**Training & Development and Performance Management in Organisation: the Malaysian employees Turnover Intention Study**

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This study addresses the impact of training and development (TD) and performance management on employee turnover intention in Malaysian Organisations. As TD theoretically influences the turnover intention, the researchers hypothesized that TD would have an indirect effect on turnover intention through performance management. A sample consisting of 633 public and private employees in peninsular Malaysia were involved in this study. Overall, results using structural equation modelling showed that TD has significant effect on turnover intention, and has indirect effect via the mediator. Using multigroup analysis, it was found that the model was invariant within male and female employees. These findings suggest that human resource practices available in organisation that fit with regard to content and process are necessary to improve the behaviour of employees.

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**KEY WORDS:** training and development; performance management; turnover intention; mediator; structural equation modelling, bootstrapping.

One of the many challenges of managers nowadays is to manage human resources. Compared to the last few decades, workers performed more manual-oriented tasks than knowledge-oriented tasks. However, in this century, knowledge workers are required heavily to achieve competitive advantage as their effectiveness contributes to change, innovation and creativity of organisations. Workers that fall into the knowledge categories normally prefer to work in organisations that provide training and skill-development opportunities, thus influencing their intention to remain in the organisation (Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Noe, 2005). Turnover intent refers to a specific behaviour and it is not the actual turnover (Berndt, 1981). Employee turnover has been a long discussion issue in human resource management (HRM) as it bring detrimental effects on organisational outcomes. When employees leave, it incurred more cost as organisations have to allocate more expenses on exit interviews, severance pay, staffing and training new hires (Holtom,Mitchell, Lee, and Inderrieden:, 2005; Steel, Griffeth and Hom, 2002).Thus, to avoid the unnecessary expenses spent, it is important for managers to be aware of the antecedents that could counter employees intention of turnover. These are some of the few reasons on why researchers in different disciplines have shown interest in discovering ways to retain them and to remove any intention of leaving the organisation. As discussed by Fayol (1916) in his principles of management, stability of employment tenure is one of the important principles in effective management of an organisation.

It is important to find the various antecedents that could moderate and mediate the relationship between training and turnover intention. Past studies treated gender as a control variable. This study emphasizes on individual level analysis and gender is treated as a moderator. Employees’ perception of performance management in organisation is the mediator variable. This study sought to uniquely examines the specific human resource (HR) practices; that is, training and development and performance management to turnover intention. We sought to test the validity of the moderated-mediated model using the sample of Malaysian employees. Figure 1 proposes the conceptual framework of this study.

|  |
| --- |
| H4  H3  H2  H1    H5  Gender |

**Figure 1**. Conceptual framework: Training and development as a precursor of performance management and to turnover intention. Gender is the moderator variable. H=hypothesis.

**Relationship between training and development, and turnover intention**

Training and development (TD) is the formal training given to employees by the organisation. The objectives of TD usually are skills acquisition and development. According to Harel and Tzafrir (1999), training improves employees’ relevant skills and abilities; and increases their satisfaction with their current job and workplace. Overall, training can be delivered either on- and/or off-the job, formally, emphasizing the skill, cross-functional,team, literacy training and so on (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy, 2006).

Researchers claimed that turnover intention could be minimised when employees perceived there are availability of training opportunities in their organisation (Allen, Shore, and Griffeth, 2003; Meyer and Smith, 2000; Wayne, Shore, and Liden, 1997). Availability of training and development opportunities to enhance knowledge, skill and ability of employees will indirectly create a positive climate that are conducive for developing knowledge workers (Allen et al., 2003), and contribute in reducing their turnover intentions (Ng, Butts, Vandenberg, DeJoy, and Wilson, 2006; Noe, 2005). However, there are studies that reported inconsistent results of the relationship between training and turnover intentions. Some researchers reported that training investment provides no significant effect on employee turnover intentions (Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Burke, Burgess and Fallon, 2006).

In fact, researchers have found that inconsistency results occur due to various situations. If workers fit well with the job but not in the organisation, there is still a high possibility of turnover as their acquisition of training is to increase their chances to employment mobility. (Wheeler, Buckley, Halbesleben, Brouer, and Ferris, 2005; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson, 2005). However, if workers do not fit well with job and organisation will stay in the organisation due to low a mobility chance and reduce their turnover intention (Wheeler et al, 2005; Trevor, 2001). Although there is no conclusive evidence to prove whether training correlates to turnover intention, it is expected that availability of training and development opportunities do bring about effects of turnover intention. However, this study posits that certain mechanism could influence the correlation between these the two variables, and hence, the hypothesis of this study is that:

H1: TD has significant effect on turnover intention.

**Mediating role of Performance Management**

Since the 1990s, researchers have placed a great interest in analysing the influence of HRM on organisational outcomes. Laka-Mathebula (2004) claimed that HRM covers the motivational aspect that inherently develops the individual’s abilities and attitudes to allow the employee to grow personally, and ultimately contribute towards organisational interests. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2006) pointed out that HRM does influence employees’ behaviour, attitudes and performance. HRM practices are defined in areas such as recruitment and selection, performance management, compensation, training, job analysis and safety and health (Hornsby and Kuratko, 2003). Most researchers have analysed the effective improvements to the organisation’s performance (Lee and Lee, 2007; Sang, 2005). However, it is important to identify one or few HR practices that could positively influence the employees’ attitudes. This is because HRM’s role in an organisation has been perceived as a cost centre and hence, does not contribute profit to organisation (Mello, 2011). It is an indeed a great challenge for HR practitioners to convince their management to implement various HR practices. Therefore, this study looked into whether of HR practices such as performance management mediates the relationship between TD and turnover intention.

Classic research on leader-member exchange theory demonstrated that communication leads to high-quality supervisor–subordinate relationships (Baker and Ganster, 1985; Fairhurst, 1993). In return, this relationship plays a key role in retaining employees in the organisation. Among others, a quality performance management should include opportunities for feedback sessions with their manager (McCubbrey, 2004), objective performance indicators (Rotundo and Sackett 2002), generate internal promotion opportunities that expand employees’ connections with other people in the organisation (Hom et al., 2009). Moreover, high quality performance management is able to deter turnover intention (Peterson, 2004; Brown, Hyatt, and Benson, 2010) and a low-quality performance appraisal system increases intentions to leave (Brown et al. 2010). Empirical research of 65 studies also found that there exists a significant relationship between performance management and the employee’s intention to quit (Zimmerman, 2009). This relationship, however, is still elusive as American Psychological Association (2001) revealed the importance of understanding conditions that could affect employee intent to leave the organisation. As mentioned by Bateman and Snell (2015), if performance management is done well, it can help employees to improve their performance, pay, and chances for promotion and eventually increase the employees’ and the organisation’s effectiveness. However, a poor performance management creates negative effects as it can cause resentment, reduce motivation and even expose the organisation to legal action. Therefore, performance management plays a role as the mediator between the organisation’s TD and turnover intentions.We hypothesized that:

H2: TD has significant effects on performance management

H3: Performance management have significant effect on turnover intention

H4: Performance management mediates the relationship between TD with turnover intention

**Moderating role of Gender on mediated relationships**

Gender plays a significant role in helping to further investigate the influence HRM practices on turnover intention since females and males think and behave differently (Ozdemir and Kilic, 2011; Okazaki and Mendez, 2013). Johnson and Spector (2007) found that female employees have lower job satisfaction and affective well-being but higher emotional exhaustion compared to the male employees. Furthermore, researchers on negotiation also found that female employees are often reluctant to negotiate because initiating negotiations is perceived as stereotypically a male employee’s behaviour (Bowles, Babcock, and Lai, 2007). There is another research that claimed female employees to emphasise the importance of maintaining a positive interpersonal relationships as compared to male employees (Bulan, Erickson, and Wharton, 1997; Zhao, 2003). In other words, female employees generally feel that working well with others contribute considerably to job satisfaction and job success. Recent studies have also shown that gender have significant differences, either their intention to accept new technologies (Li, Glass, and Records, 2008; Simsek, 2011) or the relationship between turnover intention and organisation commitment. Therefore, in this study, we expect that the gender moderate the relationship between HR practices and turnover intention. Our final hypothesis is:

H5: Gender moderates the mediated relationship

**Method**

A survey was conducted and respondents were chosen randomly from profit making Public and Private Limited companies. There were 633 participants from 146 companies who were willing to participate in this study. The research participants consisted of 299 male (47%) and 334 female (53%). Five age-range response choices were offered; ranging from 20 to 60 and over (SD=0.754, most respondents indicated they were from Categories 1, 2 and 3, ranging in ages between 20 and 49 (90.6%). A majority of the participants were in managerial positions (N=491, 63.7%), and only 140 respondents were from non-managerial positions (22.1%). Two participants did not indicate the positions. The level of education was mostly Diploma/STPM (N=343, 54.2%) and majority of respondents were in the salary range between RM3000 to RM5000.

**Instruments**

A total of 10-items were used to measure the perceived of TD and performance management. These items were adapted and modified using Gould-Williams and Davies (2005) derived from Guest (1997) and Marchington and Grugulis (2000). These items demonstrated high reliability and validity in previous studies of high-performance HRM systems (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005; Gould-Williams, 2003). The response scale used ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Examples items include:

* “This organisation has provided employees with training opportunities enabling them to extend the range of skills and abilities” (training and development)
* “Pay raises and promotions are closely tied to performance outcome of employees” (performance management).

Turnover intention was measured with using three sub-scales of Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) study. The three questions focused on eliciting respondents’ feedback on their turnover intentions; their feelings about remaining with their current organisation, and also their desire to leave their current organisation. Responses were measured using instruments on a 6-point Likert-type format. Alpha coefficients of this study are shown in Table 1.

**Analysis Strategy**

Before using structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis to measure the stipulated hypotheses, it was statistically important to measure the intercorrelations among all variables (see Table 1). Then, the Harman’s one factor test was employed to determine whether the common-method variance in the study was serious problem (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986) – this was crucial as this was a cross-sectional study. Results showed there were 3 factors in an unrotated factor analysis of all study items, and this explained 54.293% of the variance. As no single factor emerged and the general factor was not the highest variance, hence, it was concluded that the common method bias was not a serious threat in this study (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

The SEM was applied using AMOS 16 to develop a measure for the conceptual model (Arbuckle, 2008). See Figure 1. The model was evaluated using a combination of absolute, incremental and parsimony fit indexes: chi-square goodness-of-fit statistics, CMIN/df, CFI, TLI, SRMR and RMSEA. For CFI and TLI, values greater than .90 indicated an acceptable fit and a value smaller than 0.08 is acceptable for the RMSEA (Byrne, 2001). For CMIN/df (minimum discrepancy divided by the degree of freedom), the value below 5 was considered acceptable, with lower values being superior (Johnson & Rapp, 2010). The SRMR is the standardized version of the RMR and it should be less than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The measurement model comprised three latent measures (and their indicators): Training and development, performance management and turnover intention.

There is a mediation effect if there exists an indirect effect of X on Y through the proposed mediator variable (M) (Hayes, 2013; MacKinnon, 2008; Baron and Kenny, 1986). In this study, training and development (X) was tested whether it indirectly influenced susceptibility to turnover intention (Y) through performance management as mediator. SEM was the best analysis especially for comprehensive modeling because it allowed for latent variables to improve measurement of constructs as well as more complicated mediation relations (MacKinnon 2008).

For mediation analysis, bootstrap approach was used as it is a resampling strategy in which data were resampled from the original sample, with replacement. The resampling process for this study was repeated to 5000 times, does not follow a normal distribution, and has been shown to be particularly useful for estimating and testing indirect effects (Mallinckrodt, Abraham, Wei, & Russell, 2006; MacKinnon, Lockwood & Williams, 2004; Bollen & Stine, 1990,). Furthermore, research indicates that the bootstrap approach for mediation analysis is superior compare to causal steps approach and product of coefficients approach with terms of power (MacKinnon, 2008). After mediator effect was checked using bootstrapping method using AMOS, the next step followed with macro process using SPSS bootstrapping to confirm the effect.

First, we assessed the null hypothesis model (M0). We then tested the direct effect model (M1): Training and development (TD)🡪turnover intention (TI), TD🡪performance management (PM), and all other paths were set to zero. We then tested a mediation model(hypothesized model; M2); TD🡪PM, PM🡪TI, and TD🡪TI.

**Competing Models**

Due to cross-sectional nature of the current study, it was necessary to test competing models to rule out any possibilities of reversed effects (Cole, Walter & Bruch, 2008). For example, employee with turnover intentions also may influence the perception of training development in his/her organisation, mediated by performance management. First, the direct effect reverse model (M3) was tested with a path from TI🡪TD and TI🡪PM. This analysis was continued with a fully mediated reversed model (M4) that included paths between PM🡪TD. Then, other competing models were measured by using training and development as the mediator. The direct effect reverse model (M5) was tested with a path from PM🡪TD, and PM🡪TI. This process was followed with mediated reversed model of M6, that included paths between TD🡪TI.

Finally, the hypothesized model M2 was validated using multigroup analysis. There were two random samples, consisting of male (N=299) and female (N=334). If there is no significant improvement in the model when the paths are estimated freely it can be concluded that the models were equivalent, and there would be no support for the null hypothesis.

**Results**

In Table 1, the means, standard deviation, and correlation between the variables are presented. First, the analysis focused on the relationships between the demographic variables (i.e. gender, age, education, position and salary) and the research variables. In general, most of the demographic variables were not related to the research variables in the study, and hence were not included in subsequent analyses except gender. Correlations involving the demographic variables and research variables are shown in Table 1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Between the Variables** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Variable | M | SD | α | Items | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | | 7 |
| 1. Training | 4.615 | 1.624 | 0.77 | 5 |  |  |  |  | |  | |  | |  |
| 2. Performance | 4.603 | 1.303 | 0.74 | 5 | .423\*\* |  |  |  | |  | |  | |  |
| 3. Intention | 4.491 | 1.245 | 0.72 | 3 | .148\*\* | .443\*\* |  |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **Demographic** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  | |  | |  |
| 4.Gender | 1.528 | 0.500 |  |  | .081\* | .053 | -.060 |  | |  | |  | |  |
| 5. your job title | 3.040 | 0.689 |  |  | -.006 | -.013 | -.076 | .052 | |  | |  | |  |
| 6. Birth | 1.503 | 0.853 |  |  | .034 | .054 | .013 | -.021 | | -.259\*\* | |  | |  |
| 7. Education | 1.491 | 0.583 |  |  | .053 | .088\* | .095\* | -.050 | | -.077 | | 0.02 | |  |
| 8. Salary | 3.057 | 1.196 |  |  | .011 | .059 | .064 | -.051 | | -.467\*\* | | .437\*\* | | .455\*\* |
| *Note.* N = 633, \*p< .05 \*\*p< .01 | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  | |  | |  |

To test the five proposed hypotheses, the full sample was first used to test the study model. Results of the analysis model (M1 and M2) are shown in Table 2. In comparison between M1 and M2, all fit indexes for the fully mediated model, M2 have significant improvement, with CFI and TLI were above the threshold of 0.90, RMSEA (0.05) and SRMR (0.049) all at acceptable level. In M1, all direct paths were also significant (p< .001). As for M2, all paths were significant (p< .001) except TD🡪turnover intention was significant at p< .05.

As shown in Table 2, although fit indexes for M3 were satisfactory, M4 showed a better acceptable fit. All paths in M3 were significant (p< .001). In M4, turnover intention 🡪 performance management and performance management🡪TD were significant at p< .001, except turnover intention🡪TD which was not significant. As for M5 and M6, fit indices were satisfactory and all paths were significant. Overall, in comparison, M2 showed the best fit among the rest of the models.

In relation to the multigroup analysis, it was found that there was no significant improvement in the model when the paths were estimated freely. So, it was concluded that M7 was a good fit for both male and female data sets (equivalent to M2 the theoretical model). In other words, the model was invariant across gender, and the model M2 was validated. Taking all results together, the researchers determined that the best fitting model was M2. Therefore, hypothesis 5 was not supported. Next, the remaining hypotheses were assessed based on the results of M2 (See Figure 2).

Hypothesis 1 proposed that TD has significant effects with turnover intention. Results showed our prediction was supported as there was a significant negative effect between TD and TI (β=-0.120, p< .05. As for Hypothesis 2, the researchers proposed that TD is significantly related to performance management. Model M2 shows that TD was positively and significantly related to performance management (β=0.370, p< .001), confirming Hypothesis 2. This finding indicated that higher TD in the organisation will be associated with the creation of more performance management. For Hypothesis 3, which proposed that performance management will have significant effect to turnover intention, findings of the analysis found that performance management was positively and significantly related with turnover intention (β=0.756, p< .001). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was also supported.

To confirm the meditational hypothesis, the significance of the indirect effect was assessed using the bootstrapping approach. According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tatham (2006), there was no mediator if the indirect effect was lower than 0.085. The analysis revealed that estimate for indirect effect was 0.280 (more than 0.085) and the value of indirect effect was higher than direct effect (β=-0.120). This showed that there was a total mediator effect. Further analysis was conducted using bootstrapping in SPSS. Results also showed that the true total indirect effect was 95% and likely to range from 0.0733 and 0.1282; while the estimated effect is 0.0999, lying in between these two values. If zero does occur between the lower limit and the upper limit of the confidence level, there would be no mediation. However, our estimated effect (β=0.0999) was not zero, therefore indicated indirect effect. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was also supported. In general, the results supported the notion of TD as an antecedent to turnover intention when performance management as mediator in the relationship

**Table 2.** Comparison of Alternative Models

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Model | χ 2 | df | CFI | TLI | SRMR | RMSEA | CMIN/df |  |
| M0. Null model | 454.860 | 65 | .818 | .782 | .169 | .097 | 6.993 |  |
| M1. Direct effect model | 295.531 | 63 | .892 | .866 | .094 | .076 | 4.691 |  |
| M2. Mediated Model | 129.064 | 59 | .967 | .957 | .041 | .043 | 2.188 |  |
| **Competing reverse model (TD as outcome)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| M3. Direct effect model | 197.494 | 63 | .937 | .922 | .061 | .058 | 3.135 |  |
| M4. Mediated Model | 189.196 | 62 | .941 | .925 | .057 | .057 | 3.052 |  |
| **Competing reverse model (TD as mediator)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| M5. Direct effect model | 197.494 | 63 | .937 | .922 | .061 | .058 | 3.135 |  |
| M6. Mediated Model | 189.196 | 62 | .941 | .925 | .057 | .057 | 3.052 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Multigroup | χ 2 | df | CFI | TLI | SRMR | RMSEA | (Δ df),  Δ χ2 | Comparison |
| M7. Constrained | 261.623 | 137 | .942 | .933 | .063 | .04 |  |  |
| M8. Unconstrained | 247.010 | 124 | .942 | .927 | .061 | .04 | (13),  14.61 ns | M7 versus M8 |
| *Note*. N=633. CFI=comparative fit index;TLI=Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA root mean square error of approximation; SRMR=standardised root mean square residual; CMIN/df=minimum discrepancy divided by the degrees of freedom; M=model; TD=training and development; ns=non-significant | | | | | | | |  |

0.099\*\*\*

0.280\*\*\*

.370\*\*\*

.756\*\*\*

-0.120\*

13 (14.61) ns

Gender

**Figure 2**. Training and development as a precursor of performance management and its relationship to turnover intention. Gender as moderator variable. N=633. \*\*\*p< .001; \*p< .05

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The main purpose of the present study was to evaluate the effects of TD on turnover intention through performance management; supporting the hypotheses of the study. In line with strategic human resource management, it was found that TD practices implemented or perceived to be available in organizations need to be consistent with other HR practices such as performance management. TD practices have significant positive effects on the performance management, which suggested that whenever organisation provides training and learning opportunities, a clear expectation of performance will be derived. This fit is called horizontal fit, which involves an assessment of how the HRM practices intersect with each other (Milliman, Von Glinow & Nathan, 1991). The fit of HR practices could support a defined set of employees’ behaviours, competencies and motivations (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2002). In addition, previous research found that a low-quality performance appraisal system also increases the intentions to leave (Brown et al., 2010) and to reduce motivation (Bateman & Snell, 2015). Therefore, organisation looks into providing a clearer performance management system and a system that is perceived as quality by employees.

Besides, findings of the study also revealed that performance management served as mediator significantly between TD and turnover intention. Although when TD acting alone causes impact on turnover intention, their relationship is more significant when it mediates with performance management. Training and development alone would not be the greatest if performance management does not serve a developmental purpose. The information gathered from performance management can be used to identify and plan relevant additional training, learning or other improvement that the employees may require.

Findings of the study further disclosed that male and females do not have differences in structure of the model. This is useful point to note that a best bundle of HR practices can be generalised to all organisation irrespective of gender. Although researchers found there are differences in negotiation style, acceptance of new technologies, commitments among gender (Simsek, 2011; Li et al, 2008; Bowles et al., 2007; Small et al, 2007), psychological climate, the experiential-based perception of what people see and report happening to them in organisation is an important construct (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Thus, when everyone regardless of gender see and report the same HR practices in organisation, this could negate the differences of styles and behaviour between the male and female employees. Therefore, it is recommended to integrate content of HR practices with strong unambiguous messages of HR processes to alleviate the differences of gender and bring the appropriate behaviour that would be useful in the organisation.

In conclusion, the study found that the overall configuration or aggregation of HRM practices do influence employees’ behaviour. The HRM practices that operate alone causes less effects on turnover intention. The indirect effect will be greater between TD and turnover intention when performance management act and fit together as a mediator mechanism. Thus, identification of consistent set of HRM practices is important as it is generally associated with employees’ behaviour and performance - it also further provides a higher level of competitive advantage to organisation in global market.

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