

## Job Commitment among Malaysian Muslim Workers

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**Abstract:** Although, many researchers have discussed the issues of employee turnover extensively, it remains an unresolved issue. This study analysed the relationship between job satisfaction and perceived organisational support towards an intention to leave one's job. It proposes the best predictor variable which most influences employees to leave their job. Using cluster sampling this study sampled 452 respondents in nine manufacturing companies comprising nine districts in Selangor, Malaysia. Muslim workers were highly satisfied with their job and perceived the support received from their organisations moderately. This study contributes significantly towards theoretical improvement, especially concerning Muslim behaviour. Islam encourages all Muslims to maintain their trusts and considers working a potential act of worship (Ibadah). Thus being Islamic also implies being loyal to the employing organisation.

**Key words:** Manufacturing sectors, job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, intention to leave, loyal

### INTRODUCTION

In the area of Human Resources (HR), turnover intention is a major issue that remains unresolved (Mohammed *et al.*, 2011; Tian, 2009; Feng and Angeline, 2010). As noted in Malaysia insider, Malaysia has to encourage and develop their workforce besides upgrading the skills and capabilities of the existing workforce and retain its top talent to become more competitive in the industry. Supported by Govaerts *et al.* (2011) and Nizamuddin *et al.* (2015), companies must struggle to gain and retain talented employees. As defined by Purani and Sahadev (2008), intention to leave a job refers to employee's planning to quit their present job and find another in the near future. Employee turnover is a major concern of the management who need to develop solutions to avoid it affecting organisational performance adversely (Udo *et al.*, 1997; Calisir *et al.*, 2011). Abbasi *et al.* (2008) stated that turnover involves lot of costs in hiring, selecting, training and recruiting especially for new employees. Sumner and Niederman (2004) pointed out that hidden costs such as the difficulties to complete projects and disruption in team-based work environments may occur as a result of losing highly skilled staff through turnover.

The intention to leave a job can be voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary turnover refers to the employee choosing to leave the organisation either to escape negative experiences or pursue better opportunities outside the organisation. For Vandenberg and Nelson

(1999), it refers to an employee's plan to permanently leave their organisation based on their estimates due to the failure of the company to manage their internal problems such as consideration of leadership style, work culture or condition and poor salaries cause. Given the preventable nature of this type of turnover, it is a top concern of management as they potentially have the ability to prevent it from happening (Ciftcioglu, 2010; Nizamuddin *et al.*, 2015).

Spector *et al.* (2007) pointed out that turnover intention and job satisfaction are associated and the outcome for the satisfaction of behaviour will lead employees to remain in the organisation. However, dissatisfied employees will have lower job satisfaction and the level of turnover intention will be high. As a result this employee will seek to change their current job by looking for other employment. Dissatisfied employees leave organisations more often and dissatisfaction with work has a proven correlation with turnover intentions.

On the other hand, the Malaysia manufacturing sectors have recorded strong economic growth to become the largest contributor to the total exports and the second largest to GDP since 2012. This has led to increased job vacancies in the manufacturing sector to 37%. Despite the fluctuations in economic activities, the manufacturing sector remains significant (Zhang and Sharifi, 2000; Nizamuddin *et al.*, 2015) as it works towards reducing the turnover rate among employees.

Table 1: Statistics of voluntary and involuntary turnover based on a few sectors from year 2008-2010

Sectors	No. of workers		Total
	Voluntary turnover	Involuntary turnover	
Real estate, renting, services	336	2274	2610
Community, social services	209	1496	1705
Electricity, gas, water supply	5	156	161
Hotel, restaurant	26	796	822
Health, social work	0	125	125
Finance	196	568	764
Construction	150	775	925
Manufacturing	10321	26071	36392

Companies in all industries continually face the issue of turnover. Recently, employee turnover has become a concern in Malaysia's manufacturing sectors (Nizamuddin *et al.*, 2015). Shamsuzzoha and Shumon (2007) argue that the job security in the government sector is high compared with private sectors and even though salary structures are much higher in private sectors, the turnover rate is much higher in private sectors.

Additionally, the turnover rate in manufacturing sectors in Malaysia is high due to employee complexity (Nizamuddin *et al.*, 2015). As recorded by the Ministry of Human Resource, manufacturing sectors suffered from job turnover between 2008 until 2010 as shown in Table 1. From Table 1, it is clear that from all sectors in Malaysia; a total of 36,392 employees were involved in this turnover crisis which represents 75% of the total turnover rate. About 86% of the total number came from manufacturing sectors. Thus 11,957 employees left the companies voluntarily from 2008 until 2010 though the unemployment rate is high as reported by the Labour Department of Peninsular Malaysia.

The manufacturing sector needs to retain their talented employees and minimise the issue of employee turnover to become more competitive and productive. As supported by Haji and Haji (2007), the management has to focus on reducing voluntary turnover to avoid losing valuable employees. This study addresses the turnover problem among Muslim workers given that they have not been a target population in studies of employee turnover in the manufacturing sector in Selangor.

**Objectives:** The specific aims of this study are as follows:

- To analyse the relationship between job satisfaction and perceived organisational support towards an intention to leave a job among Muslim workers in Selangor's manufacturing sector
- To propose the best predictor of Muslim workers in Selangor's manufacturing sector

**Justification of the study:** This study seeks to relate the importance of job commitment with intention to leave jobs among Muslim workers in the state of Selangor.

Consequently, it will introduce a new prediction model of intention to leave a job among Muslim workers in Selangor. The findings will benefit managers in Malaysian organisations. It contributes to the field of research by presenting the outcome of perceived organisational support on individual performance. For managers it is an opportunity to understand what motivates employee to perform beyond their capabilities. What is more, it will provide valuable information about the workers such as to hire female workers and to compare their performance with male workers. Lastly, this study will be a platform for all top management in manufacturing sectors to implement consistent work ethic to all workers thereby enhancing the quality of work and building loyalty and trust toward the organisation.

### Literature review

**Intention to leave:** Many definitions have been used to describe the real situation of intention to leave the job in the organisation. For instance, Whitman described turnover intention as thoughts of voluntarily leaving the organisation. Meanwhile, Purani and Sahadev (2008) defined intention to leave as employees planning to quit their present job and actively looking for another job in the near future. Hanafiah and Normah pointed out that audit staff leave their job or organisations because of dissatisfaction with the job and job-related stress. Thus, low performance and job stress by employees affect organisational operations adversely.

Hom and Griffeth explained that turnover intention is employees' decision to leave the organisation at some point in the future. Tett and Meyer (1993) defined turnover intention as less obedience among the employees leading them to leave the organisation. Vandenberg and Nelson (1999) defined intention to quit as the individual's estimated probability (subjective) and permanently leaving their organisation at some point in the near future. Wickramasinghe (2009) study of IT personnel showed they had little loyalty to their organisations causing them to leave their organisations in search of higher rewards elsewhere. Mobley (1977) defined turnover intention as involving a cognitive process such as thinking, planning and desiring to leave a job. Fishbein and Ajzen argued that intentions towards an act or behaviour are distinct from that act or behaviour meaning that even though an employee may intend to quit, they may not do so (Fig. 1).

**Job satisfaction:** Locke (1976) associated job satisfaction with the work environment in the workplace and how it can meet the needs of employees in the organisation. Newstrom and Davis viewed job satisfaction as attitudes which will provide benefits to employee and employee benefits to be received as a result of work performed. Spector *et al.* (2007) added job satisfaction as a feeling of

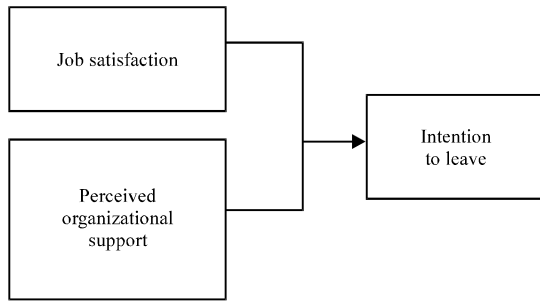


Fig. 1: Proposed conceptual framework

worker’s satisfaction on aspects of their work. Abdullah *et al.* (2009) showed that satisfaction with co-workers (supervisor and co-worker support) can help reduce the stress which in turn improves job satisfaction and motivation and increases commitment, improves performance and reduces employee turnover intentions (Currivan, 1999; Lam and Chan 2002).

**Perceived organizational support:** According to Johnsrud, perceived organisational support could be viewed as the inability of workers to adapt to the technology and work environment. The lack of management support leads to low commitment, low morale and a high desire to leave. What’s more, perceived organisational support can enhance the trust of employees for the support given by the employers and when employers are concerned about their emotional or socio-emotional needs, it can increase work effort (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Furthermore, Howes revealed perceived organisational support as the relationship between organisational commitment and intention to leave the job by the employee. Also, Dawley *et al.* (2008) revealed that perceived organisational support has the most significant effect on employee commitment to the organisation and intention to find a job.

**Conceptual framework:** The hypotheses seeks to analyse the relationship between independent variables namely JS and POS towards dependent variable namely intention to leave the job among Muslim workers in Selangor’s manufacturing sector:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Job satisfaction significantly correlates with the intention to leave the job
- H<sub>2</sub>: Perceived organisational support significantly correlates with the intention to leave the job

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study implemented a cross-sectional design and adopted a quantitative approached by using structured

Table 2: Operator population.

State	No. of operators
Selangor	78,583
Johor	61,085
Penang	42,122
Perak	31,668
Kedah	22,381
Melaka	19,054
Negeri Sembilan	18,633
Kuala Lumpur	13,344
Pahang	8205
Kelantan	4027
Terengganu	2977
Perlis	846
<b>Total</b>	<b>302,925</b>

Labour Department of Peninsular Malaysia in 2010. Ministry of Human Resource Malaysia

questionnaires. There were two phases involved in the method of analysis which are descriptive statistics to clarify the profile of the respondents and inferential statistics to generalise beyond the data to find patterns that exist in the target population. There are 302,925 operators in Peninsular Malaysia as reported by MOHR. The state of Selangor was chosen for this study because Selangor is recorded as having the highest number of operators with 78,583 as reported by MOHR. Only Muslim workers were selected as respondents. The unit of analysis is individual operators in Selangor’s manufacturing sector.

Using cluster sampling, this study distributed 720 questionnaires to the respondents. Based on the table provided by Krejcie and Morgan generalised scientific guidelines for the sample size decisions (Chua, 2006) only 384 out of 78,583 operators are needed as the sample in this study. Therefore, 720 questionnaires were divided to avoid bias and error while answering the questions. Consequently, 720 questionnaires were distributed in nine districts in Selangor and 80 Muslim workers were randomly selected from each district (Table 2).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There were nine of manufacturing companies involved with data collection. These nine companies encompassed the nine districts in Selangor which are Gombak District, Hulu Langat District, Hulu Selangor District, Klang District, Kuala Langat District, Kuala Selangor District, Petaling District, Sabak Bernam District and Sepang District. As a result, a total of 452 questionnaires were fully answered were received. The information related to the distribution of questionnaires is summarised in Table 3.

Table 4 shows the respondents profile according to their demographic attributes. From the 452 respondents selected in this study, 279 or 61.7% were male and 173 or

Table 3: Response rate

Items	No. of questionnaires
Total questionnaires distributed	720
Questionnaires returned	650
Usable questionnaires	452
Response rate (%)	63

Table 4: Background of the respondents

Profile respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	279	61.7
Female	173	38.3
Total	452	100.0
<b>Age (years)</b>		
<20	6	1.3
21-30	193	42.3
31-40	158	35.0
41-50	93	20.6
>51	4	0.9
Total	452	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	115	25.4
Married	319	70.6
Divorced	18	4.0
Total	452	100.0
<b>Highest education level</b>		
MSE/SPM and below	204	45.1
STPM/STAM	84	18.6
Diploma	99	21.9
Bachelor degree	56	12.4
Master degree	5	1.1
No response	4	0.9
Total	452	100.0
<b>Length of services (years)</b>		
<10	274	26.4
11-15	75	24.7
16-20	64	21.4
21-25	25	11.0
>26	14	10.4
Total	452	100.0

38.3% were female. The highest response rate was aged from the range between 21-30 year representing 193 respondents or 42.3% followed by respondents from the age range between 31-40 year which represented 158 respondents or 35%. Respondents from the age range 41-50 year were represented 93 respondents or 20.6%, 6 respondents or 1.3% respondents from the age range below 20 years and 4 respondents or 0.9% represented respondents from the age above 51 years old. Meanwhile, the majority of respondents were married which represented 319 or 70.6% and 115 respondents or 25.4% respondents were single and 18 respondents or 4% respondents were divorced.

Table 5 shows the correlations in the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. Job satisfaction was significantly associated with intention to leave the job at the value of  $r = -0.529$  and  $p < 0.001$ . This negative relationship suggests that the more respondents were satisfied with their work, it will lead to a lower effect on intention to leave their job. Thus, this finding supported  $H_1$ . Meanwhile, perceived organisational support was also significantly associated

Table 5: Output for regression weights

Variables	Estimate	SE	CR	p-value	Hypothesis
Intention-POS	-0.622	0.008	2.750	***	Supported
Intention-JS	-0.529	0.036	14.694	***	Supported

Table 6: Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Results
$H_1$ : Job satisfaction significantly correlates with Intention to leave job	Accepted
$H_2$ : Perceived organisational support significantly correlates with intention to leave job	Accepted

with intention to leave the job with a value of  $r = -0.622$  and  $p < 0.001$ . This negative relationship suggests that the more respondents received support from the organisation and care about their workers which will reduce worker intentions to leave their job. Hence, this finding supported  $H_2$ . Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) version 21 showed that the relationship between job satisfaction and perceived organisational support has a significant relationship towards an intention to leave the job among Muslim workers in Selangor's manufacturing sector. While perceived organisational support was the predictor variable that most influenced Muslim worker's intentions to leave their job.

## CONCLUSION

The aims of this study are to analyse the relationship between job satisfaction and perceived organisational support towards an intention to leave one's job among Muslim workers in Selangor's manufacturing sector and to propose the best predictor antecedents towards an intention to leave. This finding provided extension information to some prediction antecedents that have significant effects in clarifying worker's intentions to leave their job in Malaysian manufacturing. The findings showed that JS and POS have significant negative correlations with the intention to leave. As for the implications for policymakers, the information is critical in the decision-making process to ensure the sustainability of the industry. Management could adopt Islamic leadership styles to introduce efficient strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Future researchers are recommended to conduct research on the intention to leave among non-Muslim workers at different companies. This study focuses on manufacturing sectors in the state of Selangor. Meaning that the results are not generalisable. Thus, researchers on job commitment are advised to include other states like Pulau Pinang and Johor. Future research should also think of other factors that might have a positive impact on the organization's performance and to cope better with the issue of intention to leave organisations.

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