

Relationship between Human Resource Practices and Talent Retention among Professional and Management Staff of a Public University in Malaysia

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between human resource practices and talent retention and at the same time determine the dominant factor that contributes to talent retention among the professional and management staff in Uni A. Descriptive and correlational methods were used as the study design and a total of 381 of professional and management staffs was selected using non-proportionate simple random sampling method. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed and 282 (74%) responses were collected. Finding of study indicates that human resource practice that consists of eight variables correlates significantly with retention. Organizational work environment was found to have the strongest correlation with retention followed by organizational leadership, and person-organization fit, and teamwork. Second, the result also confirms that there is a significant influence of human resource practice on talent retention. Apparently, work environment was found to be the dominant human resource practice in retaining talent in Uni A and it also exposes that organizational commitment model was found to be more effective to measure the influence of HRP on retention as compared to intent to stay model. Thus, from the study it can be concluded that work environment is the key human resource practices in retaining talent in Uni A followed by organizational leadership and person-organization fit. Ignoring this relationship will be a risk to talent retention in Uni A and affecting university's function and performance. It is recommended that the university to invest money and effort as to implement a structured retention management strategy in order to retain talent focusing on work environment, leadership development and person-organization fit.

Keywords: Human Resource Practices, Talent Retention, Public University in Malaysia

Introduction**Talent Retention in Malaysia Public University**

The increasing competition and liberalization of education in Malaysia have made talent retention as a more critical agenda in Malaysia Public University than ever. As Malaysian higher education embarked on the liberalization, democratization and privatization in middle of 1990s, it marked the beginning of the agenda of attracting and retaining talent among the higher education institutions and universities. The establishment of new public university; from five (5) universities to twenty (20) and currently as more than 500 private education institutions established, causing rapid mobility between these institutions of higher learning involving the academicians as well as the administrators. Malaysian Medical Association reported that mobility among the clinical academics from the public universities are the highest for the past few years to work at private institutions and hospitals (Chin, 2014). Shortages of the clinical academics require Malaysia government and universities to plan measures in order to curb the brain drain among the public universities. Malaysia's aspiration to emerge as a regional education hub would require the standard quality assurance of teaching and learning while exerting greater accountability to students, parents and stakeholders (Abd. Aziz & Abdullah, 2014). Therefore, this expectation towards producing employable graduates would demand for the retention of the best talent in the universities.

It is becoming even more imperative for Malaysia public universities to manage and retain talents with the launching of Malaysia's New Economic Model (NEM) in 2010 as Malaysia gears towards producing knowledge workers and attaining a high income nation by 2020 (Arokiasamy, Ismail, Ahmad, & Othman, 2011; Darling Hammond, 2010). However, the purported alarming trend of migration of Malaysian professionals abroad at an estimated diaspora of 1.5 million people posed as one of the Malaysia's biggest challenge in its efforts to achieve the developed or high income nation (Puteh, Nor, & Zulkifli, 2012). As part of the efforts to address the issue of Malaysian talents from going overseas, Talent Corporation Malaysia is established aiming at attracting Malaysian professionals abroad to contribute to the country's development by returning to Malaysia.

In addition, the research university (RU) recognition introduced in 2006 posed the importance of retaining talent in the universities. The first RU status was awarded to four Malaysia public universities namely Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaya (UM). The RU aiming at pursuing the national agenda to transform into a competitive economy, the RU is different from other universities by its capability of conducting research and development, innovation and commercialization that definitely would require a pool of professionals, knowledgeable and highly skilled workers in the public universities (Noraani & Wee Yu Ghee, 2013).

To date, Malaysia public university's management become more dynamic and complex which requires the university to invest to attract the best talent and retain them as long as possible in the university. The roles of professional and management staff in a university are interrelated to attain University Good Governance Index (UGGI) in terms of institutional, financial, human resource and academic governance. UGGI has been accepted as a measure of the readiness of universities to be granted autonomy (Hashim, 2010). By attaining the UGGI, the government will grant the university with a greater autonomy. In addition to UGGI, participating to the university world ranking also reshaping the university and its talent to

become more competitive while promoting quality and excellence in higher education (Hazelkorn, 2013).

Therefore, retaining talent in Malaysia public university is crucial towards transforming Malaysia into a knowledge-based economy nation and finally supporting the Malaysian New Economic Model. Moreover, the world class university ranking exercise including the benchmarking strategies with other leading universities to enhance university competitiveness contribute to the importance of talent retention management in Malaysia higher education system.

Statement of Problem

Talent is an important resource for the organizational success and sustainability (Shaw, 2011; Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010; Davies & Davies, 2010; Huselid, 1995; Wright, McMahan, & McWilliams, 1994) and the need to retain talent is recognised by most organisation worldwide (Mendez & Stander, 2011). However, most of previous studies had given emphasis more on the issues of turnover rather than the retention of talent (Park & Shaw, 2013; Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011; Batt & Colvin, 2011; Siebert & Zubanov, 2009). Previous studies in turnover mostly examined the effects of human resource practices on quit rates and discharge rates at the individual and organizational levels. In contrast, talent retention studies examined the factors that influence talents' intention to stay in the organization while the talents still employed in the organization. In addition, much of the research has been dedicated to the best practices in talent retention in the profit making entities such as the hotels, medical and multinational companies (Mohan & Russell, 2010; Siebert & Zubanov, 2009; Grobler & Diedericks, 2009; Hughes & Rog, 2008). It is noted that little study has been done to address the impact and relationship between human resource practices and talent retention particularly in the public higher education institution or university in Malaysia. Few studies measure the relationship between benefit i.e. leave, loan and retirement plan and also the impact of human resource management such as employee training, appraisal system, employee compensation and empowerment on retention (Ng Chee Hong, Lam, Kumar, Ramendran & Kadiresan, 2012). Besides those human resource practices studied earlier, there are many other human resource practices to be considered on their impact on talent retention. Hence, this study is carried out to assess and identify the relationship as well as the influence of human resource practices on retaining talent in a public university in Malaysia.

Review of Literature

Definition of Human Resource Practices

Individuals who make up the workforce of an organization or business is called as human resources. Human resources is also known as human capital or sometimes called as manpower, talent, labour, or simply people. Previous researchers highlighted that people management is more complex and cumbersome than managing machine or money (Lado & Wilson, 1994; Barney, 1991) and organizations which manage their human resources well will have competitive advantage over their competitors (Wright et al., 1994).

In order to achieve the organizational goals, it requires a sound human resource practices. This refers to human resource related activities directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensuring that the resources are employed towards the fulfilment of organizational goals (Jackson & Schuler, 1996). HRD practices involves a distinctive approach

in recruiting highly committed and skilled workforce, activities to improve staff organizational behaviour such as commitment, competency and performance (Koch & McGrath, 1996).

Human Resource Practices Influencing Talent Retention

In this study, it focuses on eight types of human resource practices, namely person organization fit, remuneration and recognition, training and career development, challenging assignment opportunity, leadership, teamwork, communication and work environment as the variables in which their impact on retention of the people or talent in Uni A is examined.

Human resource practices make up as part of the strategic initiatives in managing and retaining talent (Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995; Koch & McGrath, 1996). Human resource practices designated to enable achieving success through its people (Armstrong, 2009; Becker & Gerhart, 1996). Human resource practices such as training and career development, teamwork, compensation, performance appraisal helps improve organizations' performance (Lee & Lee, 2007). It was suggested that human resource practices improved organizational outcomes through shaping employees behaviour and attitude (Kehoe & Wright, 2010). Moreover, human resource practices are related to an increase of employees' commitment to an organization (Arthur, 1994). Organizational commitment among employees would make them involved in the organization, and work hard to accomplish organization's goal and finally leads to lower turnover and high in productivity (Youndt, 2000). In general, human resource practices includes functions such as job analysis, design, recruitment/selection, training and development, performance management, remunerations/benefits, as well as labour and employee relations (De Cieri & Kramar, 2008; Delery & Doty, 1996). Through the policies enacted, methods and strategies used to attract and retain the right talent will develop a sustainable competitive advantage organization (Holland et al., 2007).

In addition to the above, in this study, the eight types of human resource practices are also considered as bundles of human resource practices that consists of two factors. First is the human resource factors that resides internally within the human resource such as their fit on organization values, satisfaction on remuneration and recognition, level of training and development, and the amount of job assignments and challenging opportunities received. The second factor is the organizational factors that revolve externally within the human resource namely organizational leadership, communication, teamwork relationship and work environment.

Human Resource Factors

Human resource factors that affect retention, job satisfaction and organization performance are as follows:

Person-Organizational Fit

Person-organization fit emphasizes on matching people and job in terms of qualifications based on knowledge, skill, or ability, and overlooking other personal characteristics of applicants that might be more suitable for the assessment of "fit" (Edwards, 1991). Person-organization fit is considered in the context of personnel selection and can be based on the congruity between personal and organization beliefs (Netmeyer, Boles, McKee, & McMurrian, 1997). In addition, person-organization fit in term of work values and honesty will increase in

work outcome, and retention (Swaney, Alllen, Casillas, Hanson, & Robbins, 2012; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009).

Remuneration and Recognition

A fair wage implied agreements between employees and employers, the underlying assumption being that money can influence behavior (Hansen, Smith, & Hansen, 2002; Parker & Wright, 2000). Organization provide pay packages superior to the market to attract and to retain talent. Innovative compensation such as profit sharing and group-based incentive pay were introduced by organization using high performance work practices (Bassi & Van Buren, 1999). Though pays continue to be important in determining motivation to perform, other non-monetary benefits known as rewards or recognition play a significant role in compensation satisfaction. A sense of accomplishment is recognized as important and a strong motivator. Employees tend to stay with the organization when they feel their capabilities, effort, and performance contributions are recognized and appreciated (Davies, 2001). Rewards-retention link study provided support to the belief that a broad and well-implemented rewards and recognition program assists in talent retention management (Mercer, 2003). In addition, a study on job satisfaction among doctors showed that recognition for high work quality, teamwork and promotion opportunities have direct effect on retention and satisfaction while pays and better incentive package sometimes were not necessarily be the dominant factors for retention (Nazir, Khan, Hussain Shah, & Zaman, 2013).

Training and Career Development

Training is considered a form of human capital investment made by an organization to enhance employee job skills and knowledge, apply and share with others (Noe, 1999). Training is needed to close the gap or deficiencies of employees performances including improving the technological know-how, communication, or problem solving; while career development mean an effort made to provide employees with the abilities that the organization will need in the future (Capelli, 1995). Training and career development of employees has been recognized as an important part of human resource management as they increase employee commitment (Oakland & Oakland, 2001). Thus, training and career development can serve to increase staff intention to stay in an organization (Frazis, Gittleman, Horrigan, & Joyce, 1998). Training and career development activities that encourage innovative, creativity and providing opportunities for personal career development will contribute to retention (Chung & Jing, 2009; Kwenin, 2013; Sinha & Sinha, 2012).

Challenging Employment Assignment and Opportunities

Employees need to be stimulated with creative challenges or they will go where the excitement is, be it in another department, industry or company. Allowing a challenging assignment or cross department projects with well-defined performance measures will encourage employees to achieve their personal objectives (Furnham, 2002) while mastering new skills will keep employees to be creative and nurturing them with a broad of experience (Ferguson, 1990). Organization that failed in providing challenging assignment and opportunities, freedom to be creative, opportunities to develop new skills among the employees, will lower organizational commitment, and increase their greater intention to leave the organization (Phillips, 1997). Thus, providing opportunities to learn new things, challenging work assignments and work autonomously on their work assignment are the human resource factors that contributed to lower turnover and increase talent retention

(Carette, Anseel, & Lievens, 2012; Preenen, De Pater, Van Vianen, and Keijzer, 2011; Fatima, 2011).

Organizational Factors

Few organizational factors that affects retention are as follows:

Organizational Leadership

Leadership is defined as the non-coercive influence behavior of a person when directing and coordinating an activities of a group of people towards the accomplishment of a shared goal and organizational effectiveness (Hoffman, Strang, Kuhnet, Campbell, Kennedy, & LoPilato, 2013; Byrman, 1992). Leadership consists of four tasks: providing direction, assuring alignment, building commitment, and facing adaptive challenges (Leimbach, 2006; Risher & Stopper, 2002).

Teamwork Relationship

Employees stay when they have strong relationship with their colleagues (Clarke, 2001). Organizations that encourage team work, cross departmental project with peers, and opportunities for social interaction which enhance bonding among members and consequently, increase organizational commitment (Abdullah, et al., 2012; Kalisch, Lee, & Rochman, 2010; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Communication

Communication emerged as an essential process in people management. Communication can be in the form of a well-informed of organization's goals, vision, strategies, policies, rules and regulations (Gilley, Gilley, & McMillan, 2009). A horizontal and vertical communication of facts, and information will provide common understanding across all level and thus develop trust between employees and leaders (Muhammad, Ur Rehman, Safwan, & Asad, 2012; Carter, Ulrich, & Goldsmiths, 2005; Hart, Miller, & Johnson, 2003). An effort towards providing a clear data communication structured towards responding to staffs' complaints and ideas will contribute to enhance job satisfaction and staffs' intention to stay (Muhammad et al., 2012; Sh. Kandelousi & Kim Seong, 2011; Gilley, Gilley, & McMillan, 2009; Carter, Ulrich, & Goldsmiths, 2005)

Working Environment

Personal and family lives did affect employees' decision either to leave or to stay at one's organization. Organizations that help employees to manage their work and personal life issues such as life stage needs, health, location, family, dual-career and other personal needs will win employees to stay longer (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). Therefore, many organizations have successfully created an employee-friendly environment by integrating specialized work arrangements such as flexible hours, telecommuting, and family-leave assistance to support employees to experience a more conducive work environment and to practice work life balance. The importance of work life family balance, harmonious work environment as well as a safe and good physical work condition would contribute to job satisfaction among employees, increased retention and high quality organization performance (Vijaimadhavan & Raju M.Com, 2013; Akintayo, 2012; Chandrasekar, 2011; Beham & Drobnic, 2010).

Methodology

Research Design and Location of the Study

In pursuing this study, a quantitative method using a descriptive and correlational research was chosen to investigate the influence of human resource practices on the talent retention of the professional and management staff in a public university in Malaysia. This study was conducted in one of the research universities in Malaysia (Uni A). Uni A is also known as one of the premier public universities in Malaysia.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study is among the professional and management staff in all faculties and offices in Uni A consisting of the academicians and administrators. The current statistics shows that there are 1223 academicians and 960 administrators which totalled up to 2183 staffs in Uni A. In order to obtain an accurate estimate of the relationship between variables, at least one hundred participants are required from a defined population. The sample size calculated using formula $50 + 8m$ (m = number of independent variable) by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) showed a sample size of 114. However in this study, the sample size was set to 381 respondents in order to increase responses and to ensure the representativeness of population in the study. There are 16 faculties in Uni A where the academicians resided while the administrators were placed across faculties, offices, centres, and institutes. A non-proportionate random sampling technique was selected in this study whereby 13 academicians selected using random number generator from each 16 faculties (total of 208 academicians) while the balance of 173 were selected from the administrator list

The Instrument

A research instrument in the form of a structured questionnaire was adopted in this study. It was used due to its efficient data collection mechanism. The instrument (questionnaire) was adopted based on previous reliable questionnaire which had been used to measure the perception of human resource practices influences on talent retention. The items in the instrument of this study was written in English and translated to Malay language and checked by a Malay language expert. Finally, to ensure and determine the content validity, the questionnaire was certified and validated by the researcher's Supervisory Committee members.

Table 3.1

Questionnaire Items

| Variable | No. of Item | Sources |
|--|-------------|---|
| 1 Person organization fit | 4 | Netemeyer, Boles, Mckee and McMurrian (1997) |
| 2 Remuneration and Recognition | 5 | Broadfoot & Ashkanasy(1994), Seashore et al. (1982), Cammann et al.(1979) |
| 3 Training and Career Development | 4 | Broadfoot and Ashkanasy (1994) |
| 4 Challenging Assignment and Opportunities | 5 | Jackson et al., 1993), Hackman & Oldham (1975) |
| 5 Organizational Leadership | 4 | Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire devised by Bass and Avolio (1990), Hartog, Van Muijen and Koopmen (1997) |
| 6 Teamwork Relationship | 4 | Bass and Avolio (1990) |
| 7 Communication | 5 | Sims, Szilagyi and Keller (1976), Broadfoot and Ashkanasy (1994) |
| 8 Organizational Working Environment | 7 | Broadfoot and Ashkanasy (1994), Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh (1979), Parker and Smith (1976) |
| 9 Organizational Commitment | 9 | Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) scale developed by Mowday, Steer and Porter (1979) |
| 10 Intent to Stay | 4 | Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Seashore et al (1982), Camman et al. (1979) and Lyons' Propensity to leave scale (Cook et al., 1981). |
| 11 Demographic | 4 | |
| Total | 55 | |

There were 55 items in the instrument including four questions which were used to obtain demographic information namely age, gender, job placement and occupation. All items were scored using Likert-Type Scale i.e. a seven point scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree (Vagias, 2006) and tested its level of significance at targeted range of <0.01 - <0.05 . Each variable was assessed using a minimum of four items and to a maximum of 9 items.

Measures of Reliability

In the pilot study, organizational fit scales, item fit 2 "values with regards to fairness" was deleted for the purpose of increasing reliability. Furthermore, the corrected item – total

correlation is too low (-0.354). Thus reliability increased from 0.435 to 0.898. For the organizational commitment scales, item Oc2 “working for a different organization” was deleted due to the corrected item – total correlation is too low (-0.026). Thus, reliability increased from 0.794 to 0.840. For the intent to stay scales, item its3 “plan to stay in this job for at least two or three years” was deleted because the corrected item – total correlation is too low (0.124). Therefore, the reliability increased from 0.585 to 0.716. The result shows that the reliability of the item selected for this study is within range 0.716 – 0.98 alpha cronbach’s after three items were dropped from the instrument. The dropped items involved negative and repetitive scale and by deleting them does not affect the instrument as a whole.

Table 3.2

Instrument Reliability Coefficient

| No. | Variable | Cronbach’s Alpha Value | | | |
|-----|--|------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| | | Pilot Study (n=22) | | Actual Study (n=282) | |
| | | Item | Alpha | Item | Alpha |
| 1 | Person organization fit (Fit) | 4 | .435 | 3 | .898 |
| 2 | Remuneration and Recognition (REM) | 5 | .877 | 5 | .804 |
| 3 | Training and Career Development (TCD) | 4 | .878 | 4 | .887 |
| 4 | Challenging Assignment and Opportunities (CAO) | 5 | .849 | 5 | .794 |
| 5 | Organizational Leadership (LDR) | 4 | .982 | 4 | .948 |
| 6 | Teamwork Relationship (TEAM) | 4 | .817 | 4 | .823 |
| 7 | Communication (COMM) | 5 | .891 | 5 | .923 |
| 8 | Organizational Working Environment (WE) | 7 | .919 | 7 | .904 |
| 9 | Organizational Commitment (OC) | 9 | .794 | 8 | .840 |
| 10 | Intent to Stay (Its) | 4 | .585 | 3 | .716 |

Data Collection

A self-administered structured questionnaire in the form of electronic online survey was developed and distributed through Uni A internal mail services and sample’s official email. The online survey was created using the free services provided by Google Docs application dated on 12 th. December 2011 and the url address to access the questionnaire was <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/gform?key=0AizHnNOFG5EdEtNQ09NNN1puZGc1dHNu0JxOUE#invite>. The online questionnaire collected data and automatically filled it in a spreadsheet that can easily work on any data processing methods. For this study, the replied form were accessed from <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AizHnNOFG5EdEtNQ09hemNNN1puZGc1dHNu0JxOUE>. The respondents have the freedom to fill the questionnaire either through online or hardcopy by printing the online form and submitted the form to the researcher.

A cover letter signed by Uni A’s Registrar requesting participation, and guaranteed confidentiality has been prepared and distributed with the questionnaire. The entire data collection phase took three months to be completed including the follow up procedure has been done by the researcher to reduce the number of missing values and collecting additional

data. First, the questionnaire has been distributed within a month. After one month of the expiry of the dateline and due to less than expected reply received, the first reminder were sent by telephone call and email. Finally, data collection with a total of 282 respondents consisting of 182 online responses and 100 hardcopy returned questionnaires.

Data Analysis

In analysing the data collected from the questionnaire, the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0 Window was used to generate the results of the survey.

Results

The demographic profile of the respondents was presented according to gender, age, job placement and occupation including frequency distribution and percentage of respondents. Table 4.1 shows that (n=282) employees in Uni A participated in this study. Out of 282 employees participated in this study, 133 (47%) were male employees and 149 (53%) were female.

In terms of age of the respondents, the data showed that 95 respondents (34%) were between ages 30-39 years old. It was followed by the age group between 40-49 years old, with 86 respondents (31%). The third place was age group between 50-65 years with 68 respondents (24%). Finally, the last age group was between 20-29 years old, consisting of 31 respondents (11%) in this age group. The results indicated the majority of the respondents or 64.3% fall under the productive age of an employment period which is between 30-39 years old and 40- 49 years old (Skirbekk, 2003). This posited the fact that the professional and management staff in Uni A is relatively young (34 years old and less).

With regard to job placement, the respondents were divided into six (6) categories. It indicates that most of the respondents were from the faculty members of which 144 (51%) respondents of the study. It was followed by 40 (14%) respondents who came from the Centres while, 35 (13%) respondents were from the Institutes. The rest of respondents i.e 30 (11%) from Divisions and 30 (11%) respondents from the Offices as well as 3 (1%) respondents came from the various Schools of Uni A. These result show majority of the respondent were the academicians and attached to specific faculties. While the administrators placement are scattered at the centres, institute, offices and divisions; the technical officers such as the IT, agriculture, librarian, and financial officer are located at their specific offices and division.

By occupation, Table 4.1 shows that only eleven respondents did not state their occupation. Hence, there were 282 valid cases in the statistics out of 320 respondents. It indicates that most of the respondents were the academicians which is due to the nature of the university is designated for teaching, learning, and research. There are 136 (48%) respondents who were academicians. The rest of respondents include 49 (17%) administrators, 20 (7%) research officers, 19 (7%) librarians, 15 (5%) others, 11 (4%) agriculture officers, 9 (3%) science officers, 7 (3%) system analysts, medical officers 7 (3%), financial officers 6 (2%) and finally, only 3 (1%) respondents were engineers.

Relationship between Human Resource Practices and Talent Retention of Professional and Management Staff in Uni A

Correlation analysis was conducted to address the third research objective of the study which is to identify the relationship between human resource practices and talent retention of the professional and management staff in Uni A. The relationship between human resource practices and talent retention was conducted using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality and linearity.

Based on the collinearity diagnostics, none of the model dimensions had condition index equal to or above the threshold value of 30.0. None of the tolerance value smaller than 0.10 and VIF statistics are less than 10.0. This indicated that that there is no serious multicollinearity problem among the predictor variables of the estimated model.

Relationship between Human Resource Practices and Talent Retention of Professional and Management Staff in Uni A

Intent To Stay

As depicted in Table 4.14, it shows that all variables correlate significantly with intent to stay. The strongest linear relationship was found to exist between intent to stay and organizational working environment ($r = 0.53$, $p = 0.01$). The correlation coefficient of .53 shows a positive direction with a moderate strength. The second highest correlation was found between the intent to stay and organizational leadership ($r = 0.45$, $p = 0.01$). The correlation coefficient of .45 shows a positive linear relationship direction and the strength was moderate. The third highest correlation was between intent to stay and teamwork ($r = 0.43$, $p = 0.01$) with a positive direction and a moderate strength too. In addition, communication indicated a significant relationship ($r = 0.42$, $p = 0.01$) including remuneration and recognition ($r = 0.41$, $p = 0.01$) which showed a positive direction and a moderate strength. Finally, there was a significant relationship between intent to stay and organizational fit ($r = 0.38$, $p = 0.01$), training and career development ($r = 0.36$, $p = 0.01$) and challenging employment assignments ($r = 0.36$, $p = 0.01$) though it showed a positive direction but the strength was small.

Table 4.14

Correlation between HRP Variables and Intent to Stay (N=282)

| Variables | Y | X ₁ | X ₂ | X ₃ | X ₄ | X ₅ | X ₆ | X ₇ | X ₈ |
|----------------|------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Y | Its | | | | | | | | |
| X ₁ | Fit | .384** | | | | | | | |
| X ₂ | Rem | .407** | .675** | | | | | | |
| X ₃ | Tcd | .375** | .657** | .744** | | | | | |
| X ₄ | Cao | .356** | .570** | .564** | .689** | | | | |
| X ₅ | Ldr | .445** | .713** | .693** | .769** | .647** | | | |
| X ₆ | Team | .432** | .631** | .664** | .710** | .621** | .771** | | |
| X ₇ | Comm | .413** | .686** | .691** | .717** | .607** | .811** | .733** | |
| X ₈ | We | .530** | .689** | .672** | .678** | .614** | .777** | .707** | .806** |

These findings highlighted that all eight variables of human resource practices in Uni A have a significant relationship with intent to stay. In Uni A, it shows that organizational factors variables are having the highest significant relationship with intent to stay where organizational work environment scores the highest, followed by organizational leadership, teamwork and communication. Only remuneration and recognition show a significant relationship with intent to stay that comes from the human resource factors variables whereby three variables namely person organization fit, training and career development and challenging assignment and opportunity correlate significantly with intent to stay but with small strength.

The significant relationship between organizational work environment and intent to stay in Uni A is relevant with previous research in U.S. firms where personal and family life such as health, dual career and other personal needs will convince employees to stay longer (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). It is also relevant with previous study in India and Nigeria that harmonious workplace, a good physical work condition and safety promotes talent intent to stay and contributed to retention and high organizational performance (Vijaimadhavan & Raju M. Com, 2013; Akintayo, 2012; Chandrasekar, 2011). In addition, these findings also confirm previous study in German service sector workers that highlighted the importance of work family balance (Beham & Drobic, 2010).

The second highest variable correlates with intent to stay is organizational leadership which states the important role of leadership to retain talent in Uni A. This finding is relevant with previous study among managers in U.S. which highlighted that effective leader and leadership practices that support high performing employee will contribute to high retention among talents (Hoffman et al., 2013). This study also confirms earlier research that leadership that provides direction will enhance retention (Leimbach, 2006), and increase job satisfaction and commitment (Aimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001; Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996).

The third highest variable correlates with intent to stay is teamwork relationship. In Uni A, teamwork is among the important HRP in retaining talent. This is similar with previous study among employees in hotel industry in Klang Valley, Malaysia that highlighted how teamwork among colleague that maintain high standard performance are crucial in retaining talent (Abdullah et al., 2012). Finding of this study is also relevant with previous study among nurses in U.S. hospitals which indicated that cross department teamwork and members that have clear idea of group's goal will enhance retention (Kalisch, Lee, & Rochman, 2010).

Finally, the fourth highest variable that correlates with intent to stay is communication. This finding shows similar result with previous study among public and private sector in Pakistan that effective communication affected talents' motivation and act as the vital source of their affiliation with organization and retention (Muhammad et al., 2012). It is also relevant with previous study that a well-informed matters related to talent is crucial for retention (Gilley, Gilley, & McMillan, 2009). A study among U.S. working professionals confirmed that horizontal and vertical communication across all level played an important factor to employees' intent to stay (Carter, Ulrich, & Goldsmith, 2005). However, the other HRP variables, namely person organization fit, remuneration and recognition, training and career

development and challenging assignment and opportunities should also be considered important in leading talent to stay in Uni A.

Organizational Commitment

As depicted in Table 4.15, it shows that all variables correlate significantly with organizational commitment. The strongest linear relationship was found to exist between organizational commitment and organizational working environment ($r = 0.76$, $p = 0.01$). The correlation coefficient of .76 shows a positive direction and a high strength. The second highest is found between organizational commitment and organizational leadership ($r = 0.73$, $p = 0.01$). The correlation coefficient of .73 shows a positive linear relationship direction and the strength was high. The third highest was between organizational commitment and communication ($r = 0.67$, $p = 0.01$) with a positive direction and a high strength too. In addition, person-organizational fit indicated a significant relationship ($r = 0.66$, $p = 0.01$) including training and career development ($r = 0.65$, $p = 0.01$) and remuneration and recognition ($r = 0.63$, $p = 0.01$) which show a positive direction and a moderate strength. Finally, there is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and challenging employment assignment ($r = 0.51$, $p = 0.01$) which shows a positive direction and a moderate strength.

The scenario in Uni A shows that organizational work environment is the highest correlation with organizational commitment followed by leadership, communication with high strength and person-organization fit correlates with moderate strength. These findings are relevant with previous research findings that confirmed how organizational work environment act as an important human resource practice in retaining talent. Furthermore, non-monetary factors such as physical working condition, harmonious workplace, spirit of cooperation, work life balance, work safety, 'management and staff get along together' and employee welfare also do play as important organizational factors in retaining Uni A's talents.

Table 4.15

Correlation between HRP Variables and Organizational Commitment (N=282)

| Variables | Y | X ₁ | X ₂ | X ₃ | X ₄ | X ₅ | X ₆ | X ₇ | X ₈ |
|----------------|------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Y | Oc | | | | | | | | |
| X ₁ | Fit | .658** | | | | | | | |
| X ₂ | Rem | .629** | .675** | | | | | | |
| X ₃ | Tcd | .651** | .657** | .744** | | | | | |
| X ₄ | Cao | .510** | .570** | .564** | .689** | | | | |
| X ₅ | Ldr | .728** | .713** | .693** | .769** | .647** | | | |
| X ₆ | Team | .643** | .631** | .664** | .710** | .621** | .771** | | |
| X ₇ | Comm | .671** | .686** | .691** | .717** | .607** | .811** | .733** | |
| X ₈ | We | .759** | .689** | .672** | .678** | .614** | .777** | .707** | .806** |

These factors are important to ensure talent intention to stay in Uni A and significantly increase their organizational commitment. Talent would leave for a better work place or working condition due to lack of good organizational work environment, (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). Nowadays, the competition among the local universities and private universities in

Malaysia to hire the talented staff, making it crucial to manage organizational commitment and intent to stay in order to retain them. Ignoring this relationship will be a risk to talent retention management and affecting university's function and performance (Vijaimadhavan & Raju M.Com, 2013; Akintayo, 2012; Chandrasekar, 2011; Beham & Drobnic, 2010). The diversity of talents in terms of age gap, gender, and type of occupation demands not only a highly effective leader but a change in managing work process through promoting team work job basis, and enhancing the work life balance among talents and making them to want to stay longer and committed to Uni A. A harmonious workplace and work life balance will increase talent intent to stay and commitment as well as job satisfaction.

Organizational leadership shows a positive significant relationship with talent retention in Uni A. This finding is relevant with previous study among managers in U.S. which highlighted that effective leader and leadership practices that support high performing employee will contribute to high retention among talents (Hoffman et al., 2013). This study also confirm earlier research finding that leadership which provides direction will enhance retention (Leimbach, 2006), and increase job satisfaction and commitment (Aimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001; Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996).

In addition, Uni A's talent demanded a clear and openness in providing and communicating universities vision, mission and action plan. An effort towards providing a clear data communication structure towards responding to staff complaints and ideas will contribute to enhance job satisfaction and staff intent to stay (Muhammad et al., 2012; Sh.Kandelousi & Kim Seong, 2011; Gilley, Gilley, & McMillan, 2009; Carter, Ulrich, & Goldsmiths, 2005). Communication emerged as an essential process in talent retention.

Talent in Uni A also appreciate the fact that matching their values with Uni A's values are important in talent retention. Person-organization fit is considered in the context of personnel selection and can be based on the congruity between personal and organization beliefs (Netmeyer, Boles, McKee, & McMurrian, 1997). In addition, person-organization fit in terms of work values and honesty will increase in work outcome, and retention (Swaney, Alllen, Casillas, Hanson, & Robbins, 2012; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009).

In Uni A, the other human resource factors such as remuneration, training and career development and challenging job assignment and opportunities should not be lacking behind. Remuneration package offered by the Government of Malaysia and the implementation of other non-monetary benefits in the form of recognition and rewards fulfilled the expectation of the talent and increased their job satisfaction (Hansen, Smith, & Hansen, 2002; Parker & Wright, 2000) and influence them to stay longer in Uni A. Employees tend to remain with the organization when they feel their capabilities, effort, and performance contributions are recognized and appreciated (Davies R. , 2001). A reward-retention link supported the notion that a broad and well-implemented rewards and recognition program assist in talent retention management (Mercer, 2003). In addition, the implementation of a structured training and career development and providing a challenging work assignment and opportunities contribute to the increase in knowledge and skill of the talent. A concerted effort between the human resource office and staff association is needed to initiate a better pay and recognition package that matches talent contribution to the university. The economic factors such as inflation and higher cost of living demanding the pays and recognition package

that are reliable and affordable for a living. The new way of thinking and doing things in the fourth industrial revolution demand an innovative training for career development among talent to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge which are suitable and current be it in teaching and learning, research, innovation and commercialization. This initiative may possibly avoid talents from leaving Uni A and looking for greener pastures and opportunities elsewhere. Hence, objective three of the study highlighted that there is a significant relationship between human resource practices and talent retention among the professional and management staff in Uni A.

The Influence of Human Resource Practices on Talent Retention among Professional and Management Staff in Uni A

Intent to Stay Regression Model

The ANOVA shown in Table 4.16 table indicates that all eight predictor variables were found to be significant in explaining intent to stay $F(8, 283) = 15.00, p = .0001$. The F-statistics ($F=15.00$) is very large and the corresponding p-value is highly significant ($p=0.01$) or lower than the alpha-value of 0.05. This indicates that the slope of the estimated linear regression model line is not equal to zero confirming that there is linear relationship between intent to stay and the eight predictor variables. Therefore, this analysis proposes the simple linear regression model is as the following equation:

$$Y_1 = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + B_6X_6 + B_7X_7 + B_8X_8$$

Table 4.16

ANOVA for Intent to stay

| I | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 155.35 | 8 | 19.42 | 15.00 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 366.32 | 282 | 1.30 | | |
| | Total | 521.67 | 282 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), MWe, MCao, MRem, MFit, MTeam, MTcd, MComm, MLdr

b. Dependent Variable: Mits

However, as depicted in Table 4.17, only organizational working environment obtained the largest beta coefficient of 0.53 with the highest t-statistic of 4.86 and p value is 0.01 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution in explaining the dependent variable of intent to stay. It suggests that one standard deviation increase in organizational working environment is followed by 0.53 standard deviation increase in intent to stay as in the following equation:

$$Y_1 = 1.91 - 0.02X_1 + 0.15X_2 + 0.09X_3 + 0.06X_4 + 0.07X_5 + 0.11X_6 - 0.12X_7 + 0.53X_8$$

Table 4.17

Regression Result for Intention to Stay

| Model 1 | Unstandardized | Std. | Standardized | t | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------|-------|------|
| Intent to stay | Beta | Error | Beta | | |
| Fit | -0.02 | 0.04 | 0.03 | -0.24 | 0.81 |
| Rem | 0.15 | 0.05 | 0.16 | 1.49 | 0.14 |
| Tcd | 0.09 | 0.05 | 0.11 | 0.88 | 0.38 |
| Cao | 0.06 | 0.05 | -0.06 | 0.59 | 0.56 |
| Ldr | 0.07 | 0.05 | 0.09 | 0.68 | 0.50 |
| Team | 0.11 | 0.05 | 0.12 | 1.07 | 0.28 |
| Comm | -0.12 | 0.06 | -0.14 | -1.09 | 0.28 |
| We | 0.53 | 0.06 | 0.55 | 4.86 | 0.00 |

Dependent Variable: ITS, R=.55, R² = .30

The regression analysis results confirmed how intention to stay model fits with the data as in the following:

$$Y_1 = B_0 + B_8X_8$$

$$Y_1 = 1.91 + 0.53X_8$$

In addition, the R-squared of 0.30 indicated that the eight predictor variables explain about 30% of the variance in the intent to stay. This dictates that from the eight HRP variables chosen for this study, only 30% contributes towards intent to stay which means that there are other factors should be measured to examine the influence of HRP and intent to stay. Again, finding shows that organizational work environment (WE) is the only dominant HRP that influence Uni A talent to stay longer in the university.

A well implemented human resource practices is crucial in order to ensure talent to stay longer (Kehoe & Wright, 2013) and thus contribute towards fulfilling Uni A's mission and vision. The lack of concern on talent retention among HR managers and top management in Uni A will lead to a huge loss not only in monetary term but also knowledge. Therefore, it is important for Uni A to implement a strategic human resource practice that encourage talented staff to stay and remain in Uni A.

Organizational Commitment Regression Model

In order to determine the extent of the research data fit, the enter method was used. According to ANOVA Table 4.18, all 8 predictor variables were found to be significant in explaining organizational commitment $F(8, 284) = 67.47, p = .0001$. F-statistics (F= 67.47) is very large and the corresponding p-value is highly significant (p=0.01) or lower than the alpha-value of 0.05. This indicates that the slope of the estimated linear regression model line is not equal to zero confirming that there is linear relationship between organizational commitment and the eight predictor variables. Therefore, this analysis proposes the simple linear regression for organizational commitment model to be as in the following equation:

$$Y_1 = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + B_6X_6 + B_7X_7 + B_8X_8$$

Table 4.18

ANOVA for Organizational Commitment

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 185.58 | 8 | 23.20 | 67.47 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 97.65 | 282 | .34 | | |
| | Total | 283.22 | 282 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), MWe, MCao, MRem, MFit, MTeam, MTcd, MComm, MLdr

b. Dependent Variable: MOc

As depicted in Table 4.19, the largest beta coefficient is 0.38 is for organizational working environment and this corresponds with the highest t-statistic of 6.73 and p value is 0.00 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explain the dependent variables of organizational commitment, when the variance explained by all other predictor variables in the model is controlled. It suggests that one standard deviation increase in organizational working environment is followed by 0.38 standard deviation increase in intent to stay. The second largest beta coefficient is organizational leadership ($B=0.16$) with corresponding t-statistic of 3.12 and the p value is 0.00 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. This is followed by organizational fit ($B= 0.10$) and corresponding t-statistics is 2.38 and the p value is 0.02 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, organizational working environment, organizational leadership and organizational fit were identified to be the best predictors for organizational commitment and summarized as in the following equation:

$$Y_1 = 1.84 + 0.10X_1 + 0.05X_2 + 0.09X_3 - 0.09X_4 + 0.16X_5 + 0.03X_6 - 0.04X_7 + 0.38X_8$$

Table 4.19

Regression Result for Organizational Commitment

| Model | Unstandardized Beta | Std. Error | Standardized Beta | t | Sig. |
|-------|------------------------|---------------|----------------------|------|------|
| Fit | 0.10 | 0.04 | 0.13 | 2.38 | 0.02 |
| Rem | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.97 | 0.33 |
| Tcd | 0.09 | 0.05 | 0.11 | 1.72 | 0.07 |
| Cao | -0.09 | 0.05 | -0.09 | 1.71 | 0.09 |
| Ldr | 0.16 | 0.05 | 0.23 | 3.12 | 0.00 |
| Team | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.65 | 0.52 |
| Comm | -0.04 | 0.06 | -0.05 | 0.68 | 0.50 |
| We | 0.38 | 0.06 | 0.45 | 6.73 | 0.00 |

Dependent Variable: OC, $R= 0.81$ $R^2= 0.66$

Therefore, the estimated organizational commitment model fit the data as the following:

$$Y_2 = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_5X_5 + B_8X_8$$

$$Y_2 = 1.84 + 0.10X_1 + 0.16X_5 + 0.38X_8$$

In addition, the R-squared of 0.66 indicates that the eight predictor variables explain about 66% of the variance in the organizational commitment. This result shows that from the eight

HRP variables chosen for this study, about 66% contributes towards organizational commitment which means that there are other factors to be measured to examine the influence of HRP and organizational commitment. The result also shows that organizational work environment is the dominant factor to influence organizational commitment followed with organizational leadership and person-organization fit.

Therefore, the finding shows that Uni A work environment is an important HRP factor in order to increase organizational commitment among the Uni A talent. Investing on money and effort to maintain and strengthen its organizational environment should be a priority. The ability to balance between work life and family life will enable talent to not only perform better in their role or job demands, but also to flourish, be creative and innovative in their careers. In Uni A, work environment that encourages greater cohesion among organization members and knowledge sharing and commitment to common goal will retain their talent to stay longer and increase organizational commitment. This study confirmed that enrichment and synergies from non-work roles can improve performance at work. This is important in Uni A especially their talent consists of new generation of X and Y in which they demand for a flexible job arrangement, and a massive use of technology in performing their functions.

Other dominant factors that influence organizational commitment are organizational leadership and person-organization fit. Leadership is important due to providing clear direction of the university in achieving competitive advantage and this is relevant with previous study that highlighted the importance role of organizational leadership in achieving organizational performance and retention (Kane, 2000; Delery, 1996; Huselid, 1995; Pfeffer, 1994). This finding is also similar with the proposition that a high-involvement work practices enhances employee retention (Paauwe, 2009; Koch & McGrath, 1996). In retaining talent through organizational commitment, the model shows the importance of fit between person and organization value among talent in Uni A. This finding is relevant with previous study that reveal how personnel selection can be based on the congruity between personal and organization belief (Netmeyer et al., 1997). Person-organization fit in terms of work values and honesty will increase work outcome and retention (Swaney et al., 2012; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009).

Therefore, the finding of objective four in the study shows that organizational work environment is the dominant factor that influences talent in Uni A to remain in the university followed by organizational leadership and person-organization fit. The finding also shows that organizational commitment is better in explaining retention among Uni A talent as compared to intent to stay.

Recommendation

Uni A needs to develop its talent retention management strategies that consider work environment as its major focus. It needs to strengthen its HRD roles that contribute towards developing effective leaders and managers and implementing person-organization fit that embraces good values as stated in the following sections;

Working Environment Strategy

Working environment strategies address three fundamental aspects of the workplace: the ethics and values; the policies that interpret those values into daily actions, and the physical

environment in which talent work. The overall goal is to make Uni A a place where talents want to come to work and to stay longer at the campus. Specifically in Uni A, it is recommended that the university promotes a culture of openness and shared information, a campus with and open apolitical culture and relatively autonomous. In addition to that, the introduction of a flexi-time and job-sharing policies as a way to retain talent and gain reputation as family-friendly environment could attract more future potential talent to work in the university. Additional initiatives can include providing more childcare and/or eldercare centers, and to offer some funding for fitness club membership among talent.

In addition to that, university should assess talents' reason to work. This activity will persuade talent to reinforce their reason to work for the universities and this will let the universities to gain better insights of what attracts talented employee to work in the universities. Finally, university should also assess talents' opinion on the improvement initiatives. This will encourage good ideas, not only for improving conditions for the talents' benefit but also for all facets of university work environment. This can be done by undertaking survey on ways and means to transform Uni A into a likeable organization.

Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy

There is a need to relook and redesign the programs and activities that would positively enhance work environment and commitment of the Uni A staff. University should design and develop effective HRD program to develop talent and let them grow and become innovative. It involves strengthening the leadership program and other development activities that contributes to talents' growth as the following;

Leadership Program

It is suggested that the university should execute more leadership and teamwork programs for the staff. This is important for the talent to have the knowledge, training and sensitivity to work effectively, in order to create the bonding and finally to retain them. HRD roles is to venture to the future trends of workforce in higher education to ensure that the staff are up to date with their surroundings. Besides that, leadership and person-organization fit factors should be considered by the HR as an important aspect in crafting their leadership program. Strengthening the role of HRD to develop and design value-based leadership and teamwork program may encourage talent to understand, internalize and embrace Uni A's organizational core values. Promoting leadership mentoring and people management skills will prepare talent to excel in their role as leaders of the university.

Training and Growth Program

Universities need to nurture personal and professional growth among their talent with new knowledge and skills. Talented employees need an organized and structured training program that meets talents' different needs making them feel closer to Uni A. Personal and professional growth program can be promoted by increasing the number of in-house training and development, seminars and workshops, funding for continuing professional education as well as career development support.

Finally, top level management and HR department officers can be trained as professional human resource managers in nurturing talent of the university. A successful HR manager must

be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and have the ability to listen, respect, and understand their employees' concerns.

Person-Organization Fit Strategies

Uni A is facing a dynamic and changing environment which requires talents whose values fit with their organizational values, goals and cultures. As for the talents, the compatibility between them and organization is an important factor that determines whether they would be willing to stay longer with and remain committed to the organization. Therefore, Uni A should implement the person-organization fit strategies to ensure that both organization and talents gain the objectives of fit. It is suggested that the university to adopt the strategies even during the recruitment and selection processes. It is recommended that Uni A should develop or identify a standardized common metric to assess applicant's fit in terms of value, honesty, clear university's goals and directions with much consideration given toward assessing the candidate's future fit with the university. The second strategy is for the university to provide a clear and structured communication plan that would share the university's values, goals, direction and achievement to talents in the university systematically. The third strategy is by creating socialization platform between university's management and talents to find high degree of FIT. Socialization platform can be in the form of scheduled meeting with talents, get-together events such as sport day, family day or dinners with talents. Finally, implementing a clear career development planning strategies will also enhance the person-organization fit.

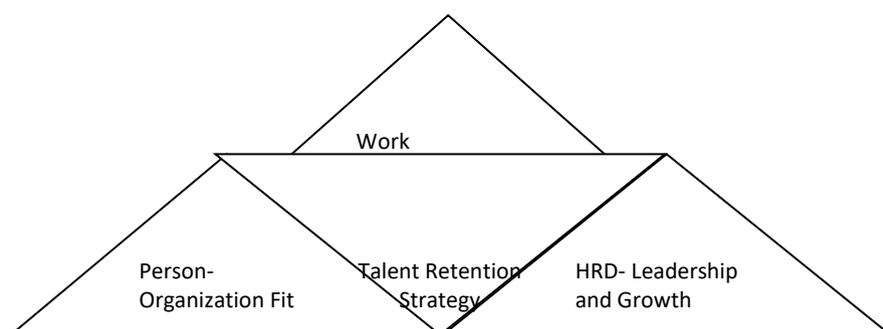


Figure 5. 1: Retention Management Strategy

It is apparent that career development plan can assist talents to measure their abilities to converge their personal goals as well as their organizational goals. Only organizations that give priorities to career development will sustain and remain relevant to cope with future challenges and demands.

Conclusion

The study confirmed that there is a significant relationship between human resource practices and retaining talent. Organizational factors shows a significant relationship with intent to stay as compared to human resource factors. It can be concluded that talents in this study are willing to remain longer and are committed to the organization due to the positive organizational work environment surrounding their professional and personal lives.

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