

10-30-2010

## Employees' Turnover Intention to Leave: The Malaysian Contexts

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### Recommended Citation

Kuean, Wan Li; Khin, Edward Wong Sek; and Kaur, Sharon (2010) "Employees' Turnover Intention to Leave: The Malaysian Contexts," *The South East Asian Journal of Management*. Vol. 4: No. 2, Article 2.

DOI: 10.21002/seam.v4i2.5633

Available at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/seam/vol4/iss2/2>

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## **Employees' Turnover Intention to Leave: The Malaysian Contexts**

Wan Li Kuean, Edward Wong Sek Khin\* and Sharon Kaur

*This study examines the relationship between organizational commitment and employees' intention to leave the organization in the Malaysian context, and the moderating effects of participation in decision making and work effort on this relationship. It is a descriptive study based on a survey conducted among working adults in Malaysia. The results of the study suggest that all three dimensions of organizational commitment; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment; have significant association with intention to leave. Participation in decision making was found to have a significant effect on intention to leave, while the time commitment dimension of work effort was found to be not significant. Implications for practitioners and avenues for further research were discussed. This study has also provided greater understanding on the relationship between the tested variables with turnover intention. Findings of the study would assist practitioners, managers and policy makers of organizations to formulate appropriate strategies particularly in the areas identified to be having an effect on turnover intention. The organization could pursue a commitment strategy to obtain a committed workforce through application of suitable human resource policies. Cultivating an organization culture of shared values and involving employees in the goal setting process would further enhance employees' acceptance of and alignment with organizational goals that would promote greater organizational commitment and eventually reduce employees' intention to leave the organization.*

*Keywords: organizational commitment, participation in decision making, work effort*

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### **Introduction**

Organizations worldwide today face many challenges with the growing integration of the world economy into one single, huge marketplace resulting in intense global competition. Besides needing to keep pace with technological advances, it is also crucial for an organization to be able

to retain its best employees in the face of globalization and workforce diversity.

Collectively, an organization's employees can provide a source of competitive advantage that is difficult for competitors to imitate. Barney (1991) firm resource model of sustained competitive advantage suggests that in order for a firm's resource to generate sustained competitive advantage,

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the resource must add value to the firm, is rare, cannot be imitated, and is non-substitutable.

Turnover intention is among the strongest predictors of actual turnover and organizational commitment is one of the most important antecedents to turnover intention (Thatcher et al., 2003; Mitchel, 1981). These findings underscored the importance of organizational commitment in retaining employees and the appropriate use of intention to leave as the dependent variable because it is linked to actual turnover.

The average employee turnover rate in Malaysia is 18% based on international human resource consulting firm Hewitt Associate's 2007 Total Compensation Management Survey. Whether it is involuntary, such as termination initiated by the employer, or voluntary, such as resignations, turnover is potentially costly and may have negative organizational implications. Some examples of possible negative impact of turnover to organizations are the high cost of recruiting, hiring, training and getting new employees up to speed, productivity loss during replacement search and retraining, loss of high performers, and disruption of social and communication structures (Mobley, 1982).

Although the researcher has found many past studies conducted on employees' turnover intention in Malaysia as well as other countries, but the literature search did not provide any studies that were carried out with the combination of these factors: organizational commitment, participation in decision making, and work effort.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions: Does employees' organizational commitment affect their intention to leave the organization? Are there any influences of the factors of participation in decision making and work effort on employees' intention to leave? The issue of commitment is important

for managers because commitment to organization is positively related to desirable organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, motivation and attendance, and negatively related to absenteeism and turnover (Lok and Crawford, 2001). With the increasing speed and scale of change in organizations, the retention of talented employees is integral to sustaining the organization's competitive advantage and growth in the marketplace.

The identification of variables associated with turnover intentions is considered an effective strategy in reducing actual turnover levels (Riley, 2006). This study, in particular, seeks to ascertain the influence of the factors of participation in decision making and work effort on intention to leave, including its direction and strength of influence. With a much clearer understanding of these constructs, employers would be able to add to their knowledge base on what causes employees to choose to leave the organization. Subsequently, employers would be able to manage the turnover process more effectively through appropriate interventions.

Below, we review the literature and develop related hypothesis for the variables of interest. The sampling design, selection of measurement scales and data analysis techniques are then described. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of results, limitations of study and implications for practitioners and future research.

## Literature Review

### Employee turnover defined

Employees may leave an organization either voluntarily or involuntarily. Voluntary turnover is an employee's decision to terminate the employment relationship. Involuntary turnover is an employer's

decision to terminate the employment relationship (Dess and Shaw, 2001). For the purpose of this study, turnover intention is defined as an employee's decision to leave the organization voluntarily.

### Consequences of employee turnover

Turnover can be negative or positive to organizations. One of the main negative consequences of turnover is the personnel costs associated with selection, recruitment, training and development of new employees to replace the employees who voluntarily quit the organization (Staw, 1980).

There are three main components associated with the cost of turnover (O-Connell and Kung, 2007): 1) staffing in addition to the cost of recruiting and hiring the person initially, the organization must now spend a similar amount to hire the replacement; 2) vacancy the period of time where that person is not working in the company results in lost productivity and potentially lost business; 3) training employees are not 100 % productive from the moment they start. So it is necessary to invest time and resources for training, orientation and development

If the turnover rate is high, recruitment and selection will become a major function of the organization, thereby increasing its administrative intensity. The new employee may also need a few months before able to perform at the level of the departed employee. The loss of key members of the organization may also affect the ability of the remaining employees to produce their work due to interdependence of work roles within the organization (Staw, 1980).

Dess and Shaw (2001) suggest a direct negative relationship between voluntary turnover and productivity levels based on the human capital theory.

Riley (2006) observe that social dynamics and effective communication systems are central to the effective

performance levels of work teams. Hence, turnover can have a negative impact on the functioning of the organization through loss of team integration, cohesion, morale, and may also increase in-group conflicts and breakdown of interaction with customers. Riley also reported the estimated cost of turnover has been on average one to one and a half times the employee's salary.

In Dess and Shaw (2001) assessment of the cost-benefit approach, they argue that although the costs of turnover are significant, organizations can also realize benefits in the form of payroll reductions, voluntary separations of poor performers, and improvements in innovation.

If poor performers are encouraged to leave, more productive employees can be employed in their place which would increase the human capital of the organization. The new employees may contribute fresh ideas, creative solutions and bring along their knowledge, skills and abilities to the organization (Riley, 2006).

Conflicts may arise at the workplace between workers and their supervisor, or among workers. Turnover can reduce deep-rooted conflicts which are not easily resolved and which one side decides to leave the organization rather than continue the fight. Turnover in middle and high level positions may also be the primary determinant of promotion opportunities, thereby contributing to a positive relationship between turnover and organization morale (Staw, 1980).

Although moderate levels of turnover are beneficial to the organization in terms of injecting new ideas, improving innovation and reducing workplace conflicts as discussed above, "*excessive turnover creates an unstable workforce and increases HR costs and organizational ineffectiveness*" (Grobler et al., 2005). Excessive turnover often engenders far reaching consequences and, at the extreme, may jeopardize efforts to attain organizational objectives due

to organizational brain drain when a key employee leaves. This may also negatively impact the quality and innovation of services delivered to customers, which in turn adversely affect customers' satisfaction and consequently the profitability of the organization (Abbasi and Hollman, 2000).

### Organizational commitment

The link between organizational commitment and various antecedents to organizational commitment (such as turnover intention) has been well established (DeConinck and Bachmann, 1994; Tett and Meyer, 1993; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Good et al., 1988; Dougherty et al., 1985). The literature suggests that employees who are strongly committed are those who are least likely to leave the organization.

The most commonly referred model of organizational commitment is that developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) which consists of three dimensions: 1) the affective component refers to employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization; 2) the continuance component refers to commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organization; 3) the normative component refers to employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organization.

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), employees with strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so. Those with strong continuance commitment remain because they need to do so, whereas employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization. *"Employees can experience all three forms of commitment to varying degrees. One employee, for example, might feel both a strong desire and a strong need to remain, but little obligation to do so; another might feel little desire, a*

*moderate need and a strong obligation and so on"* (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Based on the above literature, this study seeks to determine the existence of the relationship between organizational commitment and affective commitment with intention to leave respectively, among executives in Malaysia.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between affective commitment and intention to leave.

### Participation in decision making

Participation was defined as joint decision making or as influence sharing between supervisors and subordinates. Participation in Decision Making (PDM) is interpreted by employees as an act of support of them and trust in them by the employer. Employees' commitment to the organization follows from their perception of employer commitment to and support of them. Greater decision making power can substantially increase the feeling of success in the hierarchy even if no promotion is offered (Tremblay and Roger, 2004). VanYperen et al. (1999) also suggest that PDM promotes employees' sense of supervisory support of them, which made employees more likely to reciprocate by exhibiting organizational citizenship behavior.

PDM promotes organizational citizenship behavior through involving employees in goals and task strategies formulation. Communications become more open and transparent and decision making are enriched. This in turn promotes teamwork and reduces uncertainty, ambiguity and role conflict. As reported by Scott-Ladd et al. (2006), support in the literature claims that PDM increases

employee motivation, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

One of the benefits of PDM is reduction of negative outcomes associated with the perceptions of organizational politics (Witt et al., 2000). Outcomes of perceptions of organizational politics include: reduced organizational commitment, intention to turnover, increased stress, job dissatisfaction, and lower job performance. Providing employees the opportunities to participate in decision making processes can reduce these outcomes. The supervisor should engage in PDM with the subordinates to allow the subordinates to have a better understanding of the events at the workplace and feel a greater sense of control through power sharing and thus be less affected by organizational politics.

In Magner et al. (1996) research on the interaction between participation and outcome favorability in the performance evaluation context, it was found that unfavorable outcomes had the least negative relationship with intention to stay and trust in immediate supervisor when participation level was high. Employees who receive unfavorable decision outcomes have less negative attitudes towards their organization and organizational officials

if they participated in the decision than if they did not participate. They attribute this phenomenon to employees' belief that participation afforded them influence in decision making to ensure they received the best possible outcomes under the circumstances. Another more recent study (Kaur, 2009) found trust to be related with participation in decision making among middle and top level managers in the private sector. Managers who were given opportunity to participate trusted their superiors more.

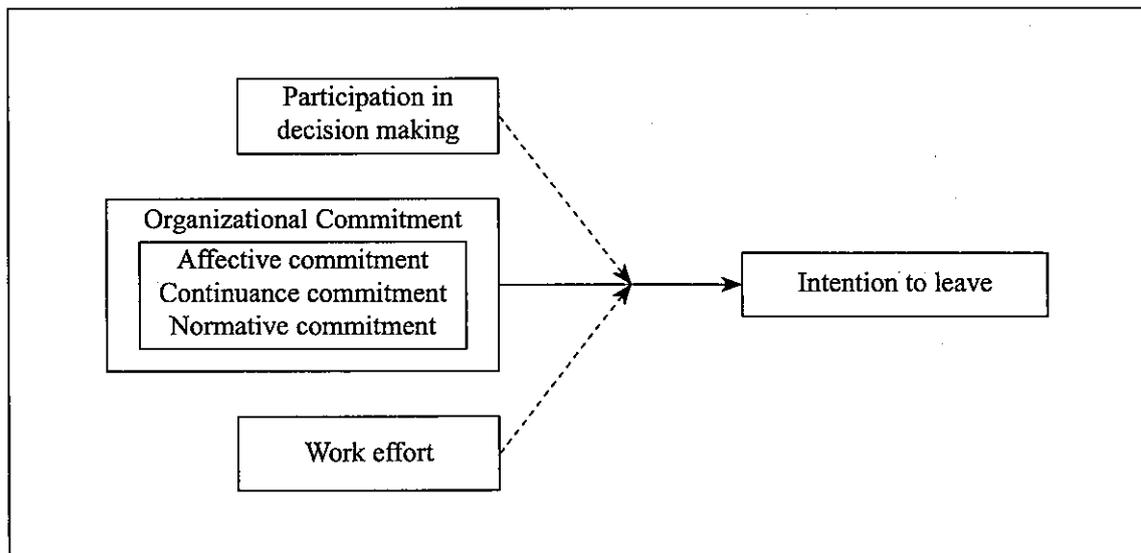
The above literature review suggests the importance of the role of PDM in organizations. With these theoretical frameworks as background, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>3</sub>: Participation in decision making has a moderating effect on the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

**Work effort**

Brown and Leigh (1996) defined effort as two dimensional consisting of time commitment and work intensity. Together, they constitute the essence of working hard.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework for intention to leave



In its hypothesized model, effort mediates the relationship between job involvement and individual work performance. High level of job involvement increases effort put in by employees and this in turn increases performance level. In Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation, *"an employee will be motivated to exert a high level of effort when he or she believes that effort will lead to a good performance appraisal; that a good appraisal will lead to organizational rewards such as a bonus, a salary increase, or a promotion and that the rewards will satisfy the employee's personal goals"* (Robbins and Stephen, 2005).

High levels of effort are assumed to be generated in the model of the high-commitment work organization (Green, 2004). Committed employees choose to remain, accept and believe in the organization's goals and are prepared to exert effort toward achieving these. Affectively committed employees seek to extend themselves as a consequence of their positive feelings for the organization, which in turn increases work effort, with subsequent positive performance outcomes (Scott-Ladd et al., 2006).

McCook (2002) suggests that organizational commitment theoretically should relate positively to effort because individuals who are more committed to their organization should be by nature of this commitment exert more effort.

H<sub>4</sub>: Work effort has a moderating effect on the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

The theoretical framework of this study consists of organizational commitment as the independent variable and intention to leave as the dependent variable. Participation in decision making and work effort are considered as moderating variables and influencing factors. This framework is summarized in Figure 1.

## Methodology

### Sampling design and data collection procedure

This research employed a descriptive design to support the study of hypothesis presented above. The survey approach is adopted for this study. The survey instrument used involved a combination of questionnaires specifically for each of the area of organizational commitment, intention to leave, selected moderating variables: PDM and work effort; along with demographic variables.

Section A of the questionnaire consists of statements taken from the selected scale for the three dimensions of organizational commitment; affective, continuance and normative commitment; and items from the scale for intention to leave. Section B consists of statements about the respondent's current job. They are taken from selected scales for participation in decision making and work effort. Section C contains questions on the respondent's gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, education level, years of service, and position with current organization. Discussion on the selection of scale for each variable follows in the next section (refer to Appendix 1).

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to a convenience sample of 300 working adults in Malaysia. Non-probability sampling method was adopted. A total of 189 responses were received, representing a response rate of 63%. Of this, only 181 cases with no missing values for all the variables were used for data analysis as the others were incomplete.

### Selection of measurement scales

**Organizational commitment:** Affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment were measured

using the three-dimensional scales developed by Allen and Meyer (1990).

**Intention to leave:** Intention to leave the organization was measured with a three-item scale from Stallworth (2003) adapted from Meyer et al. (1993).

**Participation in decision making:** Participation in decision-making was measured with a five-item Likert Scale from Ruh et al. (1975) adapted from Vroom (1960). Respondents choose from a 5 point scale ranging from 1 for 'little or no influence' (representing low participation), to 5 for 'a very great deal of influence' (representing high participation).

**Work effort:** Effort was measured using the scale developed by Brown and Leigh (1996). As conceptualized by Brown and Leigh (1996) the effort scale consists of two dimensions, time commitment and work intensity. The time commitment scale consists of five items assessing the employee's persistence and tendency to work extended hours. Work intensity scale consists of five items assessing tendency to work hard and expend energy while at work.

**Data analysis techniques:** The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 program. A code was developed for each variable prior to input into the program. Four items on the affective commitment scale, two items on the continuance commitment scale, and three items on the normative commitment scale required recoding because they were negatively worded.

All Likert Scale points for all questions under a particular measure were summed up to produce a new variable. For example, the Likert Scale points of the three questions on intention to leave scale were summed up to

produce a new variable called "intention to leave". This new variable represented the respondents' turnover intention. The higher the sum, the higher is the intention to leave of the respondent.

The following measures were derived from the sum of the Likert Scale points of the respective questions: 1) intention to leave; 2) affective commitment; 3) continuance commitment; 4) normative commitment; 5) time commitment; 6) work intensity; 7) participation in decision making.

The data analysis consisted of the following parts:

- 1) summarization of the general characteristics of all respondents in terms of demographic variables. Frequency count was used as the statistical tool
- 2) test of normality for each variable. Descriptive numerical method of skewness and kurtosis statistics were used
- 3) test of scale reliability. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used for this purpose
- 4) determination of the relationship between each dimension of organizational commitment with intention to leave. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used for this purpose
- 5) determination of the linear composite relationship between intention to leave, organizational commitment and the selected variables: participation in decision making and work effort. Multivariate statistical technique with all variables regression was used for this purpose

## Result and Discussion

### Profile of respondents

The majority of the respondents are male (55.2%) while the remaining are female respondents (44.8%). Most of the respondents fall within the age group of 25-35 years (58%), followed by those aged

from 36-45 years (29.8%). Singles consist of 52.5% while the rest are married. The majority of them hold a Bachelor's degree and most of the respondents are executives (45.9%), followed by those in management position (37%). A fair distribution of them had worked in the organizations for between one to six years and above ten years. Table 1 shows the summary of the respondents' profile.

### Normality test

The normality of all the variables was tested by assessing the skewness and kurtosis values. When data is normally distributed, the value of skewness and kurtosis are zero, as values outside the

range of +2 or -2 demonstrate considerable degrees of non-normality (George and Mallery, 2003).

Table 2 describes the summary of skewness and kurtosis values for all the variables. Variables that divert from normality are all five items in the work intensity scale. Thus, these variables are excluded from further analysis. Hence, for the testing of hypothesis  $H_4$ , only the time commitment dimension of the work effort scale will be included.

### Reliability test

Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of scale. Its value ranges from 0-1. The

Table 1. Participant profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	100	55.2
Female	81	44.8
Age		
Below 25	3	1.7
25-35	105	58
36-45	54	29.8
46-55	17	9.4
Above 55	2	1.1
Marital status		
Single	95	52.5
Married	86	47.5
Ethnic		
Malay	53	29.3
Chinese	111	61.3
Indian	13	7.2
Others	4	2.2
Qualification		
Doctorate degree	0	0
Master's degree	36	19.9
Bachelor's degree	114	63
Diploma/certificate	25	13.8
Others	6	3.3
Tenure		
Less than 1 year	13	7.2
1-3 years	44	24.3
4-6 years	48	26.5
7-10 years	25	13.8
Above 10 years	51	28.2
Position		
Upper management	11	6.1
Management	67	37
Executive	83	45.9
Non-executive	11	6.1
Others	9	5

tests of reliability were performed on all the measures used. Table 3 summarized the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each measure. A scale is reliable if the coefficient value is more than 0.600 (Hair et al., 1998).

All the measures in this study were found to be reliable with the intention to leave scale having the highest coefficient alpha value of 0.884. The measure having reliability coefficients lower than 0.700 was normative commitment.

$H_1$ : There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

$H_2$ : There is a significant relationship between affective commitment and intention to leave.

Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used to determine the relationship between organizational commitments with intention to leave. The Pearson correlation coefficient, which indicates the strength of relationship between the variables, is divided into three areas. A correlation coefficient between 0.10 and 0.29 indicates a small correlation, while a coefficient between 0.30 and 0.49 indicate a medium correlation and a coefficient between 0.50 and 1.0 indicate a large correlation (Sidin and Zawawi, 2002).

Table 4 shows the Pearson Correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) between dimensions of organizational commitment with intention to leave. The overall organizational commitment Pearson Correlation,  $r=-0.574$  indicated a strong negative correlation with intention to leave with  $r=-0.576$  ( $p<0.01$ ) while both continuance and normative commitment demonstrated a medium correlation with  $r=-0.303$  ( $p<0.01$ ) and  $r=-0.357$  ( $p<0.01$ ) respectively. Therefore, hypotheses  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  were fully supported. For testing of the moderating effect of participation in decision making and work effort respectively, on the relationship

Table 2. Normality test

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
A1	-0.550	-0.720
A2	-0.921	-0.199
A3	-0.610	-0.917
A4	-0.687	-0.081
A5	-0.922	-0.050
A6	-0.539	-0.629
A7	-0.779	-0.011
A8	-0.839	-0.271
C1	-0.385	-0.912
C2	-0.214	-1.032
C3	-0.513	-0.836
C4	-0.237	-1.075
C5	-0.933	0.232
C6	-0.201	-1.072
C7	-0.179	-1.081
C8	-0.803	-0.090
N1	-0.450	-0.679
N2	0.377	-0.809
N3	0.627	-0.138
N4	0.145	-0.969
N5	0.412	-0.861
N6	-0.116	-1.072
N7	0.175	-0.621
N8	0.203	-0.254
LE1	0.455	-0.705
LE2	0.192	-0.832
LE3	0.591	-0.282
TC1	-0.039	-0.796
TC2	0.043	-0.448
TC3	0.059	-0.889
TC4	-0.422	-0.744
TC5	-0.283	-0.676
WI1	-1.696	5.141
WI2	-1.438	4.356
WI3	-1.191	4.175
WI4	-1.363	4.096
WI5	-1.318	2.925
PA1	-0.362	-0.281
PA2	-0.578	0.038
PA3	-0.700	0.096
PA4	-0.720	-0.188
PA5	-0.633	0.187

Table 3. Reliability of measures

Measure	Number of items	Cronbach's coefficient alpha
Intention to leave	3	0.884
<b>Organizational commitment:</b>		
Affective commitment	8	0.800
Continuance commitment	8	0.749
Normative commitment	8	0.666
Participation in decision making	5	0.874
<b>Work effort:</b>		
Time commitment	5	0.723

Table 4. Pearson correlation between dimensions of organizational commitment and intention to leave

	Intention to leave
Organizational commitment (overall)	-0.574**
Affective commitment	-0.576**
Continuance commitment	-0.303**
Normative commitment	-0.357**

between organizational commitment and intention to leave (hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> and H<sub>4</sub>), multiple regression tests were conducted. Regression analysis were obtained in two stages. In the first stage, all three dimensions of organizational commitment (the control variables) were entered as the independent variables. In the second stage, the moderating variable was included as the predictor variable. In each step of hierarchical regression analysis, the predictors and control variables were regressed on the intention to leave variable. The dependent variable was the scores for intention to leave:

H<sub>3</sub>: Participation in decision making has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

From Model 1 of Table 5, the value of R<sup>2</sup> for the control variables is 0.341, which means that the three dimensions of organizational commitment contributed 34.1% of the total variation associated with intention to leave. The negative Beta values explained that employees with higher affective, continuance and normative commitment will be less inclined to leave the organization. Affective commitment was found to be the most important dimension that influenced employees' intention to leave. The least important was continuance commitment.

In Model 2 of Table 5, when participation in decision making was entered into the

equation together with the three control variables, the value of R<sup>2</sup> increased to 0.354, which means the model was able to explain 35.4% of the factors that affect employees' intention to leave. This regression result indicated that participation in decision making was a significant predictor for intention to leave as well:

H<sub>4</sub>: Work effort has a moderating effect on the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave.

The multiple regression results in Table 6 revealed that the time commitment dimension of work effort had a positive effect on intention to leave (Beta = 0.081). However, it was found to be not significant in predicting an employee's intention to leave.

## Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to determine the relationship between organizational commitment and intention to leave among working adults in Malaysia. The second objective was to investigate the moderating effect of participation in decision making and work effort on intention to leave of these same adults.

The correlation analysis results from this study confirmed previous researchers' observations that higher organizational commitment is linked with lower intention to leave the organization. The results suggest that among the three components of organizational commitment, the employee's affective commitment to the organization is the most important predictor of intention to leave. Employees are less likely to leave when they are emotionally attached to and identify with their organization. This is consistent with the findings of Iverson and Buttigieg (1999) whereby in their examination of the multi-dimensionality of organizational commitment, affective

Table 5. Regression results of dimensions of organizational commitment and participation in decision making on intention to leave

Model	Independent variables	B	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	F	t	Sig. (p)
1	(Constant)	18.627		0.341	32.079	15.394	0
	Affective Com.	-0.291	-0.499				
	Continuance Com.	-0.052	-0.089				
	Normative Com.	-0.071	-0.106				
2	(Constant)	19.608		0.354	25.652	15.261	0
	Affective Com.	-0.267	-0.457				
	Continuance Com.	-0.056	-0.095				
	Normative Com.	-0.064	-0.096				
	Participation in decision making	-0.1	-0.134				

Table 6. Regression results of dimensions of organizational commitment and work effort on intention to leave

Model	Independent variables	B	Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	F	t	Sig. (p)
1	(Constant)	18.627		0.341	32.079	15.394	0
	Affective Com.	-0.291	-0.499				
	Continuance Com.	-0.052	-0.089				
	Normative Com.	-0.071	-0.106				
2	(Constant)	18.152		0.343	24.515	14.32	0
	Affective Com.	-0.301	-0.517				
	Continuance Com.	-0.06	-0.103				
	Normative Com.	-0.076	-0.114				
	Time commitment	-0.071	-0.081				

commitment was also found to be most influential in enhancing organizational effectiveness, i.e., employees are less likely to leave, or be absent from work and are more accepting of change.

The regression results of the selected moderating variables implied that employees' turnover intention tend to decrease if they experience high level of participation opportunities in the job. Employees should be given a chance to have a say or influence on decisions which affect their jobs or workgroups, performance, company policies and strategies. However, an employee's ability to participate effectively also depends on their having sufficient knowledge in the subject matter, otherwise the result will be increased ambiguity. Participation also creates a stronger sense of ownership or identity with the job, provided the employee has appropriate and sufficient level of skill and job knowledge (Scott-Ladd et al., 2006).

Training and support should be provided to employees to assist them in making decisions.

As the regression analysis also showed that increased work effort lead to higher intention to leave, practitioners should be mindful to ensure a balance between increase in work effort due to increased responsibilities and subsequent work stress that may result from this. In this aspect, the organization could pursue a reward strategy that link effort or productivity with pay and incentives. By offering appropriate performance and effort-related incentives, employers could induce employees to willingly input higher level of efforts.

This study has provided greater understanding on the relationship between the tested variables with turnover intention. Findings of the study would assist practitioners, managers and policy makers of organizations to formulate appropriate strategies particularly in the

areas identified to be having an effect on turnover intention. The organization could pursue a commitment strategy to obtain a committed workforce through application of suitable human resource policies, e.g., training, career planning and advancement opportunities, employee participation and compensation plan to reduce employee turnover intention.

Cultivating an organization culture of shared values and involving employees in the goal setting process will further enhance employees' acceptance of and alignment with organizational goals that will promote greater organizational commitment and eventually reduce employees' intention to leave the organization.

This study has several limitations. First, the small sample size raises concern about sample bias. Participants' responses may be biased by a number of factors. They may misrepresent their actual attitudes, preferences or intentions so as to give what appear to be socially acceptable responses. This can reduce the reliability and validity of the data. Secondly, the study uses convenience sampling which might lead one to question the ability to generalize the findings. A larger and more diverse sample from different geographical area could produce more generalized results in the Malaysian context. A third limitation may be related to the current worldwide economic situation. Although employees might have intention to leave the organization, but due to economic reasons, job security is more important to them at this moment. If this study was conducted during the economic boom, the results might be different. Other limitation is that due to time constraint, the study did not collect data on actual employee turnover that may require a time frame from 6-12 months.

Beyond the limitations discussed, there are many other factors of interests not included in the current study due to

practical and time constraints. Future research efforts should explore the impact of other moderating variables on intention to leave. The data could be analyzed along other dimensions such as organizational level and gender. For example, affective commitment may be the most important predictor of turnover intention at lower organizational levels, while the opportunity to participate in decision making become increasingly important when one moves up the career ladder. We can also investigate whether there are significant differences between male and female employees in the predictors for turnover intention although they did not differ significantly in the level of education or work experience.

In Mitchel (1981) turnover study on a sample of managerial personnel, tenure was also found to be correlated with turnover intention. The cost of replacing a manager can be quite substantial especially for a long-tenured manager. Hence future studies could also include this factor into the analysis model.

Other factors for future investigations include employees' personality or perceptions of equity and organizational justice. The results of research done by Hassan (2002) confirmed that perceptions of equity and justice are meaningful predictors of organizational commitment and intention to leave. Personality includes the dispositional traits of positive and negative affectivity that can predict attitude and behaviour (Chiu and Francesco, 2003). Individuals with high positive affectivity have an overall sense of well being and are more likely to experience positive affective states over time and across situations. The findings from the current study should also be replicated with different participants for generalization. Different measurement instruments for the same variables could also be tested to identify the set of instruments that best represent the Malaysian community.

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## Appendix

### Section A – Organization

The following statements are concerned about you and your feelings about your organization. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Please tick the box which represents your degree of agreement based on the 7-point scale below.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A1 I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.							
A2 I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it.							
A3 I really feel as if my organization's problems are my own.							
A4 I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.							
A5 I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization.							
A6 I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.							
A7 The organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.							
A8 I do not feel a sense of "belonging" to my organization.							
C1 I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.							
C2 It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.							
C3 Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.							
C4 It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organization now.							
C5 Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.							
C6 I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization							
C7 One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.							
C8 One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice – another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here.							
N1 I think that people these days move from company to company too often.							
N2 I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization.							
N3 Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me.							
N4 One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.							
N5 If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would not feel it was right to leave my organization.							
N6 I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization.							
N7 Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers.							
N8 I don't think that wanting to be a "company man" or "company woman" is sensible anymore.							
LE1 I frequently think about leaving my current employer.							
LE2 It is likely that I will search for a job in another organization.							
LE3 It is likely that I will actually leave the organization within the next year.							

**Section B – Your Job**

The following statements are concerned about your current job. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Please tick the box which represents your degree of agreement based on the 7-point scale below.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neutral	Moderately Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SV1	How much variety is there in your job? That is, to what extent does the job require you to do many different things at work, using a variety of your skills and talents?							
SV2	The job requires me to use a number of complex or high-level skills.							
SV3	The job is quite simple and repetitive.							
TI1	To what extent does your job involve doing a “whole” and identifiable piece of work? That is, is the job a complete piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end? Or is it only a small part of the overall piece of work, which is finished by other people or by automatic machines?							
TI2	The job provides me the chance to completely finish the pieces of work I begin.							
TI3	The job is arranged so that I do not have the chance to do an entire piece of work from beginning to end.							
TS1	How significant or important is your job? That is, are the results of your work likely to significantly affect the lives or well-being of other people?							
TS2	This job is one where a lot of other people can be affected by how well the work gets done.							
TS3	The job itself is not very significant or important in the broader scheme of things.							
AU1	How much autonomy is there in your job? That is, to what extent does your job permit you to decide on your own how to go about doing the work?							
AU2	The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work.							
AU3	The job denies me any chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.							
FB1	To what extent does doing the job itself provide you with the information about your work performance? That is, does the actual work itself provide clues about how well you are doing – aside from any “feedback” co-workers or supervisors may provide?							
FB2	Just doing the work required by the job provides many chances for me to figure out how well I am doing.							
FB3	The job itself provides very few clues about whether or not I am performing well.							
TC1	Other people know me by the long hours I keep.							
TC2	My clients know I’m in the office early and always leave late.							
TC3	Among my peers, I’m always the first to arrive and the last to leave.							
TC4	Few of my peers put in more hours weekly than I do.							
TC5	I put in more hours throughout the year than most of our workers do.							
WI1	When there’s a job to be done, I devote all of my energy to getting it done.							
WI2	When I work, I do so with intensity.							
WI3	I work at my full capacity in all of my job duties.							
WI4	I strive as hard as I can to be successful in my work.							
WI5	When I work, I really exert myself to the fullest.							
RA1	I feel certain about how much authority I have.							
RA2	There are clear, planned goals and objectives for my job.							
RA3	I know that I have divided my time properly.							
RA4	I know what my responsibilities are.							
RA5	I know exactly what is expected of me.							
RA6	Explanation is clear of what has to be done.							

The following statements are concerned about your participation in decision making in your organization. Please choose one of the responses based on the 5-point scale below and tick in the appropriate box for each statement.

- 1 = Little or no influence
- 2 = Some influence
- 3 = Quite a bit of influence
- 4 = A great deal of influence
- 5 = A very great deal of influence

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
PA1 In general how much say or influence do you have on you perform your job?					
PA2 To what extent are you able to decide how to do your job?					
PA3 In general how much say or influence do you have on what goes on in your work group?					
PA4 In general how much say or influence do you have on decisions which affect your job?					
PA5 My supervisors are receptive and listen to my ideas and suggestions.					

**Section C – Demographic Profile**

Please answer the following questions by ticking on the appropriate box.

Gender:	Male		1
	Female		2
Age:	Below 25		1
	25 – 35		2
	36 – 45		3
	46 – 55		4
	Above 55		5
Marital status:	Single		1
	Married		2
Ethnicity:	Malay		1
	Chinese		2
	Indian		3
	Others (please specify) :		4
Qualifications:	Doctorate degree		1
	Master's degree		2
	Bachelor's degree		3
	Diploma/Certificates		4
	Others		5
Years of working in current organization:	Less than 1 year		1
	1 – 3 years		2
	4 – 6 years		3
	7 – 10 years		4
	Above 10 years		5
Current Position:	Upper Management		1
	Management		2
	Executive		3
	Non-Executive		4
	Others		5