EXAMINING THE ROLE OF MEANINGFUL WORK IN REDUCING WITHDRAWAL INTENTIONS AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS: A STUDY ON DECENT WORK AND WORK VOLITION

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Abstract
This study explores the mediating role of meaningful work in the relationships between decent work, work volition, and withdrawal intention among frontline healthcare workers in Pakistan. While previous research highlights the positive impact of work volition on fulfilling work experiences, its combined effect with meaningful and decent work on reducing withdrawal intention remains under-researched. This study addresses this gap by drawing on the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT). Data were collected via a survey of 256 healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted using Smart PLS3 to test the hypothesized relationships. The analysis reveals that meaningful work significantly mediates the relationship between work volition and withdrawal intention, as well as between decent work and withdrawal intention. Of the five hypotheses, three were supported, demonstrating meaningful work's critical role in reducing withdrawal intentions among healthcare workers, especially under challenging conditions like a pandemic. These findings suggest that healthcare institutions can mitigate withdrawal intentions by fostering a sense of purpose and decency in employees' roles. Enhancing meaningful and decent work experiences may improve retention and job satisfaction, offering actionable insights for healthcare workforce management. This study contributes empirical evidence on the interactions between work volition, decent work, and meaningful work. Applying PWT offers insights that can inform practices to strengthen healthcare workers' sense of purpose, thereby improving workforce stability in demanding settings.
Keywords: Work volition, Decent work, Meaningful work, Withdrawal intention, Psychology of Working Theory.

1. Introduction

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused serious challenges to the global workforce. This disease is not only a public health crisis and global pandemic but it has brutally affected the global economy (Kazancoglu et al., 2024). The influence of this disease on society and the economy can be observed through worldwide city lockdowns, airline suspensions, and restraints on labor mobility (Purwanto, 2020; Shafi et al., 2020). Additionally, a rise in unemployment, a reduction in income, and disruptions in transportation, service, and manufacturing industries are some underlined consequences of this pandemic (Pak et al., 2020). Therefore, there is a need to better understand the influence of the pandemic on work and careers to guide individuals in handling this dynamic situation (Ren et al., 2024). This pandemic disease has affected all the sectors of Pakistan, specifically the healthcare sector (Singhal et al., 2024). This is because

healthcare workers (HCWs) have to deal at the front and are among the most vulnerable groups (Singhal et al., 2024). The virus's rapidly changing responses severely influence well-being (Cabarkapa et al., 2020) and increase HCWs' susceptibility to COVID-19 (Saini et al., 2024). HCWs, particularly nurses who treat COVID-19 patients in underdeveloped countries, are at significant risk of getting the virus leading to increased psychological distress among workers (Sarfraz et al., 2022) and elevated withdrawal intention (Menon & Padhy, 2020). The intention to withdraw from work is a major problem in the healthcare sector (Potira et al., 2019; Thomas & Allen, 2024) and is an understudied issue. Considering the significant role of HCWs in tackling the pandemic, this study examines how to reduce their withdrawal intention.

The major transformation caused by the COVID-19 plague provoked the workforce to be adaptive (Blustein et al.,2023). However, these changes challenge the paradigm of work such as its role in sufficing needs for security, survival, and meaning (Kniffin et al., 2021). Studies suggest that HCWs who find their work meaningful are likelier to report higher job satisfaction, performance, work engagement, commitment, and lower withdrawal intention (Allan et al., 2018). Meaningful work increases HCWs' motivation and psychological connection with their workplace, enabling them to understand their contribution (Carton, 2018; Jiang & Johnson, 2018). Researchers also argue that meaningful work is a basic need if unfulfilled, and may lead to adverse outcomes such as a decline in job performance, substance abuse, alienation, and suicidal ideation (Allan et al., 2018; Yeoman, 2014; Harlow et al., 1986). During Covid-19 workers confront persistent setbacks such as inequality, uneven access to purposeful careers, boredom, low self-esteem, and stress (Allan et al., 2021; McWhirter & McWha-Hermann 2021; Christie et al.,2021). These hindrances in the workplace reinforce the need to understand the key sources of meaningful work to enhance the HCWs' experience of meaningful work. The question of what makes HCWs' work meaningful remains an understudied topic.

Accordingly, recognition of significant predictors that contribute to meaningful work is crucial for organizations and employees to enhance well-being, motivation, and commitment (Martela & Pessi, 2018; Bailey et al., 2017). In here, the psychology of working theory (PWT; ILO, 2008, 2012) offers one significant theoretical framework to recognize the predictors of meaningful work. The central premise of the framework is that contextual factors, work fulfillment, and well-being are interrelated variables. PWT highlights that psychological resources such as volition at work and access to decent work are favorable in fulfilling work (Blustein, 2001; Duffy et al., 2016). Fulfillment at work is one of the key focuses of PWT (Duffy et al., 2016) and in this research, we investigate one facet of fulfillment of work: meaningful work. From the PWT perspective, two significant aspects contributing to meaningful work are work volition and decent work.

Volition work refers to the perception that an individual has freedom in career decision-making (Duffy et al., 2017). Volition work is a psychological construct that might be vital for meaningful work. Particularly, embedded in the concept of meaningful work is that individuals have autonomy (feeling of volition) at a job that provides them an opportunity to express themselves (Martela et al., 2021). Work volition enables individuals to develop and achieve career goals because of these features, work volition has appeared to impact job satisfaction positively (Giuffre et al., 2024). Previous literature has found that volition work has a positive relation with calling (Duffy & Autin, 2013). These studies suggest that work volition may nurture the experience of meaningful work. Hence, one of the purposes of the study is to study how HCWs; volition at work contributes to meaningful work.

A second vital construct in access to meaningful work is decent work. Work that provides rest during working hours, adequate healthcare, safe working conditions, social protection, and adequate compensation is known as decent work (Adekiya, 2024; Duffy et al., 2016). When all of these needs are fulfilled, workers sense higher-level job experiences such as meaningful work. Past researchers have found that decent work has a significant link with self-determination which in turn results in meaningful work (Duffy et al., 2016). These studies suggest that volition at work may be the key variable of meaningful work. Therefore, one of the aims of the study is to examine how the HCWs' experience of decent work contributes to meaningful work.

This study extends more than just examining the issue of withdrawal intention and predictors of meaningful work. The research uniquely asserts that meaningful work mediates the relationship between predictors and withdrawal intention. The psychological mechanism of meaningful work impacting the well-being of individuals is underexamined in the studies (Lysova et al., 2019; Mcllveen et al., 2021). Also, empirical studies investigating the meaningful work's mediating impact on the relationship between work volition, decent work, and withdrawal intention of healthcare workers are scant (Allan et al., 2019; Su et al., 2023). The research examines this mechanism based on PWT (Duffy et al., 2016; Blustein et al., 2016), which states that work fulfillment driven by contextual factors influences individuals' well-being.

Despite the limited evidence of the mechanism, existing literature validates the anticipation. The significance of meaningful work for occupational well-being has been proven by vocational scholars (Allan et al., 2019). Meaningful work by decreasing the influence of work stress might increase the mental health of workers (Allan et al., 2016). Similarly, it is argued that characteristics of decent work will reduce the intention to leave by fostering and maintaining a sense of meaningful work (Fouche et al., 2017). Taken together, these studies' findings offer validation of mediating mechanisms of meaningful work. This means that when individuals perceive that their work is decent and has volition it increases their experience of meaningful work which in turn reduces their withdrawal intention. Thus, one of the objectives of the research is to examine how meaningful work mediates the relationship between predictors and withdrawal intention.

2. Literature Review and hypothesis development

2.1. Decent work and meaningful work

The psychology of working theory is extracted specifically from guidelines presented by the International Labor Organization on decent work, aiming to develop the conceptualization of decent work at an individual level (Duffy et al., 2024; ILO, 2008, 2012). Researchers view decent work as the possibility for individuals to access jobs that facilitate growth, self-development, and subjective well-being (Guichard & Di Fabio, 2015). Moreover, the opportunity to access decent work is a basic factor in the health and well-being of workers (Guichard, 2013, Yan et al., 2024). PWT focuses on both the predictors of decent work and its implications. This theory asserts that in individuals' social and cultural environments, psychological variables, and structural factors such as income, family wealth, and marginalization experiences can limit or enhance their access to decent work (Dinis et al., 2024; R. D. Duffy et al., 2016). The authors discovered that these components are interconnected, signifying that they are more likely to coexist in professions that are deemed meaningful (Duffy et al., 2017). However, historically, poor populations have had less access to decent work, making it more difficult for them to find meaningful and satisfying work (Blustein et al., 2016). Meaningful work has also been linked to decent employment and their accompanying values and mechanisms of suitable pay (Yeh & Wang, 2024). Furthermore, according to previous studies, the life satisfaction of workers has strong linkages to decent work

(Autin et al., 2019). The Psychology of Working Framework is founded on the concept that common human needs are linked to well-being (Blustein, 2001). and research has shown that meaningful work is a key component of well-being (Rosso et al., 2010).

Decent work satisfies individuals' need for work satisfaction and supports their psychological well-being. It highlights that decent work offers individuals self-determination that allows them control over work which in turn leads to fulfilling and meaningful work (Duffy et al., 2016). Previous studies found that meaningful work positively relates to decent work and its five dimensions (Duffy et al., 2017; Allan et al., 2019). Thus, we propose the following:

H1: Decent work has a significant positive relationship with Meaningful work.

2.2. Volition work and meaningful work

Volition work is asserted as an individual's motivation or freedom of decision-making capacity regarding the job. The decision of healthcare workers regarding their jobs is based on their perceived decision-making capacity, and this kind of decision-making ability is based on internal motivation which is referred to as work volition (Haggard & Lau, 2013). Work volition has recently been used in research to assess worker satisfaction. According to the findings, work volition also affects the association between career adaptability (feeling adaptable in one's job) and academic satisfaction (Duffy et al., 2015; Mortimer, 2023). Recent literature uses the notion of work volition to judge the level of worker satisfaction. Work volition has predicted job satisfaction among healthcare workers even when they are facing discrepancies and barriers from their related work (Duffy et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2023). Healthcare employees with lesser volition have more options to choose occupations that best meet their aspirations, values, and interests because they face fewer barriers in their career decision-making process (Duffy et al., 2015). In contrast, healthcare workers who engage in more volition work are likelier to experience enhanced personal motivation and perceive their work as meaningful (Allan et al., 2014; Duffy et al., 2015; Duffy et al., 2016).

Work volition is significantly associated with job satisfaction, core self-evaluation, person-environment fit, positive affect, and work meaning among workers (Duffy et al., 2015; Duffy et al., 2013). Researchers suggest that most workers work for survival to obtain food, clothing, and housing (Blustein, 2023). However, some workers expect much more from their work such as a sense of autonomy that increases individual meaningfulness of work (Lysova et al., 2023). The sense of volition was the fundamental factor in the experience of intrinsic motivation and autonomy which in turn increased work meaningfulness (Rosso et al., 2010). Therefore, prior research showed a strong correlation between work volition and meaningful work (Allan et al., 2014; Taylor et al., 2023). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis

H2: Volition work has a significant positive relationship with meaningful work.

2.3. Meaningful work and withdrawal intention

Meaningful work is viewed as the workers' perception that their work is important and has a significant contribution (Rurkkhum & Detnakarin, 2024). When activities of work are consistent with the healthcare workers' strengths and values then they perceive their work as meaningful (VAN, 2024). Researchers have found Meaningful work has favorable outcomes such as well-being (Pollet, 2016) and decreased stress and turnover intention (Heath et al., 2024). According to the literature on emotions in the workplace workers' capacities to deal with events and affectivity impact their withdrawal intentions (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017). Work activities that are aligned with healthcare workers' talents and values are more likely to be meaningful to them (Jiang et al.,

2024). Furthermore, past research has shown that meaningful work can help healthcare workers make sense of their professions (Asik-Dizdar & Esen, 2016) and increase workplace engagement. Articles examining the relationship between meaningful work and withdrawal intentions highlighted that meaningful work is linked to a lower level of intention to quit (Fairlie, 2011). Withdrawal intent expresses feelings and decisions about a profession that are precursors to the initiation of turnover behavior. Withdrawal intentions are a predictor of actual turnover intentions (Islam et al., 2019). Previous research shows a negative relation between meaningful work and withdrawal intention (Allan et al., 2019). So, we propose the following hypothesis

H3: Meaningful work has a significant negative relationship with withdrawal intention**.**

2.4. The mediating role of meaningful work on the relationship between decent work and withdrawal intention

Researchers contemplate meaningful work as work that provides a sense of self-development, self-connection, social identity, and self-actualization (Michaelson, et al.,2014; Rosso et al., 2010). Researchers have argued that decent work enhances an individual's self-determination which makes their work meaningful (Blustein, 2001). Furthermore, research shows that decent work can lower workers' conflicts and turnover rates dramatically (Blustein et al., 2023). It can increase workplace engagement and inspiration (Tao et al., 2016; Chunguo & Gang, 2018) which ultimately increases work meaningfulness and reduces intention to leave. Therefore, the study proposes that meaningful work mediates the relationship between decent work and withdrawal intention.

It is suggested that the individual's overall workplace environment or job has a significant impact on healthcare employees' affective assessments of their organization and withdrawal intention (Tan et al., 2024). Workers in insecure workplace conditions are more inclined to willingly leave their existing employers (Cottini et al., 2011). If the employer does not take the necessary steps to improve working conditions, workers do not want to abandon their withdrawal intentions (Tan et al., 2024).

Also, researchers found that all aspects of decent work such as job security, standardized working conditions, and fair pay can influence withdrawal intentions (Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019). Furthermore, research has shown that job patterns (Searle & Parker, 2013) and interactions with coworkers (Hur & Abner, 2024) that determine work meaningfulness have an impact on workers' intentions to leave the workplace. This suggests that when healthcare workers perceive their work as decent that is reasonable pay, job security, and suitable working conditions it increases their work meaningfulness which as a result lowers their withdrawal intention. So, we hypothesized that.

H4: Meaningful work mediates the relationship between decent work and withdrawal intention.

2.5. The mediating role of meaningful work on the relationship between volition work and withdrawal intention

Work volition is defined as the perceived capacity of an individual to make occupational choices despite constraints (Duffy et al., 2024). This term refers to the fact that many people are restricted in their professional choices due to financial or structural constraints (O'Campo et al., 2024). Healthcare workers in lower socioeconomic classes face more restrictions when it comes to making professional decisions (Allan et al., 2014). Researchers identified a positive link between volition work and career adaptability (Duffy et al., 2016). Other studies also found positive relationships between volition work-related variables and career adaptability, such as self-efficacy in occupational choice (Duffy & Douglass, 2015) and, self-efficacy in job search (Inegbedion, 2024).

Healthcare workers with high levels of volition work treat their work as a calling and acquire meaning from it (Allan et al., 2014; Kim & Lee, 2022). People who believe their work is meaningful have higher levels of life satisfaction, and lower levels of anxiety and burnout at work (Douglass et al., 2016; Sudarti et al., 2021).

Furthermore, these employees are more engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their jobs (Douglass et al., 2016; Fairlie, 2011; Sudarti et al., 2021). As a result, their work performance will improve, and they will be less likely to withdraw from their work (Allan et al., 2018). Studies found that when healthcare workers are satisfied with their work it reduces their intention to withdraw (Masum et al., 2016; Sudarti et al., 2021). Also, in the relationship between work volition and job satisfaction, meaningful work has been discovered to play a mediation role (Duffy et al., 2015; Inegbedion, 2024). So, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Meaningful work mediates the relationship between volition work and withdrawal intention.

Research framework

3.
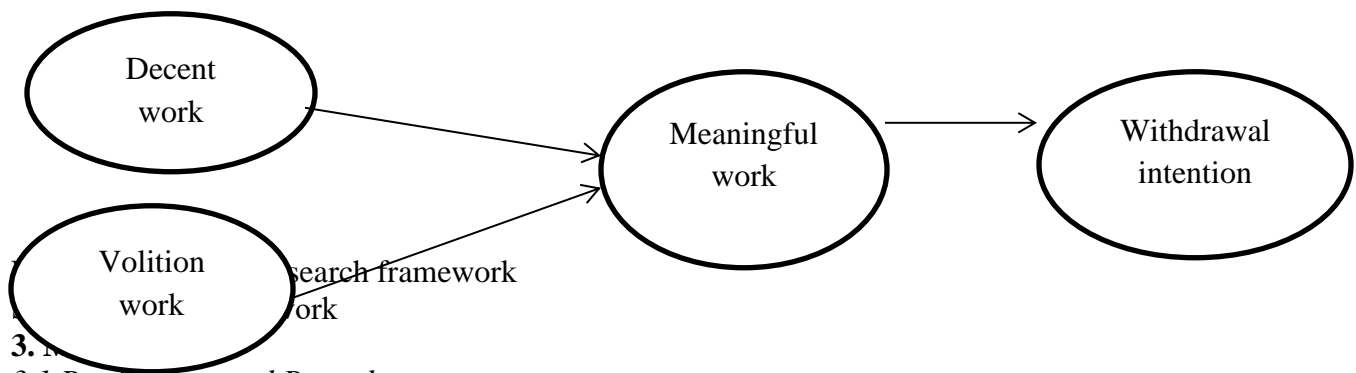
3.1 Participants and Procedure

For the present study, the data was collected from frontline healthcare workers in Pakistan. In this survey, 350 questionnaires were distributed in the first wave and 320 questionnaires were distributed in the second wave. Out of 350 questionnaires we received around 271 responses in the first wave and 269 in the second wave of the study. From both waves, 256 responses were retained for analysis. To fulfill the aims and objectives of this study, the quantitative research approach was employed. It is a type of research that involves the structured examination of phenomena by accumulating numeric data and then performing several statistical, mathematical, or computational processes to analyze that data. The data for the research was gathered through the survey method and it was conducted by distributing the structured questionnaires to our potential respondents. Smart PLS 3 was used for the data analysis.

3.2 Instruments

Five-point Likert scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree was used to gather data regarding each variable. Volition work was measured using 13 items adopted from Duffy et al., (2012). Decent work was measured using 15 items adapted from Duffy et al., (2017). Meaningful work was measured using 10 items adopted from Steger et al., (2012). Withdrawal intention was measured using 3 items adopted from Blau, (1985).

3.3 Descriptive statistics

SPSS was used to analyze respondents' descriptive statistics. Out of the participants, 137 (53.51%) identified as male and 119 (46.48%) as female. The average age was between 26-35 years, with an age range of 18 to 65 and above. Age distribution included: 18-25 years (49, 19.14%), 26-35 years (103, 40.23%), 36-45 years (54, 21.09%), 46-55 years (32, 12.5%), 56-65 years (9, 3.51%), and 65 and above years (9, 3.51%). Occupations included doctors (101, 39.45%), nurses (32,

12.5%), pharmacists (30, 11.7%), respiratory therapists (15, 5.85%), community health workers (20, 7.81%), administrators (18, 7.03%), lab technicians (27, 10.54%), pharmacy salesmen (1, 0.4%), dermatologists (2, 0.8%), ward boys (7, 2.73%), accountants (2, 0.8%), and physiotherapists (1, 0.4%). Marital status: single (80, 31.25%), married (142, 55.46%), divorced (26, 10.15%), and widowed (8, 3.125%).

4. Data Analysis

The study utilized partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) for analyzing the gathered data. The PLS-SEM technique involves the evaluation of the measurement mode and structural model (Henseler et al., 2009). Also, this technique is significant in predicting proposed relationships (Marko & Erik, 2019). Thus, our study utilized employing Smart PLS 3 software to examine the proposed study model.

4.1 Assessment of Measurement Model

Assessment of the measurement model involves the evaluation of the outer model. The model examines the linkages between variables and their indicators. Reliability was assessed using individual item reliabilities and internal consistency through composite reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and individual factor loadings (Hair et al., 2014). All AVE values of constructs were above 0.5 thus confirming constructs validity. Factor loadings indicated individual item reliability; items with loadings below 0.7 were deleted. The accepted threshold for individual item reliability is generally 0.70 or above, but values greater than 0.50 are acceptable (Hair et al., 2014). In this analysis, two items had factor loadings below 0.5, while the remaining items exceeded this threshold. Table 4.1 shows that the required criteria for factor loading, CR, and AVE were met in the current study.

Table 1. Reliability and validity of Constructs

Variables	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	(AVE)
Decent Work	DW4	0.799	0.912	0.528
	DW5	0.410		
	DW8	0.828		
	DW9	0.822		
	DW10	0.787		
	DW11	0.799		
	DW12	0.794		
	DW13	0.659		
	DW14	0.622		
	DW15	0.631		
Meaningful Work	MW1	0.637	0.904	0.519
	MW2	0.649		
	MW3	0.673		
	MW4	0.818		
	MW5	0.809		
	MW7	0.438		
	MW9	0.826		

	MW10	0.821		
Volition Work	VW3	0.705	0.889	0.510
	VW4	0.737		
	VW6	0.692		
	VW7	0.715		
	VW8	0.721		
	VW9	0.752		
	VW10	0.761		
	VW12	0.686		
	VW13	0.652		
Withdrawal Intention	WI1	0.869	0.811	0.679
	WI2	0.850		
	WI3	0.750		

Source(s): PLS-SEM output of measurement model.

Further, the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation is used for assessing discriminant validity. The analysis in this study as indicated by Table 2 below shows that the values of HTMT are less than 0.9 (Henseler et al., 2015), indicating higher discriminant validity.

Table 2. HTMT Ratios

Variables	DC	MW	VW	WI
DC	1			
MW	0.693	1		
VW	0.838	0.558	1	
WI	0.280	0.497	0.207	1

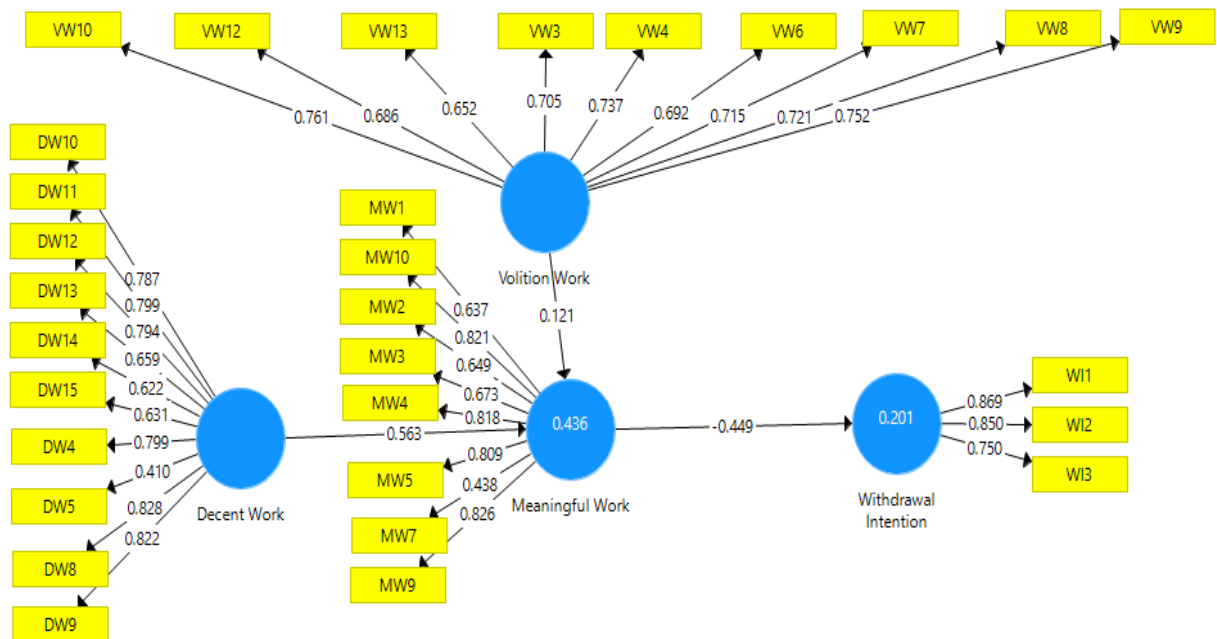Source(s): PLS-SEM output of measurement model.

Figure 2. Measurement model

4.2 Assessment of Structural Model

Assessment of the structural model involves testing the anticipated hypothesis. For this, the bootstrapping procedure was carried out to examine the significance of the link between hypotheses (Henseler et al., 2009). The formulated hypotheses are exhibited in Figure 3. In H1, we anticipated that decent work is positively related to meaningful work. This hypothesis was supported, with β = 0.569, and P = 0.000. In H2 we proposed volition work is positively related to meaningful work. This hypothesis with, β = 0.119, and P = 0.069 is insignificant. Moreover, H3 proposed that meaningful work is negatively related to withdrawal intention was also supported by the findings (β = -0.453, P = 0.000). Figure 3 and Table 3 can verify the acceptance and rejection of these hypotheses.

Table 3. Direct path testing

No.	Hypotheses	β	Std. Error	t-value	P value	5%	95%	Decision
H1	**Decent Work-> Meaningful Work**	0.569	0.073	7.770**	0.000	0.436	0.677	**Supported**
H2	**Volition Work -> Meaningful Work**	0.119	0.078	1.480	0.069	-0.021	0.235	**Not Supported**
H3	**Meaningful Work ->Withdrawal Intention**	-0.453	0.058	7.777**	0.000	-0.538	-0.346	**Supported**

T values >1.645 (** p values < 0.05)
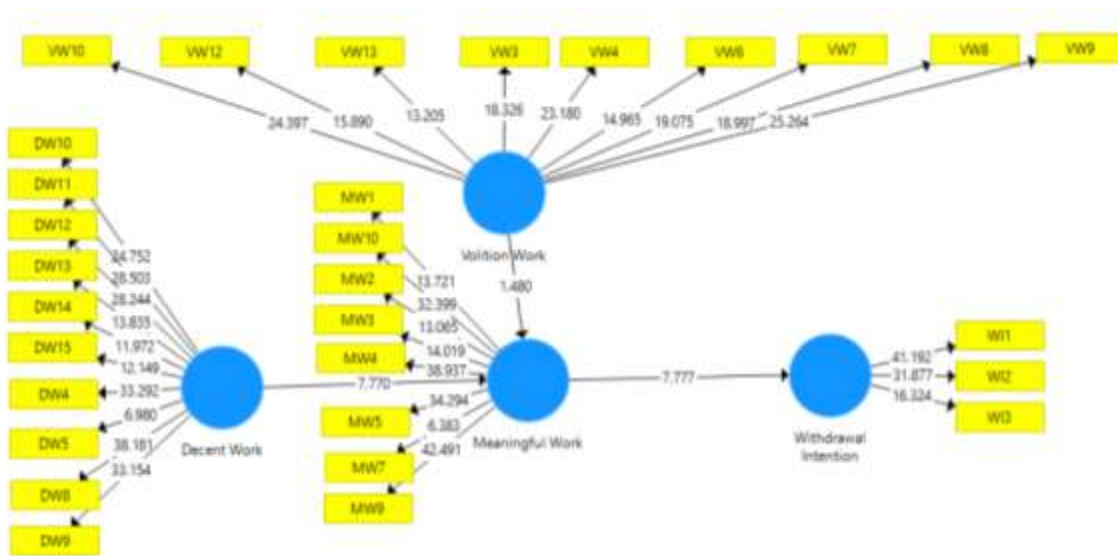
Source(s): PLS-SEM output of the structural model.

Figure 3. Structural Model

After testing the direct and indirect relations this study examines the mediating effect of meaningful work. The findings are shown in Table 4 which confirms that the relation between decent work and withdrawal intention is significantly mediated (H4: β = -0.257, P = 0.000) by meaningful work. Further, meaningful work did not mediate (H5: β = -0.054, P = 0.078) the relationship between volition work and withdrawal intention.

Table 4. Mediation Effects

No.	Mediation	β	Std. Error	t- value	P Value	5.00%	95.00%	Decision
H4	Decent Work -> Meaningful Work -> Withdrawal Intention	-0.257	0.045	5.589**	0.000	-0.332	-0.183	**Supported**
H5	Volition Work -> Meaningful Work -> Withdrawal Intention	-0.054	0.037	1.418	0.078	-0.002	-0.111	**Not Supported**

Source(s): PLS-SEM output of the structural model.

4.3 Explanatory power (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures the model's goodness by indicating the variance in the dependent variable explained by the predictor (Hair et al., 2010). Chin (1998) states that R^2 values of 0.60, 0.33, and 0.19 indicate substantial, moderate, and weak model fitness. The results demonstrated in Table 5 stipulate that R^2 values of 43% and 20% suggest weak to moderate model fitness

4.4 Predictive Relevance Q2

Additionally, this study evaluates the framework's predictive relevance (Q2). The Q^2 for the endogenous variable should be greater than zero (Henseler, et al. 2009). The findings (see Table 5) indicate that Q^2 for withdrawal intention (0.126) was > 0, representing satisfactory predictive relevance of the model developed for the study.

Table 5. Predictive power

Constructs	R^2	Q^2
Meaningful Work	0.432	0.212
Withdrawal Intention	0.198	0.126

Source(s): PLS-SEM output of the structural model.

5. Discussion:

This study intended to determine the relationship between volition work, decent work, and withdrawal intention through the mediating effect of meaningful work. These variables were used due to the global pandemic situation of Covid-19 which led healthcare workers towards finding increased meaningful work in their working environment. Regarding H1, our results showed that decent work is positively related to meaningful work which is in line with prior research (Duffy et al., 2017). When work activities are aligned with the HCWs representatives' strengths and attributes, work is certain to be meaningful (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In terms of H2, our data revealed that volitional work is linked to meaningful work. Even though this H2 is not supported, the reason for this variation is that not all people are volitional in their job selections, causing them to show less volition in their decisions (Duffy & Dik, 2009). In terms of H3, our findings revealed that meaningful work has a negative relationship with withdrawal intention. These findings are backed up by prior research (Allan et al., 2019). Researchers found that when employees believe their work is significant, their satisfaction and well-being will improve which reduces their desire to leave (Allan et al., 2019).

Moreover, regarding H4, our results showed that meaningful work mediates the relationship between decent work and withdrawal intention. This result is related to a previous study that found that when workers have access to decent work it leads toward meaningful work which in turn reduces the withdrawal intention of workers (Allan et al. 2018; Allan et al., 2019). Further regarding H5, our findings revealed that meaningful work did not mediate the relationship between volition work and withdrawal intention. This highlights the call for a comprehensive understanding of how volition works and impacts employees' work perception and their withdrawal intention, probably examining another mediating variable.

5.1 Theoretical implications

This research provides various significant theoretical implications regarding meaningful work, particularly in the field of frontline healthcare workers. First, by examining the mediating mechanism of meaningful work this research extends the knowledge of how healthcare workers' perception of work shapes their withdrawal intention. Second, this research integrates the psychology of working theory to understand how decent work and volition work contribute to employees' withdrawal intention via the mediating mechanism of meaningful work. Third, the study broadens the meaningful work literature by identifying how decent work and volition work contribute to the perception of meaningful work. Lastly, this study extends withdrawal intention literature by predicting how meaningful work influences withdrawal intentions.

5.2 Practical Implications

This research also provides various significant practical implications in the context of Pakistan. First, these research findings highlight that healthcare organizations should focus on decent and volition work. By doing this, businesses can raise the likelihood that workers will feel their employment is meaningful, which can have several positive effects on both the worker and the employer. Second, the findings highlight that organizations can enhance employee pride and loyalty by encouraging meaningful work (Dechawatanapaisal, 2021). By improving significant work experiences, organizations can promote worker delight and dedication, decreasing withdrawal intentions and progressing retention consequences (McIlveen et al., 2021). Third, this study will help practitioners in various cultural contexts and can be utilized to develop healthcare strategies for retaining healthcare workers in any type of pandemic like COVID-19 situation. Lastly, the results emphasize the need for healthcare organizations to promote career counseling and supportive work environments to deal with low work volition.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research has certain limitations. First, this study focuses specifically on frontline healthcare workers which limits the applicability of the findings. Future research could focus on other frontline workers in educational institutions, banking, distribution supply chains, traffic services, and other industries who are dealing at the front in pandemics. Second, the quantitative research design was employed because of time constraints. Thus, future studies can employ qualitative research design for comprehensive understanding. Third, research found that meaningful work decreases withdrawal intention. Still, many kinds of behavior such as turnover intention, work boredom that may be influenced by meaningful work and required to be addressed. To focus on healthcare workers well-being forthcoming scholars can examine these behaviors. Lastly, this study found that the relationship between volition work and meaningful work is insignificant. Therefore, future researchers are suggested to integrate some moderator such as supportive environment.

6. Conclusion:

To conclude, utilizing two wave research data from 256 healthcare workers examine how decent work and volition work contribute to withdrawal intention via mediating effect of meaningful work. Globally, healthcare industries face challenges in retaining staff during the pandemic, and this study highlights the role of meaningful work in attracting and retaining healthcare professionals, thereby improving organization effectiveness.

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