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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEES' RETENTION INTENTION IN THE FOOD RETAIL INDUSTRY: AGE AND EMPLOYEE RANK AS MODERATORS

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ABSTRACT

This study, completed in October 2026, examined the relationships between five organizational factors and employees' retention intention in food retail establishments in Rosales, Pangasinan, and evaluated age and employee rank as potential moderators. A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive-correlational design was employed. Of 344 voluntary survey submissions, 326 met eligibility and data-quality criteria; 321 supplied valid ages. Twenty-nine outlets representing 28 company groupings authorized questionnaire distribution. Six-point agreement responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, five-step hierarchical multiple regression, and separate full interaction-block moderation models with HC3 robust inference. The five-factor model explained 79.1% of the sample variation in retention-intention scores ($R^2 = .791$). Career growth and development ($B = .380$, $p < .001$), leadership and management style ($B = .307$, $p = .001$), and work–life balance ($B = .216$, $p = .003$) had significant positive unique coefficients. Compensation and benefits and work environment and culture did not have significant unique coefficients. Neither age ($p = .395$) nor employee rank ($p = .933$) significantly moderated the examined relationships. Findings highlight associations with development, leadership, and work–life practices; however, nonprobability recruitment, self-reports, potential common-method variance, and cross-sectional measurement limit causal and population-wide inference.

Keywords: *employee retention intention*, *organizational factors*, *food retail industry*, *hierarchical multiple regression*, *age moderation*, *employee rank*

INTRODUCTION

Employee retention remains a concern for organizations whose daily operations depend on stable staffing, customer service, and employees' knowledge of workplace routines. Employee departures may disrupt service continuity and generate recruitment and replacement costs, while employee turnover has been studied in relation to organizational performance (Hom et al., 2017; Park & Shaw, 2013). Retention intention concerns employees' stated willingness to continue working with their employer. It should be distinguished from actual retention and from turnover intention, which refers to an intention to leave.

The food retail setting places particular importance on service personnel because employees prepare products, serve customers, process transactions, and maintain day-to-day operations. Philippine Statistics Authority (2025) data indicate that restaurants and mobile food service establishments constitute a substantial part of employment in the accommodation and food service sector. However, national industry statistics do not establish the retention-related experiences of employees in individual provincial municipalities. Rosales, Pangasinan, provided the local context for the present investigation.

Five organizational conditions were examined: compensation and benefits; work environment and culture; career growth and development; work–life balance; and leadership and management style. These dimensions were selected because research has discussed employment rewards, working conditions, development opportunities, and supervisory practices as potentially relevant to employees' intention to remain (Kossivi et al., 2016; Ghani et al., 2022). The five factors represent different components of workplace experience, and their relative associations cannot be inferred from descriptive agreement ratings alone.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains how employees may respond to the treatment they receive from their organization. Herzberg et al. (1959) distinguished working conditions from motivating factors, which supports examining compensation and career growth separately. Meyer and Allen (1991) also discussed organizational commitment in relation to employees' decisions to remain. However, commitment and retention intention are not the same.

Previous studies examined human resource practices, work environment, career growth, leadership, compensation, and work–life balance in relation to employees' intention to stay or leave (Chew & Chan, 2008; Naz et al., 2020; Weng & McElroy, 2012; Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017; Zainal et al., 2022). However, these studies involved different workplaces and measures. Their results may not fully apply to food retail employees in Rosales.

Employee age and employee rank were examined separately as moderators. Work priorities may differ across ages, but that alone does not mean that age changes the relationships being tested. Adriano and Callaghan (2020) did not establish a significant age interaction in their work–life conflict study. Employee rank may also involve different responsibilities. However, Cho et al. (2006) examined managerial and

nonmanagerial turnover at the organizational level, not rank as a moderator of individual retention intention.

The research gap concerns the limited direct evidence on how five organizational-factor scores jointly predict retention intention among qualified food retail employees in Rosales and whether age or employee rank changes these associations. Accordingly, the present study assessed the five factors collectively and tested the two sets of interactions separately, without presuming significant differences among employee groups.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of respondents in terms of age and employee rank?
2. How may the five organizational factors—compensation and benefits, work environment and culture, career growth and development, work–life balance, and leadership and management style—be described?
3. How may respondents' retention intention be described?
4. To what extent do the five organizational factors statistically predict employees' retention intention?
5. Does employee age moderate the relationships between the five organizational factors and retention intention?
6. Does employee rank moderate the relationships between the five organizational factors and retention intention?

The study tested three research hypotheses: H1, that the five organizational factors predict retention intention; H2, that employee age moderates their relationships with retention intention; and H3, that employee rank moderates those relationships.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Study Locale

A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive-correlational design was used to examine employees' responses at one point in time. The study was conducted in food retail establishments in Rosales, Pangasinan, Philippines. The Business Permits and Licensing Office had recorded 265 food retail establishments and 1,987 employees, providing preliminary population information for planning rather than a verified individual sampling frame. Twenty-nine outlets representing 28 company groupings authorized distribution. The participating establishments shared three operational characteristics: outlets in Rosales, direct preparation/sale/service of food or beverages to customers, and employees engaged in store-level service or operations. Two outlets of the same company were classified under one company grouping.

Respondents and Sampling Method

Nonprobability recruitment proceeded through management-authorized access to establishments and voluntary employee participation. Managers or authorized representatives distributed a Google Forms link or QR code to potential respondents; selection was not randomized. Eligibility required current employment in food retail in Rosales and more than six months of service with the present employer. Employment arrangement was not independently an exclusion criterion. Cochran's formula with finite population correction yielded a preliminary planning target of approximately 323 respondents; because recruitment was nonrandom, this calculation does not establish population representativeness or a statistical margin of error (Cochran, 1977). Of 344 submissions, 18 were excluded after eligibility and data-quality screening, leaving 326 qualified cases. Because outlets were not identified on individual questionnaires, qualified responses could not be attributed to each participating company.

Research Instrument

The adapted survey contained 35 questions/statements: two eligibility items, two profile items, 25 organizational-factor statements (five per factor), and six retention-intention statements. The factor sections drew on the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (Heneman & Schwab, 1985), Work Design Questionnaire (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006), organizational career growth literature (Weng et al., 2010), work–life balance measurement (Hayman, 2005), and a leadership measure (Carless et al., 2000). The six retention-intention statements were positively reworded from the Turnover Intention Scale-6 of Bothma and Roodt (2013). This adaptation does not establish equivalence with the source turnover-intention scale.

Measurement Scale, Validity, and Reliability

During field administration, 31 organizational-factor and retention-intention statements used six response options: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Each construct score was the average of its statements. Three validators assessed item relevance, with I-CVI and S-CVI/Ave values of 1.00 under the adopted rule (Lynn, 1986). A 30-person pilot, excluded from the main sample, used a five-point scale. Its Cronbach's alpha values were .790, .850, .892, .829, .891, and .827 across the six constructs. The final six-point study responses produced alpha values of .931, .919, .919, .925, .955, and .958, respectively. Internal consistency was therefore evaluated for each sample separately; the different response formats prevent direct equivalence of pilot and field estimates (Cronbach, 1951).

Data Gathering Procedure and Coding

Data were collected from July 7 to July 12, 2026 through Google Forms after establishment authorization and participant consent. Respondents could decline or stop participating; no names, employee numbers, or direct contact identifiers were collected. Five otherwise qualified cases entered durations rather than interpretable ages; they were retained for analyses not requiring age, leaving n = 321 for age analyses. Age was summarized both as a continuous measure and in approximate descriptive generation bands. Employee rank was classified as rank-and-file/frontline (coded 0) or supervisory/managerial (coded 1). The questionnaire labeled this item “Job Position,” but its response options represented employee rank.

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations described respondents’ agreement with each of the five organizational-factor composites and retention intention. The panel-prescribed six-point interpretation placed scores of 4.50–5.49 in Agree and 3.50–4.49 in Slightly Agree; descriptive differences were not treated as tests of statistical significance.

Five cumulative H1 models entered the organizational factors in their prespecified order, excluding age and employee rank. H2 and H3 were tested separately: Model 1 included the five factors, Model 2 added age or rank, and Model 3 added the five corresponding interactions. Continuous predictors were mean-centered where appropriate (Aiken & West, 1991). The analyses assessed R^2, adjusted R^2, ΔR^2, robust Wald model comparisons, coefficients, and 95% confidence intervals at $\alpha = .05$. HC3 standard errors addressed detected heteroskedasticity (MacKinnon & White, 1985).

Shapiro–Wilk, Breusch–Pagan, Rainbow, Durbin–Watson, Cook’s distance, and variance inflation factors were used for model diagnostics. Harman’s single-factor screening did not conclusively establish or rule out common-method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Eligible observations were retained despite potential influence flags.

Scope and Limitations

Findings apply to the voluntary Rosales sample and self-reported retention-intention scores, not actual employee retention. Without outlet identifiers, clustering could not be assessed. The positively reworded outcome instrument requires further validation. Selection bias, possible common-method variance, unbalanced employee-rank groups, influential cases, and high interaction-model collinearity constrain causal and population-wide inference.

RESULTS

Respondent Profile

Among 326 qualified employees, 321 had valid ages (M = 27.99, SD = 5.53; range 18–52); 221 were aged 18–29, 96 were 30–45, and four were 46–52. There were 288 rank-and-file/frontline respondents (88.3%) and 38 supervisory/managerial respondents (11.7%). Percentages for age groups use n = 321; completeness and rank percentages use n = 326.

Table 1. Respondent Profile and Age Data Completeness

Profile category	Frequency	Percentage
Age 18–29 years (Gen Z)	221	68.8%
Age 30–45 years (Millennials)	96	29.9%
Age 46–52 years (Gen X)	4	1.2%
Valid age entries	321	98.5%
Invalid age entries	5	1.5%
Rank-and-file/frontline	288	88.3%
Supervisory/managerial	38	11.7%

Organizational Factors and Retention Intention

Each organizational-factor composite fell within the Agree interpretation range. Work environment and culture had the highest observed composite mean (4.84), while work–life balance had the lowest (4.58). Retention intention was classified as Slightly Agree (M = 4.44). These comparisons reflect respondents' levels of agreement and do not establish differences in predictive influence.

Table 2. Descriptive Summary of the Study Constructs (n = 326)

Construct	Mean	SD	Agreement
Compensation and benefits	4.61	1.00	Agree
Work environment and culture	4.84	0.87	Agree
Career growth and development	4.65	0.96	Agree
Work–life balance	4.58	0.90	Agree
Leadership and management style	4.67	0.97	Agree
Retention intention	4.44	1.00	Slightly Agree

Hierarchical Regression: Five Organizational Factors (H1)

In the prespecified five-step model sequence, R^2 increased from .566 (compensation only) to .791 with all five organizational factors. Each of the four successive block additions produced a statistically significant HC3 robust model-improvement test. The final model explained 79.1% of variation in retention-intention composite scores within this sample (adjusted R^2 = .788), not in the food retail population generally. Because predictors entered in a fixed order, incremental contributions are order-dependent.

Table 3. Cumulative Hierarchical H1 Model Fit and Improvement (n = 326)

Model / factor added	R^2	Adj. R^2	ΔR^2	Robust Wald p
M1: Compensation and benefits	.566	.565	—	—
M2: Work environment and culture	.657	.655	.091	< .001
M3: Career growth and development	.746	.744	.089	< .001
M4: Work–life balance	.771	.768	.025	< .001
M5: Leadership and management style	.791	.788	.020	.001

In the final five-factor model, career growth and development, leadership and management style, and work–life balance had significant positive unique coefficients. Compensation and benefits and work environment and culture did not retain statistically significant unique coefficients after adjustment for the other factors. Career growth had the largest observed standardized coefficient, but no statistical contrast established that it exceeded the other significant coefficients.

Table 4. Final H1 Model: HC3 Robust Coefficients and 95% Confidence Intervals (n = 326)

Predictor	B	HC3 SE	β	p	95% CI (B)
Compensation and benefits	.048	.061	.049	.426	[-.071, .168]
Work environment and culture	.055	.086	.048	.524	[-.114, .224]
Career growth and development	.380	.083	.364	< .001	[.218, .542]
Work–life balance	.216	.072	.196	.003	[.074, .358]
Leadership and management style	.307	.093	.297	.001	[.125, .489]

Moderation by Employee Age and Rank (H2 and H3)

Using 321 valid-age cases, the addition of five age-by-factor interactions increased R^2 by .004, but the full interaction block was not statistically significant, HC3 $F(5, 309) = 1.039$, $p = .395$. Using all 326 rank cases, adding five rank-by-factor interactions increased R^2 by .001; the block also was nonsignificant, HC3 $F(5, 314) = .263$, $p = .933$. No individual interaction was statistically significant at $\alpha = .05$. These results do not show that age or rank groups are necessarily equivalent.

Table 5. Full Interaction-Block Tests for Age and Employee Rank

Moderator	n	ΔR^2	HC3 F (df)	p	Decision
Age	321	.004	1.039 (5, 309)	.395	H2 not supported
Employee rank	326	.001	.263 (5, 314)	.933	H3 not supported

Harman's first factor explained 66.5% of the observed item variance, suggesting a possible common-method concern. Heteroskedasticity was also detected, so HC3 robust standard errors were used. The variance inflation factor reached 14.29 in the employee-rank moderation model, indicating multicollinearity concerns. These findings were considered when interpreting the regression results.

DISCUSSION

The respondents were predominantly rank-and-file/frontline employees (88.3%). Of the 321 respondents with usable ages, most were aged 18–29 years, while only four were in the 46–52 age group. This composition describes the voluntary sample rather than the workforce composition of all food retail establishments in Rosales. The small older group and the unequal rank-group sizes are especially relevant when interpreting moderation results.

All five organizational-factor composites were classified as Agree, whereas retention intention was classified as Slightly Agree. The difference in verbal agreement categories does not establish either a significant between-construct difference or stronger independent predictive influence. The multivariable coefficients, rather than rankings of descriptive means, provide the evidence about the factors' unique associations with retention intention.

The model-level support for H1 indicates that the five organizational-factor composites collectively predicted a substantial proportion of the sample's variation in retention-intention scores. The significant unique associations for career growth and development, leadership and management style, and work–life balance suggest these domains are relevant to evaluating employees' stated willingness to remain. However, the model measures associations within a nonrandom cross-sectional sample and does

not show that changing any single organizational condition would cause an employee to stay.

The career-growth association is directionally consistent with prior work on training, development, and intention to stay (Chew & Chan, 2008) and organizational career growth and withdrawal-related intentions (Weng & McElroy, 2012). Leadership findings are broadly compatible with café-based research on transformational leadership and turnover intention (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). The work–life association is consistent in direction with findings from Malaysia's service industry (Zainal et al., 2022). Such comparisons are not direct replications, because the earlier studies involve different respondents, measures, and outcome definitions.

Compensation and benefits and work environment and culture showed favorable descriptive agreement scores but nonsignificant independent coefficients in the final H1 model. This does not imply that compensation or workplace conditions are unimportant; rather, the sample did not establish additional unique linear associations once the remaining factors were included. In other settings, Naz et al. (2020) and Zainal et al. (2022) reported significant relationships between workplace conditions and retention. The apparent discrepancy may reflect differences in operationalization and the simultaneous inclusion of correlated predictors.

The nonsignificant age interaction block did not support systematic moderation across the valid ages observed in this sample. Adriano and Callaghan (2020) likewise did not establish a significant age interaction in a different work–life and turnover-intention setting. Neither finding justifies assuming that every age group experiences identical effects; the current age analysis excluded five uninterpretable entries and had limited representation among older respondents.

The employee-rank interaction block also did not support moderation, although the rank comparison was unbalanced (288 frontline versus 38 supervisory/managerial respondents), and the full rank interaction model showed high variance inflation factors. Related hospitality research has examined managerial versus nonmanagerial employment outcomes (Cho et al., 2006), but it addressed a different level of analysis and cannot be used as direct evidence for the present interactions. Failure to reject H2 and H3 should not be described as proof of equal coefficients or the absence of meaningful group differences.

The statistical model should be interpreted conservatively for several reasons. The 79.1% explained variance is sample-specific and potentially affected by common-source measurement; Harman's 66.5% screening result warrants attention. Heteroskedasticity required robust inference; influential-case flags and multicollinearity further limit precision, especially for moderator terms. Without outlet codes, clustering among employees of the same establishment could not be investigated. The adapted retention-intention items were positively reworded from a turnover-intention measure, and the pilot and field surveys used different response scales. These features support replication and further construct validation before treating the scores as a validated measure of retention intention.

Conclusions

The following conclusions correspond to the six research questions and are limited to the participating employees and the outcomes measured in this study.

The respondents reported Agree-level scores for all five organizational-factor composites but Slightly Agree for retention intention, indicating that workplace evaluations and stated willingness to remain should be interpreted as distinct constructs. The five-factor model supported H1 at the joint-prediction level; career growth and development, leadership and management style, and work–life balance had significant positive unique coefficients. Compensation and benefits and work environment and culture did not show independent significance once other factors were included. Neither age nor employee rank significantly moderated the five specified relationships in the respective joint interaction tests. Given the sampling, measurement, and diagnostic limitations, the findings cannot establish causality, equivalent effects across demographic groups, or population-wide estimates for food retail employees in Rosales, Pangasinan.

Recommendations

Food retail owners and human resource practitioners may use confidential employee feedback to monitor development opportunities, supervisory communication, and work–life practices, while evaluating any resulting initiatives with additional evidence rather than assuming causal retention benefits. Basic compensation, workplace safety, available work resources, and respectful employee relations should continue to be reviewed despite nonsignificant unique coefficients. The present nonsignificant interaction tests do not justify implementing age- or rank-specific retention policies solely from demographic categories.

Further studies could include a broader range of establishments, better-balanced rank groups, and sampling designs that support population inference. With appropriate consent and privacy safeguards, non-identifying establishment codes could permit analysis of within-establishment clustering. Future studies may test the adapted six-point retention-intention scale and check age entries during data gathering. They may also address common-method bias and compare intention with actual retention.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Before distributing the survey, the researcher secured the required research and establishment permissions. Potential respondents were informed of the academic purpose, provided informed consent through the online questionnaire, and were free to decline or discontinue participation before submitting their responses. The questionnaire did not request names, employee numbers, direct contact information, or other direct personal identifiers. Responses were kept in password-protected files accessible to the researcher and authorized statistician and were reported only in aggregate, without individual disclosure to employers. The research procedures were intended to protect participants' privacy and well-being, and interpretations distinguish statistical associations from causal claims.

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to the conduct, analysis, or publication of this study. This article is derived from the author's MBA thesis prepared at Tarlac State University and presents the same study, respondents, and statistical analyses in condensed journal form. Sources are acknowledged through in-text citations and corresponding references. AI-assisted tools were used to help prepare the manuscript, but not to generate the research data or statistical results. The author reviewed the content and remains responsible for its accuracy, originality, and integrity.

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