Articles

Staff Turnover: Impact on Internal Processes at the District Office of the Ministry of Human Development, Salinas

Rotación del personal: incidencia en los procesos internos de la dirección distrital del ministerio de desarrollo humano, salinas

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ABSTRACT

Effective human capital management is essential for the uninterrupted operational efficiency of public entities. The phenomenon of staff turnover directly affects an organization's productivity and the uninterrupted continuity of its management functions. The public sector is particularly impacted by this phenomenon, as high levels of employee turnover create challenges for organizational integration, effective knowledge retention, and the achievement of strategic goals. This paper seeks to analyze the impact of employee turnover on the internal operations of the Salinas District Office of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MDH). The author employed a descriptive-correlational approach within a non-experimental framework and a mixed-methods design. From a total population of 350 public servants, a representative sample of 184 was derived using the statistical sampling formula for finite populations. The main

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data collection techniques used were structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The analysis showed that staff turnover negatively impacts operational continuity, increases the workload, and hinders the transfer of institutional knowledge. Additionally, contractual instability, organizational climate, and a lack of upward career mobility were identified as factors contributing to job mobility. It has been established that the stability of human talent is a critical element for enhancing institutional sustainability, the efficiency of internal processes, and operational effectiveness.

Keywords: staff turnover, internal processes, human talent, institutional efficiency, organizational climate.

RESUMEN

La gestión efectiva del capital humano es fundamental para la eficacia operativa ininterrumpida de las entidades públicas. El fenómeno de la rotación de personal afecta directamente la productividad de una organización y la continuidad ininterrumpida de sus funciones de gestión. El sector público se ve particularmente impactado por este fenómeno, ya que altos niveles de rotación de empleados generan desafíos para la integración organizacional, la retención efectiva del conocimiento y el logro de metas estratégicas. Este documento busca analizar el impacto de la rotación de empleados en el funcionamiento interno de la Dirección Distrital de MDH Salinas. El autor utilizó un enfoque descriptivo correlacional dentro de un marco no experimental y un enfoque de métodos mixtos. De la población total de 350 servidores públicos, se derivó una muestra representativa de 184 mediante la fórmula de muestreo estadístico para poblaciones finitas. Las principales técnicas de recolección de datos empleadas fueron cuestionarios estructurados, entrevistas semiestructuradas y análisis documental. El análisis mostró que la rotación de personal impacta negativamente en la continuidad operativa, aumenta la carga de trabajo y dificulta la transferencia del conocimiento institucional. Además, se identificaron la inestabilidad contractual, el clima organizacional y la falta de movilidad profesional

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ascendente como factores de movilidad laboral. Se ha establecido que la estabilidad del talento humano es un elemento crítico para potenciar la sostenibilidad institucional, la eficiencia de los procesos internos y la efectividad operativa.

Palabras clave: rotación del personal, procesos internos, talento humano, eficiencia institucional, clima organizacional.

INTRODUCTION

Human talent management is vital to the proper functioning of public institutions, as employee performance determines operational continuity, the quality of services provided, and the degree to which the institution's objectives are met. In this regard, employee turnover is a persistent problem in modern organizations, particularly in the public sector, where job stability affects the sustainability of administrative and technical processes. Numerous studies indicate that high turnover reduces productivity, increases operating costs, and hinders the accumulation of organizational memory (Cabezas, 2025; International Labor Organization, 2023) .

In Latin America, public sector organizations face structural challenges in human talent management, such as difficulty retaining staff, constant administrative changes, and a lack of organizational planning. These conditions create disruptions in the execution of activities and diminish the institutional capacity to respond adequately to social needs. Recent studies indicate that employee turnover in the public sector negatively affects the stability of work teams, increases the fragmentation of work processes, and reduces the quality of services provided to citizens (Mangia, Torres, & Villacrés, 2025; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2022) .

Staff turnover involves the continuous entry and exit of employees within an organization, which can result from resignations, restructuring, layoffs, or lateral transfers. Although a certain degree of turnover can help revitalize an organization , high levels of turnover can result in the loss of organizational memory, challenges in knowledge transfer, and difficulties in executing strategic initiatives. Furthermore, due to their reliance on standardized administrative procedures, public sector organizations tend to be more susceptible to turnover, as their processes involve compliance with regulations and public policies (Acevedo-Ramón, 2023; Ministry of Labor, Annual Public Employment Report, 2023) .

In this context, internal processes are a key component for optimizing an organization and its ability to deliver services. These processes encompass the administrative,

operational, and coordination functions necessary for fulfilling technical and social roles. Organizations that suffer from high employee turnover face challenges related to onboarding new staff, redistributing roles, and a loss of continuity in organizational procedures. As a result, delays occur, along with an increased workload for staff and a decline in the quality of administrative services (Canton, 2025; Inter-American Development Bank, 2022) .

In Ecuador, high turnover rates among public sector employees are attributed to persistent changes in management, as well as deficiencies in talent retention systems. Public institutions need employees who possess the necessary experience and technical knowledge, as such experience is essential for the uninterrupted functioning of internal systems and the effective fulfillment of the institution's mandates. However, insufficient job security, a lack of motivation, and the absence of mechanisms for organizational development continue to create conditions for high turnover rates that hinder institutional performance and the delivery of quality services to citizens (Garnica, 2023; Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, 2023) .

Like other institutions, the MDH Salinas District Office is affected by the reality of staff turnover, as it can disrupt administrative processes, interdepartmental coordination, and the continuous execution of operational tasks. Constant employee turnover limits the formation of cohesive technical teams and hinders the efficient adaptation of new staff to the institution's operational framework. Furthermore, staff turnover can negatively affect the organizational climate, the distribution of work, and the timely execution of tasks related to the delivery and administration of social programs (National Assembly of Ecuador, 2022) .

From an organizational perspective, analyzing staff turnover is essential for identifying certain aspects of administrative management, the state of the work environment, and the functional effectiveness of institutional processes. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial for designing strategies aimed at improving job stability and optimizing human resources management. The most recent research indicates that turnover and operational efficiency in public institutions can be positively influenced by ongoing training, an improved organizational climate, and the establishment of workplace recognition mechanisms (Mangia, Torres, & Villacrés, 2025; Longo & Iacoviello, 2022) .

The objective of this research is to analyze the impact of staff turnover on the internal processes of the Salinas District MDH Office, considering the organizational effects resulting from workforce mobility within the institution. This research seeks to determine the effect of human talent variability on the administrative management of processes, the uninterrupted execution of processes, and the institution's overall performance. Finally, this study provides relevant information to support the

improvement of human talent management strategies in public organizations that provide social development and social services.

Employee turnover is an organizational metric related to the stability and movement of staff within an organization. This phenomenon is linked to work-related, management, and incentive factors that affect the balance of human talent. In the public sector, high turnover can result in the loss of technical expertise, disruptions to operational continuity, and reduced institutional efficiency, particularly when retention and organizational strengthening measures are insufficient (Acevedo-Ramón, 2023; International Labor Organization, 2023) .

Worker mobility has economic and administrative repercussions due to the need to recruit, train, and onboard new employees. Furthermore, frequent layoffs prevent the formation of stable work teams and reduce effective coordination among different units. Studies have shown that companies experiencing high employee turnover find it more difficult to maintain high quality and continuity in the performance of strategic activities (Cabezas, 2025; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2022)

This term describes the administrative, technical, and operational processes that support an organization's functioning. These processes contribute to organizational cohesion, functional alignment, and precision in service delivery. In public organizations, the effectiveness of internal processes depends on workforce stability, the appropriate distribution of tasks, and the uninterrupted flow of organizational processes (Canton, 2025) .

Changes in internal structures can lead to administrative delays, excessive workloads, and a reduced organizational capacity to meet the public's needs. When staff turnover is high, organizations face challenges in adapting to new personnel and the loss of transferred technical skills. This scenario affects workflow and limits the timely execution of organizational tasks (Ministry of Labor, 2023; Cabezas, 2025) .

Organizational climate refers to employees' perceptions of working conditions, the flow of communication within the institution, and relationships among employees. A positive workplace climate increases employees' commitment to the institution, motivates them, and helps reduce turnover rates. Conversely, a negative workplace climate can lead to demotivation, intergroup conflicts, and a decline in the organization's productivity (Garnica, 2023; Longo & Iacoviello, 2022) .

The retention of talent in public institutions is often influenced by job stability. Employees are more satisfied when they perceive opportunities for professional growth, and that satisfaction makes them more likely to remain with the institution. Research shows that

organizations that implement policies for workplace recognition and employee well-being experience lower turnover and higher productivity (Vásquez, 2024; Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, 2023) .

Human talent management involves the planning, teaching, and reinforcement of personnel strategies within an organization. Well-executed human talent management in public institutions contributes to improved institutional performance, strengthens staff competencies, and ensures the continuity of administrative processes. Training and evaluation programs create stability within the organization and help reduce employee turnover (Mangia, Torres, & Villacrés, 2025; Inter-American Development Bank, 2022) .

Furthermore, strategies for employee retention and motivation increase the level of commitment to the institution and boost the organization's efficiency and productivity. In the case of public institutions, there should be policies that promote staff well-being, because retaining qualified personnel ensures the uninterrupted flow of internal processes and improves the services offered to the public. Therefore, intentional human capital management becomes a vital factor in ensuring the institution's efficiency and sustainability (Cabezas, 2025; International Labor Organization, 2023) .

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study analyzed the effects of employee turnover on the internal operations of the MDH Salinas District Office using a comparative approach with a descriptive-correlational scope. The quantitative part of the study focused on the levels of impact related to job stability, organizational climate, operational continuity, and institutional efficiency. On the other hand, the qualitative component facilitated the interpretation of employees' perspectives and experiences regarding job mobility and its implications for the organization.

The research employed a non-experimental, cross-sectional design, as the variables were assessed without intervention or intentional manipulation by the researcher. Similarly, data were collected during a single time period, which allowed for an analysis of the relationships between staff turnover and the functioning of the institution's administrative and operational processes.

The research was conducted at the Salinas District Office of the Ministry of Human Development (MDH), one of the public entities that implements social programs and services for priority and vulnerable groups and populations in the Province of Santa Elena. The study population consisted of 350 employees in administrative, technical, and

operational positions related to institutional management, social services, and the implementation of public projects.

To calculate the sample size, the statistical formula for finite populations was used, considering a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. This yielded a representative sample of 184 employees, which allowed the researcher to obtain reliable and relevant data related to the variables of interest. The participant selection process was biased toward data related to occupational safety, institutional continuity, operational workload, and the organization's overall performance.

Table 1. *Distribution of the study population and sample*

Institutional area	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Participation (%)
Administrative area	92	48	26.1
Technical area	138	72	39.1
Operations	87	46	25.0
Human Resources and Planning	33	18	9.8
Total	350	183.4	100%

Source: Author
Compiled by: Author

Data collection methods included structured surveys, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The survey used a Likert-scale questionnaire designed to assess staff turnover and the influence of the institution's internal processes. In addition, the interviews provided insights and experiences from administrative and technical staff regarding the organizational impacts resulting from job mobility.

The document review provided an overview of institutional reports, administrative documents, and policies regarding human talent management and organizational operations. Quantitative data were processed in Microsoft Excel and SPSS, using frequencies, percentages, and graphical tools to interpret the statistical results. Furthermore, qualitative data were analyzed descriptively and comparatively, which served to enrich and consolidate the findings from the two methodological phases.

RESULTS

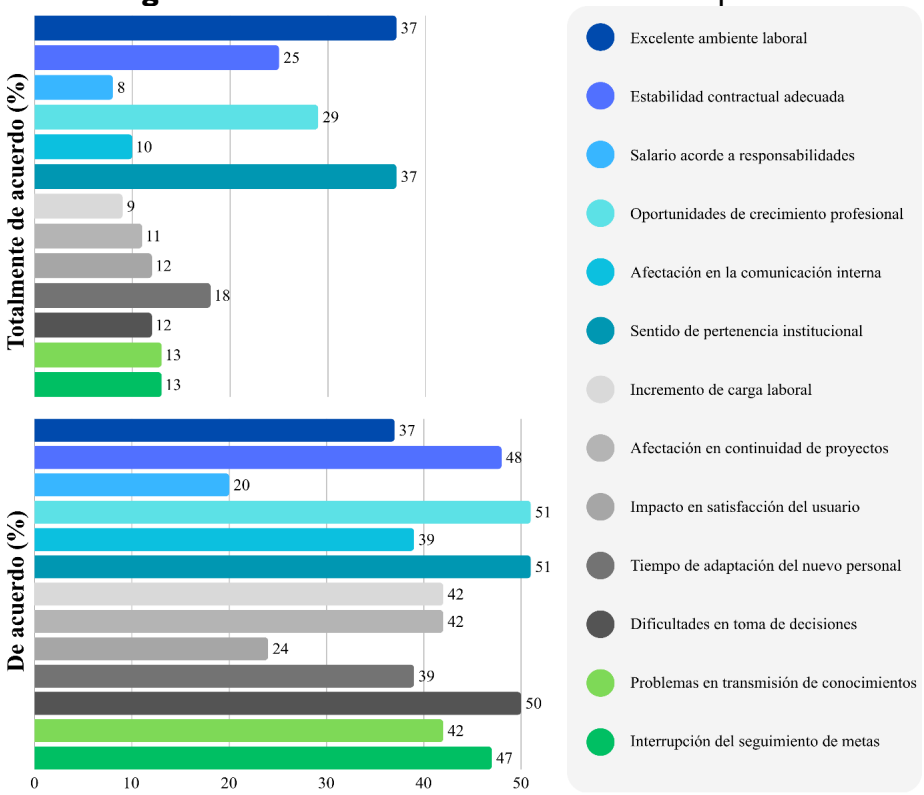
Institutional Perception of the Impact of Staff Turnover on Internal Processes

Surveys conducted among employees of the MDH Salinas District Office revealed dimensions related to job stability, organizational effectiveness, operational continuity, and institutional efficiency. The quantitative data show that employee turnover directly affects internal processes, particularly with regard to administrative coordination, the

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management of organizational knowledge, and the achievement of the institution's objectives.

Figure 1 **.** Overall results on institutional acceptance



Source: Surveys conducted

The indicators that received the highest levels of acceptance indicate that a significant proportion of staff members hold a positive view of the organizational climate, sense of belonging, and prospects for professional development within the institution. Employees continue to demonstrate loyalty to the institution despite the difficulty of job mobility. This situation reflects organizational unity and functional flexibility in some of the administrative and technical divisions.

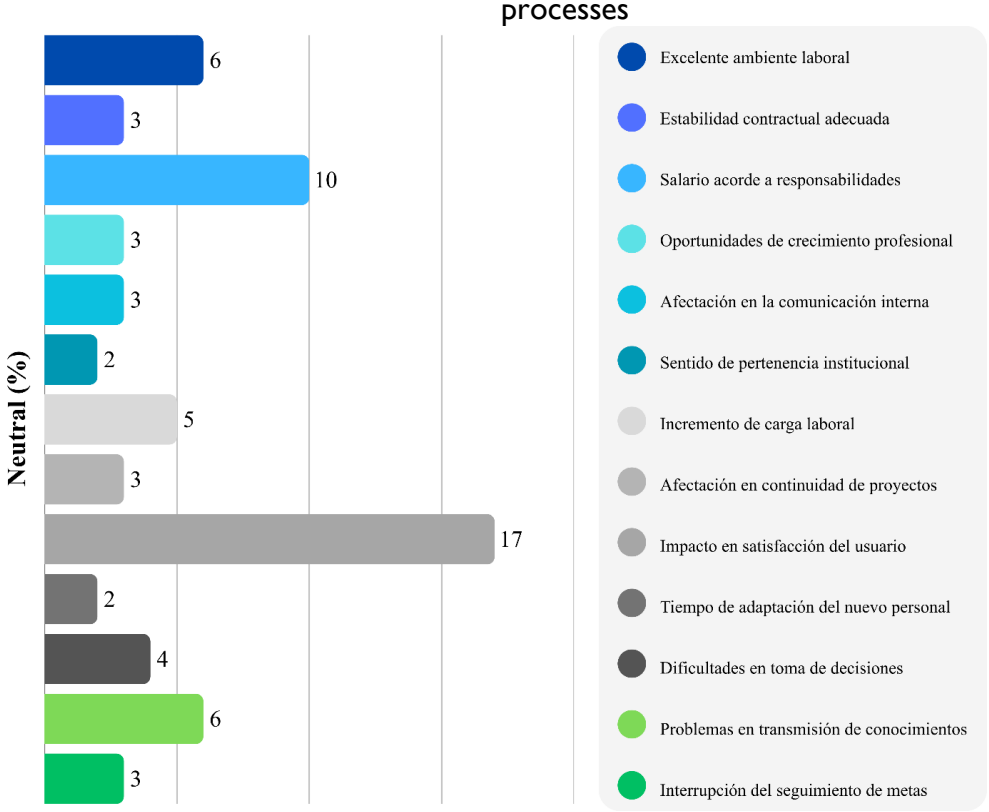
However, the positive results continue to reveal substantial institutional inconsistencies. Although there is a sense of identification with the institution and relative job stability,

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there is evident uncertainty regarding operational continuity, workload, and knowledge transfer. This pattern of behavior shows that organizational commitment intensifies alongside operational stress and administrative fatigue.

The extent to which the institution relies on the institutional memory of long-tenured staff is reflected in the high percentages of problems associated with decision-making, goal monitoring, and the evaluation of project impacts on the institution. Therefore, high staff turnover poses a considerable threat to technical continuity, coordination among units, and operational sustainability, especially with regard to social services and the implementation of public service programs.

Figure2 . Overall results showing a neutral perception of staff turnover and internal processes



Source: Surveys conducted

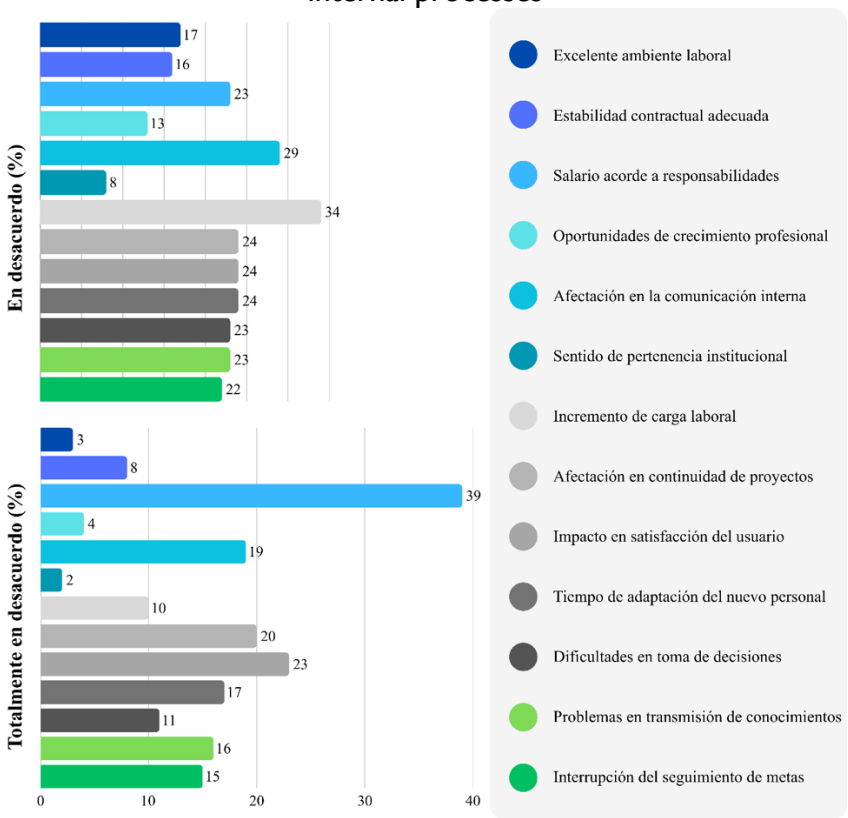
Neutral responses indicate a lower statistical ranking compared to responses indicating agreement or disagreement. However, neutral responses hold a certain degree of analytical merit within the study. The data indicate that some respondents perceive the impact of staff turnover to be moderate, specifically regarding user satisfaction, salary

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perceptions, and institutional continuity. This trend illustrates differences in perception across divisions and operational levels of the organization.

The existence of neutral criteria also provides a basis for situational interpretations of institutional ambiguity regarding how staff turnover affects specific administrative processes. This may involve variations in the operational workload, work experience, and the number of staff involved in fundamental institutional management processes. Therefore, this perceptual variability demonstrates that organizational effects are not uniformly distributed across all areas of the institutions.

Figure3 **.** Overall results of institutional disagreement regarding staff turnover and internal processes



Source: Surveys conducted

The mentions of disagreement highlight the main problems related to employee turnover at the MDH Salinas District Office, such as dissatisfaction with salary and increasing workloads, as well as challenges related to knowledge transfer and oversight of institutional objectives. The findings indicate that constant employee turnover is

detrimental to the organization's overall efficiency and the institution's operational consistency.

The significant negative perception regarding salary suggests potential demotivation and burnout in some areas of the institution. Similarly, the results regarding operational overload indicate that continuous staff turnover leads to role reassignments and the assumption of additional duties during the recruitment and onboarding phases for new staff. This situation leads to a temporary increase in work pressure and a decrease in the institution's operational capacity.

Information was gathered through interviews with administrative and technical staff at the Salinas District Office of the MDH regarding perceptions of workplace safety, organizational effectiveness, operational continuity, and institutional management. Staff turnover is an organizational concern that is directly impacting internal processes, primarily in terms of administrative integration, project continuity, and the efficiency of the institution's operations.

Interviewees highlighted contractual instability, a lack of career development opportunities, and high workloads as the main causes of high staff turnover. Furthermore, frequent staff changes have been generating feelings of job insecurity, worsening the organizational climate, and hindering the formation of stable teams of professionals. In some administrative and technical units, this situation has increased operational burnout and reduced organizational commitment.

With regard to internal processes, staff turnover affects project implementation, creates obstacles to coordination, and reduces continuity within the organization. The onboarding and training of new employees lead to a short-term decline in the organization's productivity. Furthermore, these areas are most significantly affected by the lack of programs in social services, citizen participation, and records management.

Challenges in capturing qualitative data are associated with the departure of senior staff, which significantly impacts knowledge retention and the organization's institutional memory. Participants noted that insufficient documentation of procedures increases operational risks and disrupts the continuity of institutional operations. Such conditions create administrative bottlenecks, operational errors, and gaps in the monitoring of the organization's objectives.

Similarly, constant changes within an organization lead to disruptions in internal communication and interdepartmental coordination, as demonstrated by the survey results. Ongoing recruitment hinders the development of strong working relationships and increases the operational burden on senior employees. For this reason, interviewees

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emphasize the importance of a stable workforce for improving organizational efficiency and sustainability.

Table 2. *Impact of staff turnover on internal institutional processes*

Factors Associated with Staff Turnover	Internal processes affected	Level of impact	Frequency of mention
Contractual instability	Institutional operational continuity	High	Very common
Work overload	Administrative and technical performance	High	Very common
Departure of experienced staff	Knowledge transfer	High	Very frequent
Frequent staff turnover	Internal communication	Medium-High	Recurring
Lengthy adaptation processes	Institutional productivity	Medium-High	Recurring
Inadequate work environment	Institutional retention	High	Very Recurrent
Lack of retention strategies	Tracking of operational goals	High	Very frequent
Weak institutional coordination	Interdepartmental management	Medium-High	Recurring
Limited ongoing training	Operational efficiency	Medium	Moderate
Loss of institutional memory	Continuity of projects and services	High	Very frequent

Source: Interviews conducted
Prepared by: Author

Staff turnover goes beyond the administrative sphere of labor mobility and becomes a structural factor that threatens the operational sustainability and institutional resilience of the MDH Salinas District Office. Reliance on the organizational memory embodied in veteran staff creates systemic weaknesses during continuous cycles of staff turnover and recruitment.

Similarly, the combination of contractual instability, operational overload, and a deteriorating organizational climate creates an institutionally problematic situation that simultaneously affects productivity, coordination across different levels of the organization, and the social continuity of the service provided. Therefore, qualitative assessments lead us to conclude that strengthening retention strategies, knowledge

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management, and employee well-being is a priority for the organization to achieve efficiency and sustainable internal processes.

Figure4 . Aggregate data for multivariate graphical representation



Source: Interviews conducted
Prepared by: Author
Discussion of Results

The research indicates that employee turnover has a detrimental effect on operational processes within the MDH Salinas District Office. Turnover impacts operational continuity, knowledge transfer, coordination among various departments, and the tracking of objectives within the institution. The results confirm that the constant turnover of human resources is a structural barrier to organizational effectiveness and institutional sustainability, particularly in public organizations dedicated to social and civic service (Park & Shaw, 2022; Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2024) .

The findings are consistent with Chiavenato (2022) , who asserts that high employee turnover results in the loss of institutional memory and operational deterioration of the organization. Similarly, Robbins and Judge(2022) indicate that employee productivity and retention within the organization are directly affected by the organizational climate and job stability. Furthermore, workload and operational job insecurity greatly influence the intention to resign in the public sector (De Winne, Marescaux, Sels, Van Beveren, & Vanormelingen, 2018; Karatepe, Rezapouraghdam, & Hassannia, 2024) .

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The results of this study can be compared to social research studies conducted in Latin America within institutions experiencing high rates of employee turnover, which hinder cohesion among technical teams, create operational pressure, lead to a lack of professional recognition, and result in deficits in organizational well-being. At the Salinas District Office of the MDH, staff turnover led to emotional exhaustion and prevented the development of sustainable organizational structures—a phenomenon that directly impacts productivity and the quality of public service (Pérez & Ramírez, 2023; Salgado, Méndez, & Rojas, 2025) .

The data obtained are central to the research conducted by Longo and Iacoviello (2022). These studies highlight the challenge of retaining human resources in public institutions and cite limited budgets, rigid administrative structures, and restrictions in recognition/reward systems. However, the study identified consequences stemming from staff turnover, as some employees still report a sense of belonging and commitment to the institution. This situation demonstrates the presence of organizational cohesion and operational fatigue—a phenomenon that remains under-explored in contemporary studies on public administration and employee retention (Kim & Fernandez, 2023) .

Furthermore, the qualitative results showed that the loss of staff with job stability has a significant impact on institutional knowledge management. The lack of formal mechanisms for onboarding, documenting, and transferring knowledge increases operational errors, delays project implementation, and reduces the continuity of services aimed at at-risk populations. Therefore, the loss of cognitive capital is one of the main structural damages associated with staff turnover in public and social organizations (Al-Emadi, Schwabenland, & Wei, 2024; Ferreira, Martinez, & Lamelas, 2023) .

Some of the study's challenges stem from its cross-sectional design and the fact that it analyzed a single public institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the interview data may reflect certain biases related to the interviewees' personal histories. However, the use of surveys and interviews strengthened the reliability of the interpretation and shed light on the complex impact of staff turnover on the institution's internal functioning (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2022) .

The research suggests developing methods for retention, contractual continuity, workplace well-being, and knowledge management. Emphasis is placed on strengthening ongoing operational continuity within an institution. This research offers insights based on empirical evidence in an unexplored area of employee turnover, organizational resilience, and sustainable internal processes in public social care organizations. The study contributes to the theory of strategic human resource management in fragile organizational environments (Boon, Den Hartog, & Lepak, 2024; Saks, 2022) .

CONCLUSIONS

Staff turnover affects the internal processes of the Salinas District MDH Office, as it disrupts operational continuity, institutional coordination, and the timely execution of administrative and technical activities. The results indicate that staff turnover hinders operations, increases the workload, and reduces the institution's ability to maintain stability in organizational processes.

Staff turnover at the institution is primarily due to contractual instability, inadequate career prospects, and an organizational climate that is detrimental to functionality. Situations such as these lead to a demotivated and exhausted workforce and create an organization shrouded in ambiguity. Consequently, this hinders the retention of key staff and the establishment of sustainable technical teams, especially in the areas of social programs and citizen services.

The absence of formal systems for documentation, staff orientation, and knowledge management contributes to the loss of institutional knowledge and memory. High turnover among experienced staff results in a loss of operational knowledge, increases operational risks, disrupts the continuity of institutional efforts, and reduces administrative effectiveness—particularly in goal management, inter-institutional collaboration, and the delivery of social services.

The stability of the workforce is a fundamental element of institutional sustainability and the optimization of processes at the MDH Salinas Territorial Directorate. Therefore, the implementation of strategies focused on staff retention, psychosocial well-being, organizational training, and institutional knowledge management will help reduce the adverse effects of staff turnover and enhance the institution's operational effectiveness.

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