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Job Demand, Job Resources, Burnout, and Turnover Intention among Lecturers in Private Higher Institutions in Sabah

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Abstract

The study is aimed to determine the factors of turnover intention among lecturers in the private higher education institution in Sabah. The research samples comprised lecturers in private institutions, universities, and colleges. Based on previous literature and underpinning theories, this study proposed a framework relating to turnover intention. Subsequently, two independent variables, namely job demand and resources, were employed, followed by a mediating variable, burnout. Accordingly, these variables are associated with turnover intention, serving as the dependent variable. Four hypotheses were eventually proposed based on the outlined conceptual framework.

Keywords: Job Demand, Job Resources, Lecturer, Private Higher Education Institution, Sabah, Turnover Intention.

Introduction

Turnover intention (TI) is the employees' awareness and thought about vacating their organisation position. The intention can be predicted from social loafing behaviours and insufficient peer support, and insecurities. Essentially, employee turnover can result in tremendous losses in an organisation (Akgunduz & Eryilmaz, 2018). Between 2019 and 2020, data from Malaysian Education indicate a significant turnover rate in private institutions. Hence, Malaysia's private higher education must address these issues and enhance the quality of education (Anis et al., 2018).

After expanding job resources, employees can cope with work demands, which reduces burnout (Agarwal, 2021), a critical determinant of TI (Fogarty et al., 2000). The JD-R model theory relates job demands and resources, mediated by strain such as burnout (Bakker et al., 2004). Hence, this study focuses on JD-R's critical assumption and considers burnout to mediate job demand, job resources, and TI. There are scarce insufficient studies on job demands and burnout, despite being significant predictors of TI (Park et al., 2021).

Accordingly, future studies must concentrate on support and training among lecturers in higher education to deal with these demands (Naidoo-Chetty & Plessis, 2021).

Currently, this theory is primarily conducted in nursing (Broetje et al., 2020), where theories on job demand resources are rarely applied in higher education, specifically among lecturers (Cao et al., 2020). Thus, this study contributes to the literature on job demand resources, especially in education.

Research Questions

Previous studies have identified various research questions regarding TI among educators. Based on my conceptual framework, the research questions are presented as follows:

Research Questions

- i. To what extent is the relationship between job demand and burnout?*
- ii. To what extent is the relationship between job resources and burnout?*
- iii. To what extent is the relationship of burnout on TI?*
- iv. What is the mediating effect of burnout on the relationship between job demand and job resources towards TI?*

Literature Review

A. TI

A high TI rate in an organisation may impair the organisational culture, generating a turnover trend among its employees. It is considered a severe issue that must be addressed by the management of an organization (Park & Min, 2020). Contrastingly, employees with the opposite behaviour are committed to the organisation, engaging in fulfilling its purpose, values, and goals. This element is crucial as committed employees are more likely to maintain professionalism and follow negotiated principles (Alex & Hermana, 2019).

Burnout has significant effects on TI. Job demands and job resources variables result as display in (Moloney et al., 2017) study have significant effects on TI. Results of this study indicates among the job demands, workload will cause higher burnout and the strongest predictors of TI.

B. Burnout

In 1970, (Freudenberger, 1974) developed the term "burnout" was using the "emotional depletion" concept to characterise the process. The author observed significant exhaustion and depleted motivation among the volunteers. Burnout has become a modern pandemic and is the primary cause of the increasing turnover rate among educators (Russell et al., 2020). Previous studies classified its causes into three categories based on the Job Demands–Resources model: job demands, job resources, and personal characteristics. Notably, faculty burnout is frequently associated with personal traits predictions, followed by perceived work demands and resources (Sabagh et al., 2018).

The workload is associated with the causes of increased job demands among private college lecturers. It is a neutral phrase, though being overloaded by them requires an employee to focus for an extended period (Berry, 1998). Therefore, the organisation needs to prioritise reducing burnout and emotional labour by increasing job resources as these factors are frequently associated with TI.

Currently lecturers have to face changing role and identities especially in the private sector because it is marketised. Lecturers have to face challenge in terms of students'

satisfaction. Furthermore, lecturers have to face other tasks instead of teaching such as research and administration (Wong & Chiu, 2019).

Shifting to online teaching is one of the current burdens that have to be face by lecturers. When online replacing classroom teaching, lecturers have to make adaption and improvisation. In the same time creating a positive learning outcome among students (Bryson & Andres, 2020).

Underpinning Theories Related to Turnover Intention

A. Theory of Job Demand-Resources (JD-R)

The Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) theory is considered an occupational stress model, introduced by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli in 2001. They advocated burnout as a reaction to significant work demands an employee faces compared to resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). Accordingly, the model can serve as a guideline for managers and supervisors to assist employees in reducing job stress, simultaneously improving their well-being and productivity.

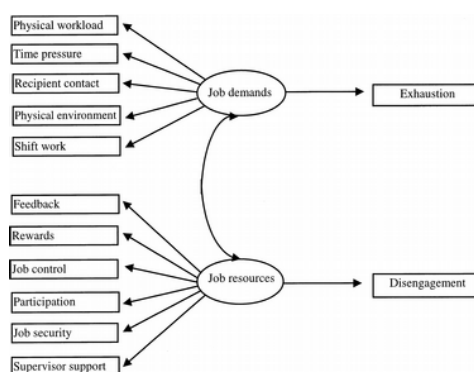


Figure 1 The JD-R model of Burnout in 2001 [19]

Notably, the model has sparked much interest in occupational health psychology research. A meta-analytic review reported that the JD-R model offers an appropriate theoretical foundation for assessing employee well-being for a wide range of organisations (Lesener et al., 2019).

The current proposed model of J-DR develop by (Bakker & De Vries, 2021) stated how continuous interplay between the organization and individual employees in the burnout process. Organization may reduce burnout by providing stable job resources in the form of HR practices and healthy leadership.

B. Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The conservation of resources (COR) theory is a stress concept that explains why individuals retain their present resources while also seeking new ones. The theory was established by Stevan E. Hobfoll in 1989 as a significant contributor to the research on stress as a construct. It primarily constitutes two critical concepts that prevent the loss of resources (Hobfoll, 1998).

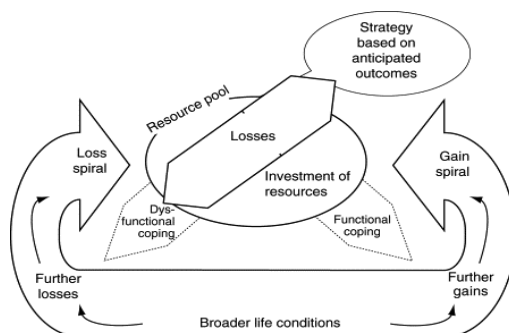


Figure 2 Process of Resources Conservation (Buchwald & Schwarzer, 2010).

By applying COR theory, (Meijerink et al., 2020) found that increased in job resources or challenging job demands are positively related to engaged employees. On the contrary, this research found that decreasing hindering job demands is unrelated to work engagement. Employees should engage more in job resources specifically job crafting which can influence the outcomes of high-commitment HRM.

Proposed Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review, we propose a conceptual framework in Figure 3. The variables that we will employ are Job Demand and Job Resources as independent variables. Meanwhile, burnout is considered the mediator and TI as the dependent variable.

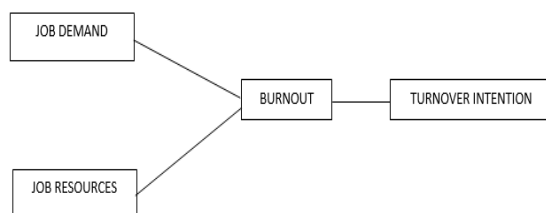


Figure 3 The Conceptual Framework

- H1: Job demand has a significant effect on burnout.
- H2: Job resources has a significant effect on burnout.
- H3: Burnout has a positive effect on TI.
- H4: Burnout has a mediating effect on the relationship between job demands and resources towards TI.

Methodology

A. Research Design

This research will be conducted using quantitative research to test the objective theory by measuring the relationship of the variables (Creswell, 2009).

Table 1

Strategies to Choose the Research Design (Creswell, 2009).

Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental designs • Non-experimental designs, such as surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative research • Phenomenology • Ethnographies • Grounded theory studies • Case study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequential • Concurrent • Transformative

This study will be conducted using questionnaires among lecturers in Sabah's Private Higher Education Institutions. Subsequently, the researchers will choose simple random through online surveys because of the lower cost of administering the survey and the higher chance of reaching a larger population. Additionally, this method is advantageous for geographical and time-saving, convenience in reaching specific populations, and others (Vasanth & Harinarayana, 2016).

B. Research Instrument

The questionnaire is divided into four sections, where Section A comprises demographic profile questions. Meanwhile, Section B consists of the independent variable of job demand and job resources. Finally, Section C encompasses their burnout level, and Section D is considered their commitment to the organisation (TI).

Table 2

Sources of the Questionnaire

Construct	Item	Source For Items
Job Resources	12	Karasek's (1985)
Job Demand	12	Karasek's (1985)
Burnout	6	Maslach Burnout Inventory (1996) MBI-ES
Turnover Intention	6	Jacobs and Roodt (2008)

Section B, C, and D will be using the Likert Scale, also known as the Summated Rating Method developed by Rensis Likert. This scale is used to measure how strongly the respondents agree or disagree with the constructed statements in the questionnaire.

Conclusion

The study attempted to examine the determinant of TI among Lecturers in the Private Higher Education Institution in Sabah. A conceptual framework is proposed with Job Demand, Job Resources, Burnout, and TI as variables of this study. Furthermore, the expected results are expected to be consistent with previous research and will be the aim of the research output. However, certain limitations become a potential challenge to this type of research, i.e., the cooperation among the colleges. Overall, this study contributed to the well-being of Private Higher Education Institutions lecturers in Sabah. The findings from this study can serve as a reference among the Human Resources management for this industry.

This study's contextual contribution is replicate in a previous study by using a similar framework which is in education management in Malaysia. This is done by using a similar conceptual framework as the study by (Scanlan & Still, 2019) in the Australian mental health service and conducted among health personnel for 1100 clinical staff in Australia. Additionally, most of the previous studies in the same industry are using a similar theory but are done in other countries which are not in Malaysia. Secondly, this study's main theoretical contribution is providing scholars with an empirically supported model which explains the effects of job demand and job resources on turnover intention mediated through burnout.

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