uniformly to all other variables with AVE values exceeding 0.5.

4.1.5 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses the strength of structural relationships within the reflex indices. It ensures that each index strongly correlates with its respective construct [58]. Among the methods used to test discriminant validity in SmartPLS, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio is considered more sensitive than cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Based on the multitrait-multimethod matrix, discriminant validity is confirmed when the HTMT value is significantly below 0.9 [59].

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

Dimensions	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1				
X2	0.279			
Y	0.653	0.584		
Z	0.468	0.499	0.812	

4.1.6 Structural Model (Inner Model)

Once the external model fulfills the necessary prerequisites, attention is directed toward evaluating the internal model within the structural framework. At this stage, the focus is primarily on examining the R-squared values of the variables. These values are crucial for assessing the model's explanatory power, indicating the proportion of variance in the dependent variables explained by the independent variables within the structural model. This evaluation provides insights into the robustness and predictive capabilities of the overall model.

Table 5. R-Square

Dimensions	R-Square
Y	0.721
Z	0.402

The table above indicates that the R-squared value for variable Y is 0.721, signifying that 72.1% of the variance in Y is accounted for by variables X1, X2, and Z. Furthermore, variables X1 and X2 collectively contribute to the variance in Z with a coefficient of 0.402, highlighting their significant influence within the model.

The hypothesis test result is as follows:

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

Relationship	Original sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P Values
X1 on Y	-0.317	-0.309	0.058	4.775	0.000
X1 on Z	0.356	0.376	0.061	5.632	0.000
X2 on Y	-0.187	-0.191	0.067	2.503	0.010
X2 on Z	0.342	0.360	0.073	4.190	0.000
Z on Y	0.497	-0.472	0.060	6.994	0.000
X1 on Y via Z	0.180	-0.182	0.042	4.240	0.000
X2 on Y via Z	0.132	-0.177	0.045	3.566	0.000

4.1.7 Direct Influence of Role Conflict on Turnover Intention

The analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between role conflict and turnover intention, with a p-value of 0.000, well below the 0.05 threshold. The initial sample estimate of -0.317 further substantiated this inverse association, indicating that as role conflict increases, turnover intention decreases, and vice versa. Consequently, Hypothesis 1, which posited that role conflict influences turnover intention, was supported. These findings suggest that higher levels of role conflict are associated with a reduced likelihood of employees leaving the organization. The results align with those reported by Maryadi et al. (2024) and Asfahani (2022).

4.1.8 Direct Influence of Role Conflict on Work Stress

The findings identified a significant positive relationship between role conflict and work stress, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.000. The initial sample estimate of 0.356 highlighted a positive association, indicating that increased role conflict correlates with heightened work stress. Hypothesis 2, which proposed that role conflict influences work stress, was thus confirmed. These results suggest that escalating levels of role conflict contribute to a corresponding rise in work stress, consistent with the studies of Arshad et al. (2020) and Wahjoedi (2023).

4.1.9 Direct Influence of Role Ambiguity on Turnover Intention

A significant negative relationship was observed between role ambiguity and turnover intention, as demonstrated by a p-value of 0.010. The initial sample estimate of -0.187 indicated that as role ambiguity increases, turnover intention decreases, and vice versa. Hypothesis 3, which proposed that role ambiguity impacts turnover intention, was validated. These findings align with the studies conducted by De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia (2017a) and Shin et al. (2020).

4.1.10 Direct Influence of Role Ambiguity on Work Stress

The relationship between role ambiguity and work stress was statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000. The initial sample estimate of 0.342 indicated a positive correlation, suggesting that increased role ambiguity is associated with greater work stress. Hypothesis 4, which proposed that role ambiguity influences work stress, was supported. These findings are consistent with those of Rehman & Wajidi (2023) and Piasecki (2024).

4.1.11 *Direct Influence of Work Stress on Turnover Intention*

The results confirmed a significant positive relationship between work stress and turnover intention, with a p-value of 0.000. The observed sample estimate of 0.497 demonstrated that as work stress increases, turnover intention also rises. Hypothesis 5, which proposed a direct link between work stress and turnover intention, was supported. These findings are consistent with the studies of Khoir et al. (2024) and Marlapa & Endri (2024).

4.1.12 *Indirect Influence of Role Conflict on Turnover Intention Mediated by Work Stress*

The study identified a statistically significant indirect relationship between role conflict and turnover intention mediated by work stress, supported by a p-value of 0.000. The initial sample estimate of 0.180 highlighted a positive pathway, confirming Hypothesis 6. This finding indicates that increased role conflict contributes to higher work stress, which in turn heightens turnover intention. These results emphasize the critical mediating role of work stress in the relationship between role conflict and turnover intention, extending the focus of prior research that primarily examined direct associations.

4.1.13 *Indirect Influence of Role Ambiguity on Turnover Intention Mediated by Work Stress*

A statistically significant indirect relationship was also observed between role ambiguity and turnover intention, mediated by work stress, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000. The initial sample estimate of 0.132 demonstrated a positive pathway linking role ambiguity, work stress, and turnover intention, validating Hypothesis 7. This suggests that as role ambiguity increases, it contributes to elevated work stress, ultimately leading to a rise in turnover intention. The findings underscore the mediating role of work stress in this relationship, offering a nuanced perspective beyond the direct associations explored in previous studies.

4.2 Discussion

The results of the data analysis showed that reducing role conflict, role ambiguity, and work stress did not significantly impact increasing turnover intention. In fact, in this study conducted in a cigarette factory dominated by women, role conflict tends to reduce turnover intention. This is because workers, despite facing role conflict, feel that their jobs provide essential financial stability, especially in an industrial environment that does not have many alternative job options that offer similar benefits [68]. In addition, role conflict often encourages workers to adapt better to the work environment, strengthen solidarity, and create a sense of belonging to the organisation [69]. Thus, although role conflict is identified, workers tend to maintain their positions rather than look for other jobs that may offer more significant uncertainty. Developing skills, conducting effective workload evaluations, and fostering open communication are critical strategies that enable employees to navigate conflicts effectively without escalating turnover intentions. These approaches equip workers with the tools and support needed to address challenges constructively, enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Work stress emerged as the most influential factor impacting turnover intention, followed by role conflict and role ambiguity, collectively accounting for 72.1% of the overall effect. However, role conflict and ambiguity contributed only 40.2% to the total variance in work stress, with the remaining portion attributed to other variables. The findings indicate that employees experiencing role conflict often felt disengaged from the organization, fostering a

sense of inefficacy. This disengagement was frequently linked to unclear responsibilities, which led to conflicts during task execution. These challenges were attributed to several organizational shortcomings, including ineffective information systems, ambiguous leadership directives, strained workplace interactions, inadequate skills, and the pressures associated with multitasking [62], [70].

In observing the aspect of role ambiguity, it was found that role ambiguity reduces employee turnover intention in the context of a cigarette factory dominated by women. This can be explained through several specific indicators that emerged from the questionnaire responses related to role ambiguity. Although job descriptions are not always clear or role expectations are not fully understood, some employees feel that this uncertainty provides flexibility in how they carry out their duties. Without strict boundaries, they can find creative solutions or adjust their work methods, reducing the pressure from overly specific demands. In addition, role ambiguity can strengthen solidarity among coworkers in a relatively homogeneous work environment, such as a cigarette factory dominated by women. Role ambiguity often forces them to collaborate, discuss, and support each other more often, thus forming a strong sense of togetherness in the workplace. Furthermore, some employees feel that role ambiguity allows them to participate more in determining their way of working, which makes them feel more autonomous and valued [71]. This autonomy, despite stemming from a lack of clear guidance, has the potential to enhance employee loyalty to the organization, reduce turnover intentions, and foster a heightened sense of individual accountability for their work's success. These findings contrast with prior research suggesting that role ambiguity contributes to increased turnover intentions. [72], [73].

Unclear job descriptions significantly contribute to work stress and insufficient workspace conditions. This aligns with findings by Mohd-Shamsudin et al. (2024), who observed that employees experiencing stress often feel heightened pressure in fulfilling their responsibilities. External factors, such as perceived threats or environmental challenges, can exacerbate anxiety, increasing employees' inclination to leave the organization. To address these issues, an effective strategy is essential to mitigate turnover intention and alleviate work stress. Management must proactively understand and address employee sentiments and preferences to foster a sense of involvement and loyalty to the organization. Employee dissatisfaction with managerial practices can escalate intentions to seek alternative employment opportunities [75]. Furthermore, role stress, encompassing role conflict and ambiguity, exacerbates turnover intentions. Excessive workloads or tight deadlines intensify this stress, prompting employees to consider changing jobs. While companies must meet competitive market demands, unrealistic work targets can lead to higher turnover intentions if employees perceive them as unattainable or overwhelming.

Observations indicate that employees facing excessively high workloads often experience frustration and decreased motivation, which significantly heightens their intention to leave the organization [76]. They emphasised that when employees face role conflict, role ambiguity, and prolonged work stress, a lack of skills and a clear understanding of role expectations can strengthen the urge to look for another job. Managers can reduce turnover intention by providing clarity about their roles and contributions. A supportive work environment and roles that fit employees can help reduce the desire to move. Therefore, businesses should clearly explain job duties and requirements before recruiting the right candidate [77].

Of the five questionnaire items related to turnover intention, it is known that respondents tend to give answers that reflect the desire to seek opportunities elsewhere. This can be seen from their tendency to be willing to pursue other jobs in response to the work pressure they experience. Interestingly, this is in line with previous research, which states that work pressure and dissatisfaction with the work environment are often the primary triggers for the desire to change jobs [78]. The lowest scores were recorded on questionnaire items that

focused on thoughts of leaving their current job, where respondents showed doubt or uncertainty in maintaining their position. In addition, questionnaire items related to actively seeking new jobs revealed that some respondents had begun exploring other opportunities outside the company. On the other hand, there were some indications of decreased satisfaction with their current jobs, primarily related to workload and perceived responsibility. This directly impacts long-term plans in the company, where respondents tend to show a lack of commitment to staying for a long time, indicating a relatively high potential for turnover intention.

This approach allows companies to reduce turnover intention caused by role ambiguity effectively [51]. Implementing a clear and structured management system at all company levels is essential to reduce turnover intention triggered by role ambiguity mediated by work stress. A well-functioning management system can clarify employee roles and responsibilities, minimise role ambiguity, and create a more stable and supportive work environment, thereby reducing work stress and ultimately reducing turnover intentions [64]; [25]. In addition, implementing a customised approach, such as a Daily Management System aligned with the organisation's needs, can help reduce stress due to role ambiguity and reduce the tendency of employees to seek other job opportunities. This strategy is in line with the recommendation of [79]; [52] Who stated that an approach focusing on reducing work stress can reduce turnover intention. Consistent leadership support for operational processes also plays a vital role in increasing job satisfaction, thereby reducing stress due to role ambiguity and fostering long-term employee commitment to company goals.

5 Conclusion and Implication

In conclusion, the findings of this study reveal critical relationships between role conflict, role ambiguity, work stress, and turnover intention among female employees in the production department of PT Karya Timur Prima, a cigarette manufacturing company. Firstly, role conflict exhibits a direct negative effect on turnover intention, indicating that as role conflict increases, turnover intention decreases. However, role conflict also demonstrates a positive relationship with work stress, which indirectly heightens turnover intention when mediated by stress. Similarly, while role ambiguity directly reduces turnover intention, it positively influences work stress, adversely impacting employee effectiveness and indirectly increasing turnover intention through the mediation of stress. These results suggest that although role conflict and ambiguity may directly reduce turnover intention, their contribution to heightened work stress indirectly amplifies it.

The study underscores the complex and mediated interplay between these variables, offering valuable contributions to the theoretical understanding of the psychosocial dimensions of workplace performance. However, the scope of this research is limited to a single industry, which may constrain the generalizability of its findings to other sectors. Despite this limitation, the results provide meaningful insights into local corporate management practices and significantly enhance the understanding of the relationship between work stress and employee turnover intention.

Given the indication that other factors may play a dominant role in influencing turnover intention, future research should explore a broader set of variables across diverse industries. Employing a mixed-methods approach could yield deeper insights into these relationships, potentially enhancing the statistical significance of the findings. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of turnover intention as a central variable in analyzing these dynamics. Including turnover intention in future research frameworks could offer a more nuanced understanding of the drivers behind employees' decisions to leave their current positions. By adopting a more expansive approach, future studies can contribute to a

comprehensive understanding of the interactions between employees and organizational factors within the context of turnover intention.

6 References

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