

Factors Affecting Female Lecturer Retention in Private Higher Institution in Perak

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Abstract

The contribution of female lecturer in education profession is undeniable and their satisfaction is crucial to retain them in this field. This research was conducted with the aim to investigate the factors that influence the female lecturer satisfaction in private higher education institution in Perak, Malaysia. Subsequently it intends to examine the effect of female lecturer satisfaction on their job retention. Perceived Organization Support Theory and Theory of Organizational Equilibrium have been applied in this research to explain the relationship among the variables. Questionnaires were distributed to female lecturers in five higher private education institutions in Perak. The result shows that workplace diversity, workplace recognition and rewards and work life balance have a positive effect on job satisfaction among female lecturers, while workplace environment has no significant effect on their job satisfaction. The current research also found that job satisfaction has a significant effect on female lecturer retention. Among all the factors, workplace diversity has the highest effect on female lecturer satisfaction. This implies that diverse workplace with variety of ethnic, education level and job position will influence female lecturer satisfaction. It is expected that this study will contribute to the management of higher education institutions and also contribute to further researches.

Keywords: Female Lecturer, Employee Retention, Job Satisfaction, Private Higher Education, Perceived Organization Support

1.0 Introduction

The competition to be the pioneer in establishing regional education hub is the vital for the current growth in cross-border higher education in Malaysia (Knight and Morshidi, 2011). According to World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Competitive Index (GCI) report for year 2011-2012, Malaysia ranks 14 out of 142 countries on the quality of our education system. In order to face the challenges of globalizations and internalization, Malaysia is changing from production-based to knowledge-based economy which demands the expansion of skillful and sophisticated workforce (Sidhu and Kaur (2011). There are 20 public-funded universities, 37 private universities and university colleges and about 300 private colleges in Malaysia (Ministry of Higher Education, 2008). Whereas, Perak is moving towards to establish the comprehensive knowledge and educational hub under the K-Perak plan to endeavor attraction students from across the region. According to Perak's Menteri Besar, Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, the raising numbers of higher learning institution in this state has been a part of strategy to achieve Perak Maju Plan 2015 Malaysian Chronicles (2013).

Nowadays, lecturers are not just delivered lecture in class. The burden of duty including teaching and also doing other administrative services that need more commitment from the staff. Female lecturer experienced more stress compared to male counterparts (Nur Aqilah & Juliana, 2012). This leads to higher rate of turnover among lecturers in private university. In addition, better offer from other institutions such as higher salary, compatible workload and better opportunity for career advancement might also contribute to this problem. The higher rate of turnover among lecturers in university may affect the productivity and efficiency of the company in future. It will give a bad reputation to the institution and student may also have lost confident and choose to go to other private university that might have a better reputation. It is clear that turnover of experts and knowledgeable person can reduce the performance of knowledge-based organization. Women are facing difficulties in doing dwi-duties as a housewife at home and also as an employer at the work place. Heavy responsibilities at home and no sufficient time to do all tasks at one time including taking care of their kids are always be a main reason for a woman to give their resignation letter. Women are likely to leave their job due to domestic and social responsibilities than male, which leads to higher voluntary resignation among them. Therefore, job satisfaction is crucial as it is related to job performance and turnover and in the 21st century, this has become a serious problem in the management of educational institutions (Anil Kumar Agnihotri, 2013).

Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to identify the factors affecting retention among female lecturers in private higher education institution in Perak state. This study investigated whether the reason of retention among female lecturers are influenced by the level of job satisfaction that will be measured by four main determinants; workplace diversity, workplace balance, workplace recognition & rewards, and workplace environment. Besides, this study also identified the most significant factor that influencing the retention level among female lecturers in private university located in Perak. This study goes beyond the underlying components of job satisfaction to discover the new insight of job satisfaction variables among academician.

2.0 Operationalization of Research Variables

Diversity in the organizational structure is the co-existence of employees within the organization which are from diverse socio-cultural background including race, gender, age, physical ability (Henry and Evan, 2007). Researchers (Pitts, 2006; Kellough & Naff 2004; Naff & Kellough 2003) found that workplace diversity enhances an employee's efficiency, organizational achievement and persistent competitiveness. Hence, matching the organizational mission with workplace diversity tends to escalate employee satisfaction and retention, increases responsiveness and certainly adds value to the final consumers (Langbein & Stazyk, 2013; Pitts, 2006).

Work life balance described the equivalent level of commitment and satisfaction of an employee towards their working life and family life (Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003). A part from improving organizational financial performance, work life balance tends to raise employee satisfaction and generate labor efficiency (Konrad and Mangel, 2000; Lambert, 2000). Therefore, work life balance has significant importance in determining employee behavior towards the organization (Rani, Kamalanabhan & Selvarani, 2011). According to Hammer et al. (2008), employee's job satisfaction and their devotion towards the organization increased when the employers fostering the integration between work and family responsibilities. Additional to that, Clarke, 2001 found that U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics categorized work life balance as one of the five key factors that will influence employees and their working place during 21st century.

A reward system is defined as structured method of evaluating and compensating employees based on their performance (Nathaniel, Geraldo & Marie, 2010). Recognition is the demonstration of appreciation for a level of performance, an achievement or a contribution to an objective. It can be confidential or public, causal or formal and it is always in addition to pay. According to Carolina (2010), two major factors that affect work motivation in a company are intrinsic and extrinsic reward. The same factors has been found by Nadia, Syed & Humer (2011) and Godday, Kenneth and Zechariahs (2013), but their study shows that extrinsic is more related to job satisfaction compared to intrinsic reward. Tahira, Saif, Syed and Khalid (2013) identified the relation of reward practices in higher education institution in United Kingdom and they found that the higher education system offers both monetary and non-monetary rewards to faculty members and make them competent because its consider that the faculty members as a social agents. According to Shagufta and James (2013), higher reward and satisfied employees play a major role for job satisfaction as well as employee productivity in that organization.

Workplace environment described the surrounding conditions for the employee in performing their duties. The work environment can be composed of physical conditions and it can also be related to factors such as work processes or procedures. According to Khuong and Tien, (2013) the factors of working environment includes the facilities in doing the job, comfortable workplace, safety workplace and the degree of noise. It is notable from the prior empirical studies that workplace environment do influence the job satisfaction (Bhavani & Anbuoli, 2012); (Leblebici, 2012)(Qasim, Azam Cheema, & Syed, 2012) and (Mokaya, Musau, Wagoki, & Karanja, 2013). The workplace environment plays an important role in job

satisfaction as the employee mentally and physically demanding a good working condition (Parvin & Nurul, 2011). Ironically, there is a need to provide a healthy work environment that can protect the employee mentally and physically especially for female lecturer. Inadequate and deteriorating infrastructure and facilities which drastically limit the carrying capacity coupled with the increased enrolment of student have made work very stressful for the lecturers (Iyabo, 2013) and consequently will influence their job satisfaction.

Studies on job satisfaction began in the early 1900's in United States when psychologists in the field of industry conducted an array of studies on industry workers to determine the extent of their job satisfaction (Ghazi & Shahzada, 2012). From thereon, job satisfaction has been defined in various ways. According to Robbins and Judge (2013), job satisfaction is positive feelings about a job, resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. The recent definition of job satisfaction is from Jeet and Sayeeduzzafar, (2014), whereby they define job satisfaction as an attitude that resulted from harmonizing and summation of numerous precise likes and dislikes experiences with the job. Job satisfaction is important for human resource management and has been proven by literature to have a significant effect on employee retention. Generally, employee retention refers to the ability of the organization to retain their employee from leaving the organization. A study by Terera and Ngirande, (2014) found that job satisfaction has positively influence the employee retention of academic staff at selected tertiary institution in the Eastern Cape Province. The result from the research conducted by Awan,(2013) in service sectors organization of Pakistan also concluded that job satisfaction effect employee retention. On top of that, Mostafa, (2012) strongly recommended that employee retention is relay on job satisfaction.

3.0 Theoretical framework

Perceived Organization Support (POS) that developed from Organizational Support Theory has been employed as the foundation for this study. It was proposed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) who suggested that employee will form global beliefs concerning the extent that organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. The organization support can discharge by providing a diversity workplace, a work-life balance workplace, rewards and recognition and safety workplace. Employees who feel supported by the organization will be satisfied with their job and in return will retain with the company. High levels of perceived organizational support creates feelings of obligation, to the employers as well as makes them feel they have to return the employers' commitment by engaging in behaviors that support organizational goals (Ahmad & Yekta, 2010). Previous studies have proven that POS influence job satisfaction (Miao, 2011); (Colakoglu, Culha, & Atay, 2010)(Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, & Rutherford, 2009). On the other hand the link between job satisfaction and employee commitment was developed from Theory of Organizational Equilibrium. This theory was created by March and Simon in 1958 who suggested that employees will be more likely to stay with the organization when they are satisfied with their job (Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2008).

4.0 Methodology

This study has employed quantitative approach where questionnaires were distributed in-person to the target respondents. The target populations for this study are female lecturers who are currently teaching in Private Higher Education Institution in Perak. Those institutions are Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Quest International University Perak, UniKL Royal College of Medicine Perak, Kolej Universiti Islam Sultan Azlan Shah and Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman. A pilot test has been carried out among 30 female lecturers from the selected universities. Pilot test has been conducted to gather useful feedbacks from the respondents and to improve the overall quality of the questionnaire before commencement of the actual data collection. Overall, the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.6 and above. This indicates that all the measuring variables are reliable and the questions used to measure the variables are consistent. Meanwhile, 200 questionnaires were distributed to the selected universities with a specified time period of two weeks. However 100 copies of questionnaires only had been returned after the two weeks period.

5.0 Data Analysis and Discussion

The questionnaires have been completed by 100 female lecturers whereby 62% of them is from age 25 to 35 years old. 58% of respondents are Malay, 22% are Chinese while the remaining are Indian and other races. Majority of them has been working with the organization for less than 5 years. The objective of this study is to investigate the factors that influence the female lecturer satisfaction in private higher education institution in Perak, Malaysia, thus Multi Linear Regression (MLR) has been used to analyze the data and the result presented in table 1.

Table 1: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Significant
0.62	0.396	0.37		0.00

Based on table 1, R square of this model was 0.396 which indicates that 39.6% of the variation in female lecturers' job satisfaction can be explained by the independent variables. The remaining 60% can be explained by other variables which are not investigated in this research. The result also concluded that the model was fit as the p-value is 0.00.

Table 2: Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	.265	.450		.589	.557
WD	.502	.124	.401	4.049	.000
WB	.222	.103	.190	2.161	.033
WR	.288	.108	.303	2.669	.009
WE	-.085	.121	-.086	-.700	.486

Table 2 shows that workplace diversity, work life balance and workplace rewards and recognition were significantly affect female lecturers’ job satisfaction while workplace environment do not affect the female lecturers’ job satisfaction. The following liner equation was formed: $JS = 0.265 + 0.52WD + 0.222WB + 0.288WR - 0.85WE$

Whereby:

JS = Female Lecturer Job satisfaction WB= Work life balance
 WR= Workplace rewards and recognition WE=Workplace environment
 WD = Workplace diversity

From the above equation, a unit increase in WD will increase JS by 0.502 while holding WB, WR and WE constant. Similarly, a unit increase in WB and WR will raise JB by 0.22 and 0.288 respectively while other independent variables remain status quo. However, the p-value for WE was 0.486. Thus, WE were not significantly predicting the percentage of JS.

Another objective of this study was to examine whether female lecturers’ job satisfaction affect the employee retention. Data has been analysed using simple linear regression and presented in table 3. The output proved that job satisfaction significantly influences the female lecturer with the R square of 0.479 and p value is 0.00.

Table 3: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Significant
.692 ^a	.479	.473	0.00

Table 3 indicated that 47.9% of female lecturers’ retention was influenced by their job satisfaction. The p-value was <.0001, which was less than 0.05 and this indicated that the research model was fit.

Table 4: Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	.799	.287		2.779	.007
JS	.742	.78	.692	9.487	.000

Table 4 shows that the p-value was < .0001, which was less than 0.05. The regression equation is: **ER = 0.799 + 0.742 JS**

Whereby, ER is Employee Retention and JS is female lecturer job satisfaction

Based on the regression equation above, for every increase in female lecturers' job satisfaction, employee retention will increase by 74.2%, provided other variables remain unchanged.

6.0 Conclusion

The results suggested that workplace diversity, work life balance and workplace rewards and recognition influence the job satisfaction of female lecturer in higher education institution in Perak. This findings was consistent with the past empirical study conducted by Langbein & Stazyk, 2013; Pitts, 2006; Hammer et al., 2008, stated that the positive workplace diversity and work life balance tends to increase employee satisfaction and retention rate of an organization. The incorporation between working field and family bonding would certainly raise employee satisfaction (Nadia, Syed & Humer, 2011). Among all the variables, workplace diversity has the highest influence on job satisfaction. It is believe that diversity in workplace able to create a variety of ideas for improvement in job satisfaction as there are different races, different level of job position and different education background in the organization. In addition, work life balance also influences the job satisfaction. Organization that provides a work life balance can reduce the stress and work life conflict among their employee.

Rewards and recognition are other factors that influence the job satisfaction as it shows the company appreciation towards its employee. In this study, workplace environment was found not significant with female lecturers' job satisfaction and this is in line with the past study conducted by Herzberg et.al (1959) has become one of the most replicated studies in the field of employees' satisfaction. Herzberg identified that some factors as a 'motivator' to motivate the workers, while there was another factor known as 'hygiene factor' lead to job dissatisfaction. Comfortable and adequate working conditions have been found that it is not significant to enhance employees' satisfaction in the workplace. This study also concluded that employee retention among female lecturer in higher education institution in Perak is depending on their job satisfaction. This is consistent with the research by Awan,(2013). Ideally, employee will remain with the company if they satisfied with the workplace and rewards that they received.

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