

Impacts of Demographic Antecedents toward Turnover Intention amongst Academic Staff in Malaysian Private Universities

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Abstract: Job-hopping, resignation or turnover had appealed to be hit issues or problems encountered, critically observed and to be addressed strategically by most of the organisations concurrently in the corporate world. These issues had delivered the main objective of publishing this empirical paper to examine the relationship between demographic antecedents and turnover intention amongst Private Universities' academic staff in Malaysia. Several studies had provided inconsistent results due to different context of study. According to the literature review, conceptual framework and several hypotheses have been formulated, and it is a descriptive study. A quantitative and cross-sectional method has been adopted in this study, meanwhile the targeted population was academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities. Proportionate stratified sampling technique has been employed with a total of 377 samples were collected. Numbers of assumption tests have been effectively conducted, namely normality test, reliability test and factor analysis. Besides, One-Way ANOVA and Independent sample t-test were also adopted to test the hypotheses. In accordance to prominent findings, there are significant differences between gender and marital status toward turnover intention, such as female has higher intention to leave as compared to male, while married respondents have higher job commitment as compared to single respondents. Present research result had also displayed that there is a significant difference among age group towards turnover intention, however no significant difference from educational levels. The result was re-affirmed that elders are willing to retain in their respective institutions as compared to those younger. Few valuable implications were highlighted to assist in addressing issues of turnover intention. Some limitations and future researches have been acknowledged and proposed as well.

Key words: Turnover intention, gender, marital status, educational levels and age groups

INTRODUCTION

Constructive developments in higher education sector play or portray a very critical role in various countries' economic development process. According to Economic Transformation Programme, education sector is one of the important key areas which may aid in transforming Malaysia from middle income nation into high income nation by the year 2020. This is due to the impact on productivity and human capital development in Malaysia (Economic Transformation Programme, A road map for Malaysia, 2010). Higher education institutions involving in teaching and research, they provide professional training to people for high-level of job requirements and contribute in the development of social economics (Ng'ethe *et al.*, 2012). Meanwhile, research universities in Malaysia also enhanced the body of theoretical knowledge as well as their applications to practical problems. Therefore, there is no doubt that academic staff play a critical role in sustaining the quality of education as they served as the backbone of any success achievements in higher education institutions. With this rationale, academic staff should be retained by offering reasonable remunerations and benefits.

As illustrated in Table 1 below, the average turnover rate for education sector was 29.28% from July 2010 to June 2011. It has been ranked in third place after IT/ communication sector and hotel/ restaurant sector according to a study was conducted by Kelly Services' in Singapore and Malaysia. Results demonstrated that the high turnover trend is mostly seen in Gen Y, and the rationale of turnover is not concern just about the money only.

Table 1: Statistic for average turnover rate of non-manufacturing sectors in Malaysia from July 2010 to June 2011.

Non- Manufacturing Sector	Annual Average
Banking/ Finance/ Insurance	12.12%
Business Service	15.72%
Education	29.28%
Holdings & Investment/ Plantation	17.4%
Hotel/ Restaurant	32.4%
IT/ Communication	75.12%
Medical Service	19.8%
Property/ Construction	15.6%
Transport/ Warehouse service	26.88%
Wholesale/ Retail/ trading	18%

Source: Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF)

Turnover intention can be broadly defined as a behaviour of an individual to cease the membership in an organisation (Price, 2001). Morrell *et al.* (2001) classified turnover into two broad types: voluntary turnover and involuntary turnover. In the study of Price and Mueller (1981), voluntary turnover refers to willingly end the membership in an organisation and move to another organisation, shifting the employment position in the same organisation, or completely switch from one line of work to another. While, Morrell *et al.*, (2001) and Hayajneh *et al.* (2009) defined involuntary turnover as an individual unwilling to leave the organisation. The most likely causes of involuntary turnover are cost reduction and organisation restructuring. However, many studies had evidenced that turnover is an individual choice behavioural pattern which also is a psychological response (Lum *et al.*, 1998).

Turnover seems to be prominent topics in Human Resources Management context as it can deliver harmful consequences to organisation. For instance, high turnover rate of the academic staff in universities incurred higher cost and lower service quality (Mahmoodi, 2007). In addition, turnover can also lead to waste of management efforts, and demoralisation of other employees (Lee & Chon, 2000). Therefore, it turns to high difficulty and hard to ignore the issue of turnover intention of universities academic staff in Malaysia. Although there are many factors might impede the turnover intention, however we will only focus in demographic antecedents in this paper. In 1999, Osiki's study has shown that demographic variables allow inferences and explanations on turnover intention. The four basic types of demographic characteristics are namely gender, marital status, age and income levels.

Objective and Significance of the study:

In this paper, the focal point is whether the demographic antecedents will play an important role in the turnover intention of academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities or not. Objective of this study is to examine the relationship between demographic antecedents (gender, marital status, age and educational levels) and turnover intention among academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities. The study is expected to be useful for the purpose of management policy making. Hence, identifying antecedents which will affect turnover intention is very critical for management policy planning and implementation purposes.

Literature Review:

Gender and Turnover Intention:

Nowadays, Malaysian women are more willing to involve themselves in the workplace and such circumstance is projected to be continued in future (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2012). With high participation rates of women in the workforce, substantial research studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between gender and turnover intention (Miller and Wheeler, 1992). Several research studies have concluded that the relationship between gender and turnover intention are inconsistent (Smith and Calasanti, 2005; Kim, 2005; Khatri *et al.*, 2001; Byrd *et al.*, 2000).

Miller and Wheeler(1992) found that women have higher turnover intention as compared to men. This result is in lined with the studies of Kim (2005) and Huang, Chuang and Lin(2003) which have illustrated that female employees have higher intention to leave their jobs as compared to male employees. This is due to the reason of weak attachment to their jobs (Chaudhury and Ng, 1992), lower pay and more sporadic work histories (Lambert, 2001; Cohen, 1999). However, some studies have revealed that men have higher turnover intention compared to women (Smith and Calasanti, 2005; Khatri *et al.*, 2001; Mor Barak *et al.*, 2001). For the studies of Byrd *et al.* (2000) and Mitchell, MacKenzie *et al.* (2000), there is no difference between male and female toward turnover intention. The inconsistent results are due to the difference of target population, industries and culture context. This will definitely lead to different opinions toward turnover intention. Hence, a proposed hypothesis is formulated:

Proposed Hypothesis₁:

There is significant difference between male and female toward turnover intention amongst the academic staff.

Age and Turnover Intention:

Age is another antecedent that affects the turnover intention. According to Tepeci and Barlett (2002), there is a positive relationship between age and turnover intention in educational sector. There are several past studies have also concluded that age and turnover intention have an inverse relationship (Henneberger and Souza-Poza, 2007; Iverson and Currivan, 2003; Mor Barak *et al.*, 2001; Byrid *et al.*, 2000; Griffeth *et al.*, 2000; Mitchell *et al.*, 2000). Besides, some studies argued that relationship between age and turnover intention tends to be weak and researchers proposed that age is not essential to predict employees' turnover intention (Khatri *et al.*, 1999; Healy *et al.*, 1995). Various types of results were generated by different studies. These have evidenced that different employees' background may result different level of turnover intention. Hence, researchers would like to explore more on to what extent the proposed assumption is valid in the case of Malaysian Private Universities' academic staff. The second hypothesis is proposed as below:

Proposed Hypothesis 2:

There is a significant difference among age groups towards turnover intention among academic staff.

Marital Status and Turnover Intention:

The relationship between marital status and turnover intention is one of the most investigated topics in the past literatures. Salami (2008) stated that marriage has negative impact over the turnover intentions of employees whereby it will be costly for employees' family to relocate for jobs. Similarly, marital status has become a significant variable impact on organisation. This result is consistent with Akintayo (2010) which indicated that singles have considerable higher turnover intentions than married ones. This is because married respondents have family responsibility and especially for those male employees who are married will have higher sense of family obligations. However, Chughtai and Zafar (2006) stated that there is no significant relationship between marital status and turnover intention among employee in educational sector. Besides, there is a majority of employees who are young in age and when their spouses relocate for jobs, this would directly cause many employees to quit voluntarily and follow their spouses (Ahuja *et al.*, 2007). Hence, the third hypothesis is formulated as below:

Proposed Hypothesis 3:

There is a significant difference between marital status towards turnover intention among academic staff.

Educational Level and Turnover Intention:

The level of education is found to be positively linked with turnover intention where employees who are more educated are more likely to quit (Mitchell *et al.*, 2000). Similar results generated by other studies conducted in different sectors such as retail sector (Igharia and Greenhaus, 1992), nursing sector (Yin and Yang, 2002) and hotel sector (Khatri *et al.*, 2001). According to Iqbar (2010), employees who are higher educated will have higher expectation towards their existing employer. This is far more challenging and difficult to fulfil their needs. However, Salami (2008) argued that employees with higher education qualification and occupying higher position will have more responsibilities toward organisation. Therefore, it results higher organisational commitment and lower turnover intention. The result is consistent with the study of Curry *et al.* (2005) which illustrated that negative relationship exist between the level of education and turnover intention among the social service employees. Despite from all that, there is a study has failed to associate the level of education and organisational commitment as well as turnover intention of academic staff in Pakistani Universities (Chughtai and Zafar, 2006).

Proposed Hypothesis 4:

There is a significant difference among the educational level towards turnover intention among academic staff.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development:

Based on the discussion presented in literature review, a conceptual framework is constructed and proposed in Figure 1. As referring to the proposed conceptual framework, the main objective for this paper is to examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and turnover intentions of Malaysian Private Universities academic staff. Figure 1 displayed that demographics characteristics of gender, marital status, age and educational level have influences over turnover intention in Malaysian Private Universities.

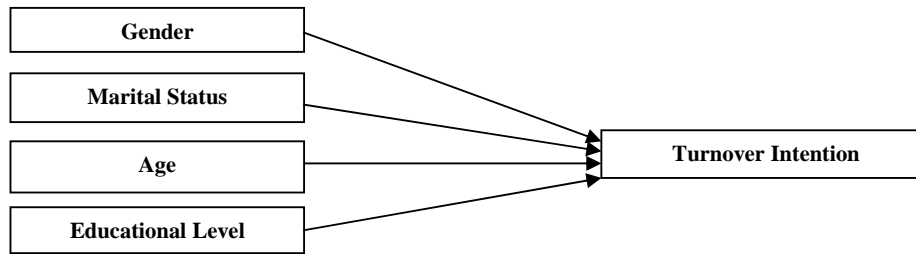


Fig. 1: The Proposed Conceptual Framework

In accordance to the literature review, there are four hypotheses have been proposed.

Hypothesis 1:

There is a significant difference between male and female towards turnover intention.

Hypothesis 2:

There is a significant difference between single and married towards turnover intention.

Hypothesis 3:

There is a significant difference among age groups toward turnover intention.

Hypothesis 4:

There is a significant difference among educational levels toward turnover intention.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Questionnaire Design:

Generally, this study's self-administered survey questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section is known as demographic section which included respondents' gender, marital status, age and educational level. The second section of questionnaire was prepared to assess respondents' perception of intent to leave their existing employer. Items used to measure turnover intention were developed and adopted from Hunt, Osborn and Martin (1981) and will be assessed with the adoption of five-likert scale.

Sampling Design:

The target population of this research is academic staff who working in the Malaysian Private Universities. The size of targeted population is known. Therefore, a proportional stratified sampling technique was adopted. A targeted sample size was 380. According to Roscoe (1975), sample sizes should be larger than 30 and not more than 500 for most of the researches. Additionally, the sample sizes should be at least ten times more than the number of variables.

Data Collection:

Approximately one thousand questionnaires were administered via personal distribution, online survey and email. Out of 1000 respondents, a total of 433 respondents have participated in the survey. However, 56 of answered questionnaires were uncompleted and discarded, which resulted a total of 377 usable questionnaires that yielding an actual response rate of 37.7%. Hence, the response rate had attained the minimum acceptance of response rate (30%), which is adequate for most of the researches (Sekaran, 2003).

Statistical Analysis:

Data were analysed via the application of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 software. The analyses of data were divided into two main parts. The first part known as descriptive statistical part, it can be further divided into three stages. The first stage was descriptive analysis which included the frequency and percentage of the participants' characteristics. Next, a Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency reliability of the items within those constructs and followed by normality test which using Kurtosis and Skewness tests have been applied to test on the normality of the data. The last stage was factor analysis which test the multicollinearity, singularity and principal component analysis.

For inferential statistical part, this part has also been divided into three stages. Firstly, independent sample t-test analyses were conducted to test on the differences mean between male and female and married and single group of respondents towards turnover intentions. Secondly, ANOVA test analyses were employed to examine the differences among the mean of age groups and educational levels toward turnover intention.

Results:**Respondents Profile:**

There were 192 (51%) male respondents and 185 (49%) female respondents have participated in the survey. Majority of qualified respondents were married, 254 (67%). One hundred and fifty seven (42%) respondents were in the 30-39 years age group. This was followed by the age group of below 30 years (121, 32%), 40-49 years (72, 19%) and 50 years and above (27, 7%). Huge number of respondents were master degree graduates, 276 (73%), fifty nine respondents were PhD holders (16%) and 42 were Bachelor Degree holders (11%).

Normality and Reliability Analysis:

A proper normality test has been conducted in order to ensure the data is normal distributed. The normality test results for turnover intention data was 0.205 for skewness test and -0.193 for kurtosis test. Both tests have fulfilled the rules-of-thumb which is fall within the range of 1 to -1 for kurtosis and +3 to -3 for skewness. Therefore, the data were acceptable and considered normal distributed. For reliability analysis, the Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient value for turnover intention was 0.866 which is above 0.7 minimum values (Hair, Money, Samouel and Page, 2007). Hence, the turnover intention items were indicated good reliability and acceptable.

Factor Analysis for Turnover Intention:

A preliminary analysis has been conducted in order to ensure that there is no singularity and multicollinearity in the data. All the significant values are greater than 0.05 and correlation coefficient values are lesser than 0.9. Therefore, there is no any singularity and multicollinearity problem exist in this set of data. Based on the table 1, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin of sampling adequacy is 0.759 which it falls in the good range (Kaiser, 1974). Besides, the Bartlett's test for the data set is 0.000 which also shown that all correlations within a correlation matrix are significant. Hence, the factor analysis is appropriate enough for these data. Based on principal component analysis, there was only one Eigenvalue of 3.198 extracted and displayed greater than 1.0 and the total variance explained by these four items was 79.94%.

Table 1: Factors Identified by Principal Components Factor Analysis for Turnover Intention

Factor's Name	Items	Factor's Loading	Eigenvalue
Turnover Intention	1. How do you feel about leaving this organization?	0.928	3.198
	2. If you were completely free to choose, would you prefer to continue working for this organization?	0.924	
	3. Which of the following statements most clearly reflects your future with this organization in the next year?	0.876	
	4. How important is it to you personally that you spend your career in this organization rather than some other organization?	0.845	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.759 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 0.000			

T-Test for Gender:

Based on Levene's test for equality of variances, the significant value is 0.245 which is more than 0.05 (Table 2). Hence, the variances for both male and female groups were assumed equal at alpha value of 0.05. For the t-test for equality means, the p-value for t-test is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Thus, alternate hypothesis H_1 is supported. The output indicated that there is a difference in the level of turnover intention between male and female respondents. To solidify the results, 95% of confidence interval for mean differences were 0.14425 and 0.39775. Since the values do not contain zero, we can strongly conclude that there is a difference in the mean (0.2710) between males (4.3116) and females (4.5826).

Table 2: Independent Samples T-Test for Gender

Equal Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Assumed	1.355	.245	4.204	375	.000	.27100	.06446	.14425	.39775
Not Assumed			4.202	373.17	.000	.27100	.06450	.14417	.39782
Mean	Male	4.3116							
	Female	4.5826							

T-Test for Marital Status:

The significant value for Levene's test for equality of variance was 0.643 which larger than 0.05 (Table 3). Therefore, we can conclude that both group variances are homogeneous at alpha value of 0.05. Based on the t-test for equality means, the p-value for the test is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. Hence, alternate hypothesis H_2 should not be rejected. As referred to the 95% confidence level, the mean differences were 0.10712 and 0.37761. Since the values do not contain zero, it can be concluded that there is a difference in mean between single and married respondents. Thus, alternate hypothesis H_2 is strongly supported.

Table 3: Independent Samples T-Test for Marital Status

Equal Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Assumed	0.215	.643	3.524	375	.000	.24236	.06878	Lower	Upper
Not Assumed			3.461	238.838	.001	.24236	.07002	.10442	.37761
Mean	Single	4.5299							
	Married	4.2875							

One Way ANOVA for Age Groups:

The Levene's test of equality of variances delivered a p-value of 0.884 which more than 0.05 (Table 4). Thus, the variances can be assumed to be homogeneous. The p-value from One-Way ANOVA procedure was 0.000, which less than 0.05. Therefore, at least one pair of age groups different significantly in term of means, so the third proposed hypothesis H_3 is supported. Based on Turkey HSD test, age group of below 30 years was significantly different to age groups of 30 to 39 years and 40 to 49 years. The mean differences were 0.34598 and 0.46315 respectively. However, the remaining pairs do not have any difference in term of means.

Table 4: ANOVA Test for Age Group

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig. Value
0.218	3	373	0.884
ANOVA			
F Value - 10.845; Sig. Value - 0.000			
Turkey HSD			
Age Group (I)	Age Group (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig. Value
Below 30	30 - 39	-0.34598	0.000
Below 30	40 - 49	-0.46315	0.000

One Way ANOVA for Educational Level:

The p-value for Levene's test of equality variance among educational level was 0.559, which larger than 0.05 (Table 5). Therefore, the variances among the educational level can be assumed to be similar. Based on p-value from One-Way ANOVA procedure, it is stated that 0.138 which also meant that there was no difference among the educational level variances toward turnover intention. Hence, the last proposed hypothesis is not supported.

Table 5: ANOVA Test for Education Level

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig. Value
0.583	2	374	0.559
ANOVA			
F Value	Sig. Value		
1.988	0.138		

Discussion And Conclusion**Discussion for Hypothesis H_1 :**

Based on results, there was a significant difference between male and female towards turnover intention among academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities. Besides, female academic staff tend to have higher turnover intention as compared to male academic staff in private universities. The result was consistent with the studies of Kim (2005) and Huang, Chuang and Lin (2003). Some studies had claimed that female employees have weaker attachment to their employers due to they have to play dual role in their daily lives. Dual role means female academic staff have the responsibility to commit themselves into family as well as to work in order to reduce the burden of their husbands (Akintayo, 2010). According to Lambert (2001), female has higher turnover intention is also caused by lower pay and more sporadic working histories. For male, they have lower turnover intention as they have low commitment to their family (Akintayo, 2010). They spend more time in their works as they have the responsibility to provide financial support to their own family.

Discussion for Hypothesis H₂:

The result has evidenced that there was a significant difference between single and married academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities, and single academic staff have higher intention to leave an institution as compared to married academic staff. The present research result was in lined with the studies of Salami (2008) and Akintayo (2010). Akintayo (2010) stated that married staff are not willing to relocate for jobs as it will be costly for them and their family. Married academic staff have high family responsibility as they are required to provide financial support to their family, especially for male academic staff who are married.

Discussion for Hypothesis H₃ and H₄:

The third hypothesis is supported, due to there was significant difference among age groups toward turnover intention among academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities. According to result, younger academic staff have higher sense of turnover as compared to elder academic staff. Result was also supported by a number of past empirical studies such as Henneberger and Souza-Poza (2007), Iverson and Curri van (2003), Mor Barak *et al.* (2001), Byrid *et al.* (2000), Griffeth *et al.* (2000) and Mitchell *et al.* (2000). When an academic staff grows older, they are less willing and have low intention to leave an institution. This might due to the reason of their ability of adaptation to another new working environment, policy and culture.

For the last hypothesis, the result does not show any significant difference among the educational levels toward turnover intention among academic staff. The result was similar to Chughtai and Zafar (2006) study. However, based on the mean value for each educational levels, PhD holder was slightly higher in turnover intention as compared to Bachelor Degree holder and Master holder academic staff. Iqbar (2010) stated that employees who are higher educated will have higher expectations on their existing employers. Hence, this is far more challenging for institutions to design remuneration packages that are able to satisfy their highly educated academic staff. Moreover, highly educated academic staff tend to have higher chance of employability in any institutions. Therefore, academic staff who possessed higher qualifications will have higher turnover intention as compared to lower educational level's academic staff.

Implications:

Based on findings, there are several useful implications can be highlighted in order to address the issue of turnover intention among academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities. First, the present study findings indicate those females who are married will play dual role responsibility which are family and work responsibilities (Akintayo, 2010). Institutions are required to pay attention to this situation whereby they should assign less challenging managerial positions to females. Hence, the married female academic staff able to balance their responsibilities. Second, institutions should assign single academic staff to hold challenging job positions (Akintayo, 2010). With this act, single academic staff will need to contribute higher efforts into their jobs. Eventually, this will strengthen their commitment towards the organisation and ensure the improvement of institution performances. Third, the institution and Human Resource authorities are encouraged to practise flexible working hours and provide some attractive benefits such as childcare services to their staff. An attractive remuneration package should be provided in order to retain experienced academic staff. This is not only will benefit younger generation academic staff, but also able to motivate married academic staff to retain in the institution. Last but not least, the management should also be advised to provide some valuable and beneficial trainings and workshops to those academic staff who are young without any experience, first degree holder and single in status. Hence, this able to enhance their knowledge and competencies in performing their existing duties effectively and efficiently.

Limitations and Future Research:

One of the limitations of this study is the target respondents. Present study is focus on academic staff of private universities in Malaysia. Therefore, the results generated were not applicable to colleges, university colleges as well as public universities, due to the working cultures, environments and policies are differ among each other's. Thus, in future researches more studies can be conducted on academic staff of public universities and colleges. Another limitation is the demographic profile of samples. Majority of respondents are Master holders, while only small group of respondents are PhD and Bachelor Degree holders. Hence, this might affect the results' generalisability. Therefore in future researches, researchers are required to pay more attention in selecting qualified samples by adopting proportionate stratified sampling technique based on educational levels of academic staff and gender. These initiatives will definitely can solidify the eventual results.

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