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## Factors Influencing Turnover Intention among Fast Food Restaurant Managers

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### Abstract

Employees are the major and essential asset to the business survival of fast food industry but turnover among managers has been considered as a critical issue of the industry that needs attention. High turnover rate among managers signals a major weakness towards organizations achievement. When the industry loses talented employees, productivity and operating costs of organizations is affected. As such, the main purpose of this study is to analyze factors influencing turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. Data was collected through questionnaire to 132 fast food restaurant managers from seven fast food restaurant brands in Shah Alam. The findings indicate that fast food restaurant managers' turnover intention is influenced by organizational commitment, job stress, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit. Above all, compensation and benefit, person organization fit, and job stress, was found to be the most significant influencer. This finding could be valuable to the literature on managerial turnover intention in fast food industry in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Fast Food Restaurant, Turnover Intention, Organizational Commitment, Job Stress, Person Organization Fit, Compensation and Benefit

### Introduction

The fast food industry has been expanding rapidly over the past years. According to Fast Food Industry Analysis (2018), globally, this industry brings about over US\$570 billion in revenue, in which the amount is bigger than other economic values of most countries. In 2018, number of employees in this industry has reached almost 3.8 million. Relatively, the significant figure reflects the number of workers needed to keep the industry going. Employees are the major and essential asset to the business survival of fast food industry. They also will determine the successfulness of the organization, thus employee turnover has been considered as a critical issue that needs attention (Al-Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Kaur, Mohindru, & Pankaj, 2013).

Forrest (2017) has pointed out that the productivity and operating costs of organizations within the fast food industry are affected due to employee turnover. Gill et al. (2013) indicate that

high turnover rate could ruin the business in the form of both direct and indirect costs. When an employee leaves an organization, the company has to bear various costs such as the cost of recruitment process from advertising, selecting, interviewing, hiring, conducting orientation programme, training for the newly hired employees, and replacement, including the indirect cost of education spending, building employee self-confidence, and managing related stress on the existing workers (Al-Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Atef, El-Leithy & Al-Kalyoubi, 2017).

A more crucial issue within the employment of fast food industry is the increasing turnover rate among fast food restaurant managers. Thacker (2016) mentioned that in 2015, fast food restaurant manager turnover rate hit 72.1% and this industry needs to spend about US\$3.4 billion to recruit and train new managers. Anecdotal evidence shows that similar issue is faced by Malaysia fast food industry. According to H. Mazlan, an area manager for an international fast food brand in the country (personal communication, March 22, 2018), each year, they have to recruit a new manager to replace the existing manager that left the organization. Unexpectedly, after less than three months the managers finished their training session, they left the organization. Such remark gives an indication on the importance of conducting research on employee turnover intention to help fast food industry by providing further insights into the problems. The aim of this research, therefore, is to investigate the factors influencing turnover intention among local fast food restaurant managers. Hopefully, these findings will redound to the benefit of the fast food industry in considering the reason on why employees, in particular managers, leave the organization.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Fast Food Restaurant Industry***

One of the fastest growing and most diverse segments of the hospitality industry in Malaysia is foodservice business (Bakar, Anuar, Alias, & Mohamad, 2017). Mat, Zulqernain, and Zain (2016) stated that there are approximately 6000 franchise outlets of food and beverages, which dominate the market with a value of RM1.8 billion. In addition, food and beverages revenue recorded in 2017 was RM98 million with the number of persons employed in food and beverage services increased to 6.7% annually in 2017 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017). There are several top international fast food chains, which have gained popularity among Malaysian people such as Subway, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Burger King, KFC, Domino's, and A&W (Choong et al., 2013).

According to Bakar, Anuar, Alias, and Mohamad (2017) in 1963, there were only two multinational organizations that dominated fast food restaurants in Malaysia, which were McDonald's and KFC. Today, KFC is considered as the leading fast food brand in Malaysia with a record of 42% value share in 2016 (Eurononitor, 2017). McDonald's is the second largest fast food brand that serves 13.5 million customers every month and the chain commands an approximately 40% share in the local quick service market. Even though the fast food industry plays a vital role in contributing to Malaysian economy, this industry is continuously dealing with the issue of retaining the employees.

### ***Employee Turnover Intention***

Employee turnover has become a critical issue in today's organizations because it affects organizations in several ways where the company loses talented employees and the organizations need to spend significant sums of money to replace the employees who left the organization (Alkahtani, 2015). Arshad and Puteh (2015) admit that major weakness towards organizations achievement is due to high number of turnover rate among employees. Turnover intention is the main antecedent to a person's act of turnover. Kaur, Mohindru, and Pankaj (2013) define turnover intention as the employees feeling of leaving their positions either voluntarily or involuntarily. Although many studies have been conducted to investigate this issue, the number of employee turnover within the industry has not yet decreased (Rizwan, Arshad, Munir, Iqbal, & Hussain, 2014).

Report from Bureau of Labour Statistics (2017) shows that turnover rate in fast food industry has increased by 15.5% since 2010 with managers experiencing a 34% turnover rate in 2014. In 2015, the overall turnover rate among fast food restaurant managers was 72.1%. According to the Nation's Restaurant News (2017), 50% of fast food restaurant managers will leave each year, and it cost the industry about US\$3.4 billion in recruiting and training. According to Cross (2017), 50% of managers' turnover in the fast food industry is voluntary turnover and it costs about US\$10 billion annually. Muthukumaran and Latha (2013) indicate that there will be a big loss to the company when there is a turnover among well-trained manager because selecting, recruiting and training involves heavier cost to the organization.

### ***Organizational Commitment***

Allen and Meyer (1990) are the main originators of the organizational commitment research area where they have looked into the history of researches related to this area. They have designed three-component models of organizational commitment namely affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. Hanaysha (2016) stated that employees are the main source for continued success and performance, hence building organizational commitment is undoubtedly essential for all organizations. It is pointed out that if the manager is committed towards the organization, the manager will have less intention to leave the job because he or she has a feeling of wanting to go beyond the general occupation requirements (Thiranagama, 2015; Park, Christie, & Sype, 2014).

Naqvi, Ishtiaq, Kanwal, and Ali (2013) discovered that when fast food managers have high level of commitment with the organization, they are willing to stay with the organization because it reflects on individual's attitude towards the goals, objectives and values of the organization. For instance, when fast food restaurant manager feels valued by the organization, they are willing to stay with them (Werf, 2016). Gatling, Kang, and Kim (2016) indicate that a lack of commitment will result in employee's job search behaviour, intention to leave, job hopper, and turnover.

### ***Job Stress***

Mosadeghrad, Ferlie, and Rosenberg (2011) claimed that staff shortage, too much work, inadequate pay, inequality at work, lack of recognition and promotion prospects, time pressure, lack of job security and lack of management support are the major sources of job stress. Research conducted by Choong et al. (2013) proves that long work shift is one of the factors that has contributed towards job stress in restaurant industry. Within the fast food industry, when an employee is absent, manager needs to work for more than eight hours in order to replace the absent staff and performs extra works, which contributes to job stress. Hence, when employees are not satisfied with their compressed work schedules, they are likely to be absent, which can lead to turnover intention (Deery, Walsh, Zatzick, & Hayes, 2017; Choong et al., 2013).

Apart from that, job stress happens when employees are incompetent and lacking in knowledge to encounter the job challenges that are beyond their aptitude, pace and insufficient resources and these kinds of pressure become unmanageable, which then lead to stress (Divakar, 2015). Study done by Allen (2017) indicates that there is a positive correlation between job stress and turnover intention in which job stress may increase an employee's intention to leave an organization. This is supported by Gill et al. (2013) who indicated that job stress is one of the factors contributing to employees' decision to quit.

### ***Person Organization Fit***

Chen, Sparrow, and Cooper (2016) indicated that a key in retaining workforces with high flexibility is by achieving a high degree of person organization fit. Person organization fit has become an important factor to predict a variety of workplace attitudes and behaviors (Tugal & Kilic, 2015). Choong et al., (2013) have observed that different conceptualization of person organization fit becomes a problematic issue in the fast food industry. Kumar, Ramendran and Yacob (2012) have explained that there is a relationship between individual level pre-entry outcomes and these types of fit such as applicant attraction, job acceptance, intent to hire and job offers. Farooqui and Nagendra (2014) discovered that task and responsibilities that matched with employee competencies, lead to higher performance as well as lower turnover intention.

Therefore, high person organization fit can improve an employees' working state, which can also lower the turnover rate in an organization (Chen, Sparrow, & Cooper, 2016). It can be concluded that the fit between employees with organization is the acceptance of individual's beliefs with the organization values, culture, and norms (Covella, 2017). Employees may experience feelings of incompetence, anxiety and stress that could lead to turnover intention when there is no fit between them and the organization (Tugal & Kilic, 2015). Several study found that person organization fit has a significant impact on employees' turnover intention (Krishnan, Wesley, & Bhaskaran, 2017; Nazir & Saima, 2014; Kumar, Ramendran, & Yacob, 2012).

### ***Compensation and Benefit***

Long, Kowang, and Chin, (2017) indicate that employees desire a compensation system that they perceive as being fair with their skills, experiences and knowledge. Odunlade (2012) explained that benefits offered from the organization help them to focus on improving or maintaining the quality of life and provide a financial security for workers and their family members. Organization should have proper fringe benefits in order to motivate employees for greater productivity and better performance (Tan, Yew, Tang, & Tee, 2013). However, this aspect is still lacking within the fast food industry (Ukandu & Ukpere, 2014).

Study by Ukandu and Ukpere (2014) found that 67.5% of fast food employees were not satisfied with their overtime pay rate. Therefore, compensation and benefit packages at various levels should be reviewed by the management in preventing high level of employee turnover intention (Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola, & Heirsmac, 2014). This is because employees are motivated by rewards offered by the firm and they tend to work for the organizations for long term or to continue their work for the industry (Iqbal, Guohao, & Akhtar, 2017). Hence, compensation and benefits system of employees at fast food industry should be improved in order to overcome employee turnover intention.

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted using descriptive research design in order to investigate factors that influence turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. The target population in this study was fast food restaurant managers from popular brand such as KFC, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Subway, Domino's, Burger King, and A&W operating in the city of Shah Alam. These fast food brands were chosen because they are among the biggest chains with a significant number of employees.

There are 188 fast food restaurant managers in Shah Alam, which derived from 59 fast food outlets of the seven major brands. Based on the sample size table developed by Isaac and Michael (1995), 132 samples are required from a 200-population size with 95% confidence interval and 5.0% margin of error. Accordingly, a total of 132 fast food restaurant managers were involved in the survey. Convenience sampling, a sub category of non-probability sampling was used to determine the selection of a subset of fast food restaurant managers within the population.

Self-administered questionnaire was utilized as the instrument for the survey. The set of questions for the survey were constructed by adapting the questions used in past studies on turnover intention at fast food restaurants (Choong et al., 2013; Beehr et al., 2001; Prihati, Oetomo, & Utomo, 2009; and Bluedorn, 1982). The questionnaire is divided into three sections, which includes 37 items in total (Section A: Demographic information, Section B: Influencing factors and Section C: Turnover intention). A five point Likert type scale were used for Section B and Section C to increase response rate and response quality in answering the questions (Babakus & Mangold, 1992).

A pilot test was conducted with 30 fast food restaurant managers to test the adequacy of the instruments. This test was catered to rectify the reliability and validity of each item as well as identifying errors in the questionnaires; hence correction can be made for the assurance of more meaningful and accurate data. Feedbacks from the respondents of the pilot study suggested that the questionnaire is relatively easy to understand and respondents friendly. The pilot test was completed a week before the distribution of questionnaires to the real sample size proceeded. Reliability test (Cronbach Alpha) was utilized to measure the internal consistency on how closely related the set of items are as a group (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Multiple regression analysis was utilized to explore the total effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables (Nor, Nor, Ahmad, Khalid & Ibrahim, 2017).

### Findings

The respondents were asked about their demographic profiles in the first part of the questionnaire. This consisted of gender, age, race, educational level, marital status, monthly income, job position, organization and the duration of their working position as supervisors in the fast food industry. A detailed overview of the demographic profiles of the respondents is presented in table below.

Table 1: The Demographic Profiles of the Respondents (N=132)

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	63	47.7	47.7
Female	69	52.3	100
<b>Age</b>			
21-25 years old	51	38.6	38.6
26-30 years old	59	44.7	83.3
31-35 years old	13	9.8	93.2
36-40 years old	9	6.8	100
<b>Race</b>			
Malay	124	93.9	93.9
Chinese	8	6.1	100
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	110	83.3	83.3
Married	22	16.7	100
<b>Education Level</b>			
SPM/STPM	52	39.4	39.4
Diploma	56	42.4	81.8
Bachelor's Degree	23	17.4	99.2

Master's Degree	1	8	100
Monthly Income			
RM1001-RM1500	9	6.8	6.8
RM1501-RM2000	56	42.4	49.2
RM2001-RM2500	49	37.1	86.4
RM2501-RM3000	9	6.8	93.2
Above RM 3001	9	6.8	100
Job Position			
Restaurant Manager	34	25.8	25.8
Assistant manager	98	74.2	100
Organization			
KFC	25	18.9	18.9
McDonald's	26	19.7	38.6
Pizza Hut	22	16.7	55.3
Subway	25	18.9	74.2
Domino's	15	11.4	85.6
Burger King	15	11.4	97.0
A&W	4	3.0	100

Table 1 shows that female respondents are the majority (52.3%), while the males are only 47.7%. The respondents' age ranged between 26 and 30 years old eventually becomes the highest proportion among 132 respondents, resulting about 44.7% in total. This followed by respondents aged between 21 and 25 years old with approximately 38.6%. In terms of race, the majority of the respondents are Malay (93.9%), while the remaining 6.1% are Chinese. Most of the respondents are single (83.3%). The data demonstrate that 39.4% of the respondents are SPM/STPM holders, almost half of the respondents (42.4%) are Diploma holders and another 17.4% possess a Bachelor Degree. The table further indicates that the majority of the respondents (42.4%) income level falls between RM1501 and RM2000 with another 37.1% between RM2001 and RM2500. Overall, more than three quarter of the respondents (74.2%) are assistant restaurant managers. The other 25.8% are restaurant managers. There is a fair representation of managers from each fast food restaurant in Shah Alam, 18.9% of the respondents' works with KFC, 19.7% are from McDonald's 16.7% from Pizza Hut and another 18.9% are managers at Subway. The remaining 11.4 % from Domino's and Burger King, and another 3% are from A&W.



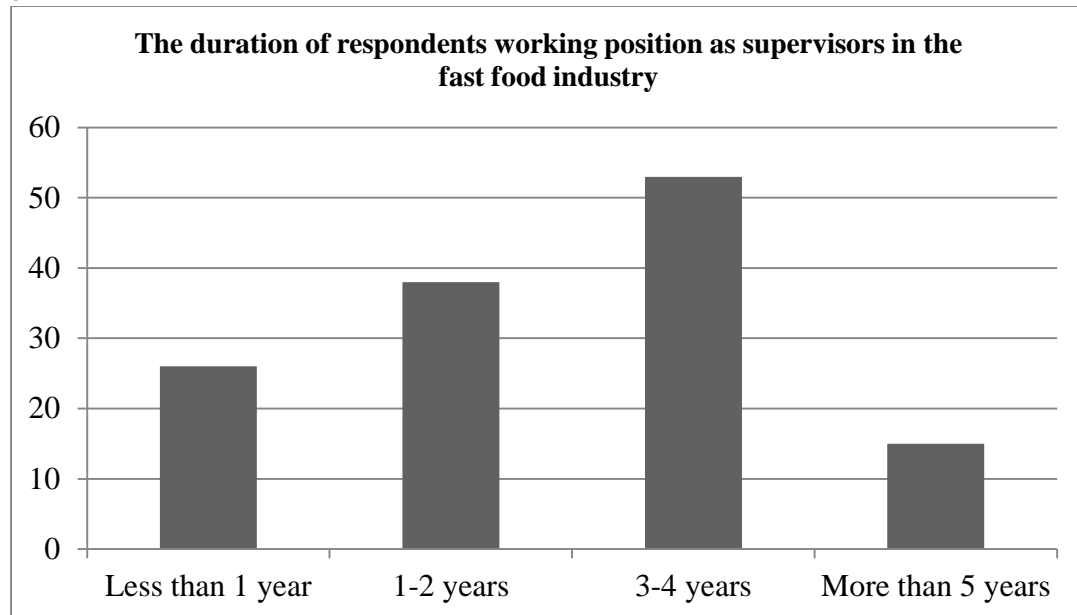


Figure 1: The duration of respondents working position as supervisors in the fast food industry

The figure above shows that the majority of the respondents (40.2%) have served the fast food industry between 3 - 4 years. 28.8% of the respondents have been working for at least 1 - 2 years in the industry. 19.7% of the respondents have less than 1 year of experience working in a supervisory position. Lastly, those with more than 5 years of working experience in the industry represent only 11.4% of the total respondents.

The findings imply that four independent variables, which are organizational commitment, job stress, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit, have significant influence on turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. Above all, compensation and benefit, person organization fit, and job stress have a greater influence on the dependent variable. There is a relationship between all four independent variables (organizational commitment, job stress, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit) towards turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. The results indicate that there are quite strong relationships between compensation and benefit, person organization fit, and job stress, with turnover intention ( $r = .50$  to  $1.0$ ). The results show that the greatest influence on turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers is compensation and benefit with  $\beta = -0.723$ ,  $n = 132$ ,  $p < .01$ , with high levels of compensation and benefit associated with lower levels of turnover intention.

The second most influential factor is person organization ( $\beta = -0.693$ ,  $n = 132$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The result indicates that a high level of person organization fit is associated with lower levels of turnover intention. The results further indicate that job stress is third in importance in influencing turnover ( $\beta = 0.609$ ,  $n = 132$ ,  $p < .01$ ), high levels of job stress are associated with higher levels of turnover intention. Even though organizational commitment has the lowest correlation value, the results still indicate that there is an average level of correlation between the variable and turnover intention correlated ( $r = .30$  to  $.49$ ). In details, high levels of organizational commitment are associated with lower levels of turnover intention ( $\beta = -.354$ ,  $n = 132$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 2: Result of Multiple Regressions on Independent Variable and Dependent Variable

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1						
	OC	-.650	.151	-.354	-4.311	.000
	JS	.604	.069	.609	8.753	.000
	POF	-.820	.075	-.693	-10.946	.000
	CB	-.732	.061	-.723	-11.948	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TI

### Compensation and Benefit

The compensation and benefit scale has a significant negative weight, ( $\beta = -0.723$ , t-value = -11.948,  $p < .01$ ) indicating that after accounting for organizational commitment, job stress, and person organization fit scores, those managers with a higher compensation and benefit scores were expected to have a lower turnover intention. Long, Kowang, and Chin (2017) indicate that employee will remain in the organization if they get benefits, which are align with their skills, experiences and knowledge. Fast food industry should review compensation and benefits packages in preventing high level of turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers (Ukandu & Ukpere, 2014). Many studies (Chepchumba & Kimutai, 2017; Iqbal, Guohao, & Akhtar, 2017; Rubel & Kee, 2015; Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola, & Heirmsmac, 2014) have reported that compensation and benefit will satisfy employee as well as minimize employee turnover intention.

### Person Organization Fit

Person organization fit scale had significant negative regression weights, ( $\beta = -0.693$ , t-value = -10.946,  $p < .01$ ), indicating that after accounting for organizational commitment, job stress, and compensation and benefit scores, those managers with a higher person organization fit scores were expected to have a lower turnover intention. Fast food industry should be more selective in hiring for the managerial position in order to minimize the number of turnover. During the process of manager selection, it is difficult for human resource manager to measure the fit between the candidate and the organization. It is comprehensible to measure the actual fit of candidate because organization can access the risk of hiring the individual with a known probability to quit (Iqbal, Guohao, & Akhtar, 2017). There is evidence that shows when there is no fit between manager and organization, the tendency for them to leave is higher (Kumar, Ramendran, & Yaacob, 2012). This finding is significant because higher level of person organization fit is associated with positive work outcomes as well as turnover intention (Krishnan, Wesley, & Bhaskaran, 2017; Rizwan, Arshad, Munir, Iqbal, & Hussain, 2014; Nazir & Saima, 2014; Kumar, Ramendran, & Yacob, 2012).

### **Job Stress**

Job stress scale had significant positive regression weights, ( $\beta = 0.609$ ,  $t\text{-value} = 8.753$ ,  $p < .01$ ), indicating managers with higher scores on this scale were expected to have a higher turnover intention, after controlling for the other variables in the model. Review of the literature suggests that the factors that contribute to job stress the most are excessive overtime, excessive work demands, staff shortage, and insufficient resources (Divakar 2015; Kotteeswari & Sharief, 2014; Mosadeghard, Ferlie, & Rosenberg, 2011; Chong et al., 2013). As managers are required to do paperwork such as ordering and purchasing, banking transaction, sales report, staff working schedule, and many more on a weekly basis, they may find it stressful. Many studies have reported a significant negative relationship between job stress and turnover intention (Deery, Walsh, Zatzick, & Hayes, 2017; Divakar, 2015; Kotteeswari & Sharief, 2014; Choong et al., 2013). The result also supports recent study by Allen (2017) proving that there is a positive correlation between job stress and turnover intention.

### **Organizational Commitment**

Lastly, organizational commitment shows the least of Beta value (-0.354) where significant positive influence on turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. Organizational commitment scales had significant negative regression weights ( $\beta = -.354$ ,  $t\text{-value} = -4.311$ ,  $p < .01$ ), indicating managers with higher scores on this scale were expected to have a lower turnover intention, after controlling for the other variables in the model. Results depict negative correlation between both variables, indicating that a higher organizational commitment among fast food restaurant managers leads to a lower intention to leave their job. In context of the fast food industry, managers with a lower level of organizational commitment tend to be involved in counterproductive behaviors such as absenteeism, refused to help others, and turnover (Gatling, Kang, & Kim, 2016). Fast food restaurant managers are likely to refuse to leave their current job because of their passion in this career, lack of job alternatives, and they feel guilty when they quit (Park, Christie, & Sype, 2014). This finding is supported by Kumar, Ramendran and Yaacob (2012) who have proven that managers with higher level of organizational commitment preferred to stay and work with the organization rather than leave. When one's commitment towards the organization is high, the turnover intention will be low.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the study connote some theoretical and practical implications. This study provides information about factors that influence turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. The findings indicate that organizational commitment, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit have a significant negative relationship towards turnover intention, while job stress has positive relationship with turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. The findings implied that organizations can adopt these factors as antidote for some of the problems related to turnover intention among managers.

For the practical implications, fast food industry may use this finding in developing several strategies and planning to minimize the number of turnover intention. Study in this area is still essential in promoting good working environment in the workplace and motivating managers to engage with the organization. The findings of this study are of great significance to fast food industry. Human resource managers will be in a better position to understand the causes of turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers and be conversant with the best employee retention strategies to manage high employee turnover rates.

Overall, the findings imply that four independent variables which are organizational commitment, job stress, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit, have significant influence on turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers. Firstly, the findings suggest that the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions is negatively related and significant. Increased levels of organizational commitment lead to lower levels of turnover intention. Secondly, decreased levels of job stress leads to a lower levels of turnover intention. Thirdly, relationship between person organization fit with turnover intention is significantly negatively related with higher levels of person organization fit lead to lower levels of turnover intention among fast food managers. Finally, the relationship between compensation and benefit and turnover intention is significantly negatively related. When the compensation and benefit offered by the management are appropriate, turnover intention will be lower.

In conclusion, the findings of this study expanded the literature on the factors influencing fast food restaurant managers. Fast food industry was selected as the focus of the study due to the high turnover rate among managers, which has significant effect on the performance of the business. This research gives a better understanding on the reasons why fast food managers tend to leave this industry. The results indicate that turnover intention among fast food restaurant managers is significantly influenced by organizational commitment, job stress, person organization fit, and compensation and benefit. The industry needs to find a comprehensive human resource solution and plan to retain talented managers as well as minimize the number of turnover among fast food restaurant managers.

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