

Does the Procedural Justice affect Turnover Intention of Academic Staff in Malaysian Research Universities?

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Abstract

Academic staff are critical components of any effective teaching-learning process. Several researchers have identified the phenomena of academic's staff, leaving their profession because of many reasons. But why this topic has been more relevant than it used to be, and why it is part of its strategy to remain so. This problem is getting more complicated because it involves the personal, institutional and social aspects of society. It is widely accepted that if the academic staff perceived fairness during the decision-making process, they can fulfil the educational objectives and national goals. Academic staff who feel unfairly treated tend to leave the organisation. Several types of research have shown that turnover intention has to do with procedural justice. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between procedural justice and academic staff of Malaysian research universities with turnover intention. This study's design is quantitative through the cross-sectional approach. Also, the samples obtained via questionnaires from university personnel of five public research universities. A total of 277 university staff completed the surveys. The result showed that the purpose of turnover between the lectures was negatively affected by procedural justice. Thus, we concluded that procedural justice was an even better predictor of turnover. It means that the University of Research in Malaysia would understand that their decision to leave will be motivated by a lack of justice.

Keywords

Turnover Intention, Procedural Justice and Malaysian Research University

1. Introduction

The relationship between employees and turnover in the public and private sectors has been widely debated and discussed among researchers in recent decades (Shahnawaz & Goswami, 2011; Zeffane & Melhem, 2017; Krøtel & Villadsen, 2016). Researcher intense attention is an issue of employee turnover because of the severity and consequences (Lee et al., 2010). Pietersen and Oni (2014) further note that these sectors and the reasons for their attitudes and differences are explained. Therefore, the research interest in differences in attitudes and conduct between researchers and academics has increased considerably. Researches would like to know how employees' different attitudes and conduct can influence critical academic issues facing them (Bright, 2008). Malaysia is equally suffering a similar problem (Feng & Angeline, 2010; Manogharan et al., 2018). Perhaps, among the public sector in Malaysia, academics or nurses' turnover intentions are usually carried out (Idris et al., 2011; Hassan, & Hashim, 2011; Ramoo et al. 2013). Empirical evidence has shown that employee turnover is quite well known among employed in the public sector. There are 16% of employees who quit jobs in 2004 (Malaysian Employers Federation, 2004). According to Juhdi et al. 2013, Towers Watson's survey reveals that staff turnover in Malaysia doubled from 2010 to 16% in 2011. In 2012, Lisa Goh notified Malaysia of employee turnover from 2009 to 2011 has increased from 10% to 15.9% within two years.

The issue of turnover is being reported by The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) explains the number of lecturers who have completed the contract, retired or dismissed since 2012 is about 2,000 (Meor Ahmad & Fahmy Azril, 2017). Although the figure slightly increased and decreased in 2007-2012, public university employee turnover's continuing rate should not be neglected. Knowing the work-related plan to maintain turnover will allow organisations to enhance their performance at the required level to decrease their intention. Therefore, the purpose of

improving demands the study's focus as it is a direct context and a proxy for actual turnover behaviour. Thus, it is important to understand and reduce the predictors of staff turnover in the education sector. The connection between the perception of organisational justice and turnover intention needs to be learned more (e.g., Griffeth et al., 2000; Loi et al., 2006). Researchers have found that the procedural justice is one of the most exacting predictors of high turnover (Knudsen et al., 2006), with negative effects in the working environment (Hassan, & Hashim, 2011).

Procedural justice is used to interpret unfair treatment in decision-making by determining the organisations (Crawshaw et al., 2013). Procedural justice has been done in many sectors such as public accounting (George & Wallio, 2017), but few previous studies have involved research universities in Malaysia contexts has been carried out. In this context, there is a need to examine the perception of justice with the focus on compensation concerning procedural justice and turnover intention, focusing on the Malaysian research universities context. The present study's importance is no existing academic study on procedural justice in the sector has been founded in extensive research. There are limited existing empirical studies have explored the differences between national and expatriate academic staff in Malaysian higher education institutions (Hassan & Hashim, 2011). Michel et al., (2010), most procedural justice studies, those involving academic staff, seem to have been studied in the Western context.

1.1 Objectives

This work seeks to tackle the research gap in the turnover of academics and gain insight into the effect of procedural justice on higher education turnover in Malaysia. Perhaps no other construct in organisation academic study has led many scholars to conclude and give the same advice. The present research aims to address the following research question; Is there a relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention among Malaysian research universities?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Turnover Intention

Turnover remains a subject of concern among researchers in management. The employee turnover in literature has drawn considerable interest (Lewis & Cho, 2011; Joo & Park, 2010) since its connection to employees' actual turnover (Kim et al., 2017). Employee turnover can be referring to individual movements within the social or organisational structure of a person (Kim et al., 2017). Also, turnover intention describes how employee cognition withdraws from the job and intention of leaving the job. According to Timinepere et al. (2018), when the organisation supersedes an average proportion of employees for a given period, this is called turnover intention. Busari et al. (2017) explain that the purpose of turnover is psychologically determined when an employee chooses whether to stay or not to stay in a job. Employee turnover is typically considered a common issue at the organisation. However, this trend is prevalent in the academic field (Hassan & Hashim, 2011; Busari et al., 2017). The company also uses turnover to find alternatives that match their satisfaction level (Wheeler et al., 2007) if employees are not happy with their jobs. Another possibility would be, when lecturers in one sector are not satisfied, they will seek to move from the public to private or other sectors, for instance, into another sector to achieve their satisfaction. (Ghafoor, 2014; Ziauddin, 2010). If the organisation's atmosphere is friendly and nice, employees don't leave the organisation (Marion, 2001).

2.2 Procedural Justice

Justice in organisations and employee turnover are studied and continue to draw attention from the most popular research organisations (Mensah et al. 2016; Ohana & Meyer, 2016). According to Swalhi et al. (2017), justice is an important area of concern for both employee and organisations. Organisational justice refers to a person's understanding of fairness in an organisation (Greenberg & Colquitt, 2013; Asadullah et al., 2017). Employees' perception of justice in their organisation impacts the attitudes and behaviour (Wolfe & Piquero, 2011) because such perception will make employees feel they are equally rewarded for their contributions (Moon et al., 2014). Within the literature, distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice, three constructs have been identified. (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Cropanzano et al., 2002).

For the research, procedural justice is of interest to us like the attitude and employees' behaviour. This thinking is supported by Colquitt et al., (2006); Skarlicki et al., (1999) found that predict the behaviour of procedural fairness to the specific results (such as quit job). Early research by Floger and Greenberg (1985) described procedural justice as a fair process and procedures related to the distribution of resources and allocating financial outcomes within the organisation. The more influential people believe that they must deal with the fairer situation (Deconinck & Johnson, 2009). Low-level organisations in procedural justice have raised employee's turnover (Bal et al., 2011). The feeling of individual injustice can lead to frustration, anger and lashing, and then negatively affect the organisation (Spector & Fox, 2002) and contribute to turnover intention (KalemciTuzun & Arzu Kalemci, 2012; Parker et al., 2011).

Procedural justice also offers a basis of confidence because procedural justice means that their employer values them and appreciates those (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). When employees are satisfied with their jobs, the intention of turnover is less likely (Butt et al., 2007). Even employees who believe they have higher turnover intentions if unfairly handled by their organisation; (Parker et al., 2001).

Previous studies have found that the relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention is strong and negative significant. For example, George & Wallio studies (2017) explored the relationship between corporate justice and millennial public accounting turnover intentions. There is the greatest proof of a stronger relationship between millennial public accountant from diverse backgrounds and aspirations. Nevertheless, there were far less empirical studies on the effects of procedural justice perception by academics in the Asian context, especially in Malaysia. In line with the previous elaboration, this study indicates that the aims will only succeed if the staff's aim for information exchange is affected by perceptions and subjective expectations. In this study, the whole attitude–subjective norms–intention–behaviour proposed by the TRB theory is confirmed. Much of the previously mentioned research on procedural justice is based on a similar industry, such as the private sector. For example, Elanain (2010) explored large organisations operating in Dubai, and Suifan et al. (2017) researched airline companies in Jordan. Therefore, this study and its results fill the gap and provide some insight into the differential effect of procedural procedures on public sector academic workers, especially in the context of Malaysia.

2.3 Hypothesis Development

Turnover intention referred to an employee's willingness to leave their current job and look for another (Chen & Wang, 2019). Turnover intention one of the most widely studies attitudes withdrawal (Perryer et al., 2010). The relation between perceptions of justice and the intention to leave remains a topic of insufficient research. Some studies have shown that employees have wanted to leave their employers in reaction to low procedural justice. Other studies have reported that procedural justice negatively correlates with turnover intention due to organisational decision-making norms (Loi et al., 2006; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). According to Aryee et al. (2002), an organisation's violation of procedural justice or unfair organisation treatment negatively affects the employee. It is logical to expect that employees experiencing the unfair treatment of outcomes or procedures will be correlated with higher turnover (Siers, 2007). Therefore, previous studies have also shown that procedural justice leads to higher turnover (e.g., Bal et al., 2011; George & Wallio, 2017; Karatepe & Shahriari, 2014). Thus, the proposed hypothesis is procedural justice will negatively significant with turnover intention.

3. Methods

3.1 Population and Sample

This study using data collected from academic staff in five research universities (RU). The five universities are Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). According to the official website of the university, 2,902 academics in RUs 2017. Thus, due to the highly heterogeneous population in nature, we used the non-probability random sampling methods to draw a representative sample. Therefore, based on the sampling size table from Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 734 questionnaires were distributed, 280 completed, and 277 were considered final samples and returned. The data gathered via paper-based and web-based online questionnaires to academic staff for each university.

3.2 Measurement Instruments

This research adopted and used the instrument for procedural justice and intention turnover. A fifteen-item scale of procedural justice developed by Moorman (1991) and Niehoff and Moorman (1993). A sample item is "The University will collect accurate and complete information before deciding on my job", "At this university, the criteria used to decide for the job consistently enforced for all employees". The turnover intention assessed based on the developed scales by Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) containing the five-item scale. A sample item is "I am actively looking for another job", "I often think about quitting this job". All item was measured using a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from (1-Strongly Disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = do not agree or disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

3.2 Data Analysis

The IBM SPSS software (predictive analytics software) version 21 was used to analyse the data. The mean value, standard deviation and correlation test were used in data analysis for this study. For testing the validity, factor, reliability and correlation analysis have been carried out. If one independent variable is expected to influence one dependent variable, the regression analysis approach (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016) is used. The regression model is chosen to clarify the relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistic

In this section, we report the result of the descriptive statistic is divided by two, i.e. demographic profile and mean and standard deviation. Five demographics respondent must answer in the questionnaire, such as gender, age, education and position in their profession. The findings showed that 277 of the final academic staff were counted (n= 159) were male, and (n= 118) were female. The age of academic staff (n= 64) was 25-35-years old, (n= 117) 36-45-years old, (n= 66) 46-55 years old and (n= 30) was 56-65 years old. Most respondents were lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors and professors follow for the academic staff position. The majority of these academic staff were PhD holders, and the rest are respondents who have master and bachelor's academic qualification. Further, Table 1 below shows that the mean value of turnover intention is 1.94, with the value of standard deviation is 3.40. For procedural justice, we found that the mean value for this variable is 3.37, and the standard deviation is 0.78.

Table 1. The result of descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	SD
Turnover intention	1.96	3.40
Procedural Justice	3.37	0.78

4.2 Measurement

Before testing the proposed hypothesis, we present the result of construct validity and reliability. Table 1 below displays that the value of loadings factor for both constructs, i.e. procedural justice and turnover intention, ranges from 0.70 to 0.88. It means that the item loads significantly in reflecting the construct. Also, for checking the measurement scale, we use the composite reliability (CR). The result of CR for both constructs are 0.968 and 0.930. It indicates that the measurement scale used in both constructs are reliable. In addition, we also report the result of convergence validity (Average Variance Extracted) testing. The result shows that AVE's value is 0.672 (procedural justice) and 0.770 (turnover intention).

Table 2. The result of construct validity and reliability

Construct	Item	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Procedural Justice	PJ1	0.880	0.968	0.672
	PJ2	0.870		
	PJ3	0.860		
	PJ4	0.860		
	PJ5	0.850		
	PJ6	0.850		
	PJ7	0.840		
	PJ8	0.840		
	PJ9	0.830		
	PJ10	0.830		
	PJ11	0.820		
	PJ12	0.800		
	PJ13	0.730		
	PJ14	0.710		
	PJ15	0.700		
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.913	0.930	0.770
	TI2	0.887		
	TI3	0.866		
	TI4	0.842		

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

In this section, we report the result of the regression analysis, which aims to test the proposed hypothesis in this study. The result, as seen in Table 3 below:

Table 3. The result of hypothesis testing

Independent variable	β	P-Value	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-Value
Procedural Justice	-0.536	0.000	0.287	0.284	98.792**

Dependent variable: Turnover Intention

Table 3 above display the result of hypothesis testing. The result of the analysis found that the value of R² is 0.287. It explains the 28.7 percent of the variance in turnover intention predicted by procedural justice. The Beta (β) shows how much each variable makes a significant contribution to the procedural justice predicted for the dependent variable (turnover intention). The outcome showed that the turnover intention was greatly influenced by procedural justice. This means that employees with higher perceptions of fair procedures are less likely to have turnover intention. Also, F-Value indicated that independent variable contributed significantly [(98.792), $p < .001$] with the dependent variable. For assessing whether a significant level varies, the significant value should be less than the significant level of .05. The results show that sig. procedural justice ($p < .000$) means that this variable gives the prediction variables a unique contribution.

5. Discussion

The purpose of the research was to explore the relationship between procedural justice RU academics turnover intention. Procedural justice associations were primarily related to aim for turnover. Such relationships were consistent with earlier results. The negative relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention has been shown by previous research (Nadiri & Tanova 2010; Bal et al., 2019). This study expands the literature on procedural justice by looking at its relevant factors and value in this area where only a few studies exist. Hassan and Hashim (2011) have explored the gap between national and expatriate academic of organisational justice in Malaysia institutions of higher learning. They reported that procedural justice led to the intent of local academic staff to turnover. They drew the sample from public universities in Malaysia and divided them into two groups. This study, however, drawn the sample from all academic staff in research universities in Malaysia. In total, this study aims to explore the understanding perception of procedural justice toward turnover intention among Malaysian research universities. Thus, the study's findings should provide new value to the current literature on procedural justice and employee behaviour, especially in academicians.

We also present the procedural justice model for academics at public university, especially in Malaysian research universities, where only a few studies exist. Finally, the findings conclude that the direct effect on the procedural justice's turnover intention was negatively significant and in line with the previous study (e.g., Flint et al., 2013; George & Wallio, 2017). In other words, where procedural justice is high, the impact of the intention to make a turnover is slight. Finally, this result provides empirical evidence for procedural justice from a different area of turnover intention. To the date, the literature has shown that the lack of knowledge of the procedural justice factor will interfere with attempts to reduce employee's turnover intention. Thus, management in this area focuses on improving the strategy to ensure that their academic staff are treated fairly. In the context of turnover intention in an organisation, procedural justice has negatively affected it.

Similar findings reported by Ko and Hur (2014), when employees consider an organisation fair treatment, they may feel obliged to repay the organisation. In this case, justice must be considered regarding how workers will view and respond to turnover in the academician's sector. In a research university's, the department head must be concerned about whether strategies to build employee fairness are in place. As a research university worker, procedural justice has a significant effect on an employee's decision to make a turnover in an organisation. Thus, paying more attention to research university staff that may have substantial rewards for individual employee loyalty and happiness. Otherwise, perceived procedural fairness would greatly impact building trust between different research universities, including employees and employers. Also, organisations should ensure the decision-making processes are followed to ensure fair implementation of impartial policies and procedures.

5. Conclusion

This research seeks to answer research questions related to procedural justice and turnover intention. This finding shows that procedural justice factor was influencing the turnover intention negatively. These results prove that

procedural justice can minimise the intention to leave the academic staff in a public institution. In other words, a high level of procedural justice for academic staff, the lower rate of turnover intention among academic staff. Furthermore, if they did not perceive support or fairness in the organisations' procedures, these lecturers are tending to find for another job and made decisions to quit. In the organisation's context, most academic staff felt that justice was just obtained from the organisation commensurate with their work's duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the justice received among academic staff discouraged them from leaving the organisation. Also, at the workplace, the fairness of the justice rendered by the organisation assisting a lecturer in the group and work together to enhance the performance. Thus, for procedural fairness, the lecturer attempts to predict a lecturer's success and reduce the administrative implications and create a positive environment for both parties, i.e. academic staff and organisation.

The existing results have several limitations for prospective research. First, in this study, there are only five public research universities were investigated. Also, the data should collect from more than five public universities. Thus, our interpretations should be more generous. Second, these data may not be equivalent to real respondent's form university database. Thus, the missing data will, in turn, affect the quality of data analysis. Future studies would like to consider this weakness to have adequate control to detect significant effects of certain unique features. We do assume that findings from this study will explain the area for future studies. For example, our study can also be replicated using a different sample such as university administration staff. It would allow people to understand their different reactions and perceptions in comparison to academic staff.

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