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## Preliminary study of Intention to Stay among the IT Employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia

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### Abstract

The purpose of this preliminary study is to examine the effects of human resource management practices on intention to stay among the IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The IT segment is worthy of study due to its expected growth and the increase in multinational companies operating in Malaysia. Responses from 123 survey respondents revealed that human resource management practices (career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation) have significant positive relationships with intention to stay. Furthermore, career development opportunity is found to be the best predictor of intention to stay among the IT employees in this study. In addition to the contribution to the intention to stay literature, the implications of this study may provide human resource practitioners insight into the drivers of intention to stay that is related to human resource practices.

**Keywords:** Intention to stay, career development, work-life balance, compensation.

### 1. Introduction

Employee retention is an effort made by human resource practitioners and employers to create and maintain a conducive working environment that encourages employees to remain with the company (Bhattacharya, 2015; Al Mamun and Hasan, 2017). Retention of talented employees has become a great concern among organizations in the IT sector as the global labor market provides increased career opportunities for IT professionals who seek to satisfy their own individual demands by leaving their companies (Lumley Coetzee, Tladinyane and Ferreira, 2011). The

increasing market demand for IT professionals has triggered IT organizations to implement retention strategies that focus on retaining existing employees, especially those with critical skills and experiences (Oosthuizen, Coetzee and Munro, 2016). Examples of critical skills include proficiency in programming platforms, familiarity with integrated technologies, development of data analytics on cyber security, web traffic, artificial intelligence, business intelligence and others (McCraw, 2017).

It is crucial for IT organizations to retain their employees because these IT employees are professionals who have irreplaceable specialized skills and knowledge. Furthermore, they can act as the organization's strategic advantage (Kwenin, 2013; Oosthuizen, Coetzee and Munro, 2016). If these employees choose to leave the organization, this will result in the loss of knowledge, proficiency, deterioration of company's performance, loss of profits, loss of business opportunities, and loss of customer satisfaction, all of which eventually lead to the instability of a company (Kwenin, 2013). Moreover, companies suffer both direct and indirect costs of employee turnover. Direct costs include expenditure on recruitment, selection, orientation, training and development of the new employees, while indirect costs refer to the cost of education, condensed self-confidence, the collapse of social capital, and stress on the current employees (Al Mamun and Hasan, 2017). In contrast, retaining skilled employees may increase investors' confidence, ensure the company's survival, competitive advantage, and achievement of objectives. As such, employee retention is significant in promoting the organization's long-term growth and sustaining its continued success (Kwenin, 2013).

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) reported that many multinational IT companies, such as F-Secure Corporation, Avanade, and T-Systems set up their subsidiaries in Malaysia (MDEC, 2017). An increase in the number of multinational companies operating in Malaysia also increased the number of workforce employed in the IT industry. Since 2010, the IT industry demonstrated tremendous growth rate in the workforce because the industry required knowledgeable workers in order to achieve an organization's vision and needs (see Table 1). However, Van Dyk and Coetzee (2012) stated that IT employees have strong tendencies to leave their organizations. According to Aon Hewitt's Radford Trends Report (2016), high employee turnover rates were problems faced by the technology sector companies across Asia-Pacific. The country with the highest impact was India (12-month voluntary turnover rate of 13.6%), followed by Malaysia (13%). This shows that high turnover rates are a critical phenomenon that IT companies in Malaysia have to confront, forcing them to work at retaining their skilled employees. Therefore, it is imperative for IT companies in Malaysia to increase their current employees' intention to stay. However, there are limited studies on IT employees in Malaysian organizations because past research focused on manufacturing employees, restaurant employees, and nurses instead of IT employees (Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi and Shadman, 2013; Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali, 2014; Armstrong-Stassen, Freeman, Cameron and Rajacic, 2015; Yang, Liu, Liu and Zhang, 2015).

Previous research identified the factors affecting employees' intention to stay as the following: career development opportunity, compensation, performance evaluation, work-life balance/ flexible work practices, job satisfaction, recognition and respect, organizational commitment, perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support, which are closely related to human resource management (HRM) practices (Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi and Shadman, 2013; Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali, 2014; Armstrong-Stassen, Freeman, Cameron and Rajacic, 2015; Yang, Liu, Liu and Zhang, 2015). Hence, it is crucial for the organization's HR department to recognize the exact

reasons why employees choose to stay in the organization as this enables further promotion and development of such practices, which can improve intention to stay and thus retain skilled employees.

Table 1: Employment in ICT Industry from the Year 2010 to the Year 2016

Year	Number of Workforce ('000)	Growth Rate (%)
2010	956.4	-
2011	984.9	3.0
2012	995.3	1.1
2013	1,018.4	2.3
2014	1,041.2	2.2
2015	1,060.0	1.8
2016	1,070.0	0.9

Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia (2015, 2016, 2017)

As such, the main objective of this study is to examine the effects of human resource management (HRM) practices on the intention to stay among IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia in the hopes of providing human resource practitioners with the knowledge of how to retain existing employees. The specific objective and research question are stated as follows:

Specific objective

1. To determine the relationships between career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation on intention to stay.

Research question

1. What is the relationship between career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation on intention to stay?

## 2. Intention to stay

Intention to stay has been evaluated by the past research into various similar definitions. According to Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali (2014), intention to stay represents the tendency of employees to retain their membership in their current organizations. Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad (2012) stated intention to stay as the employees' intention to stay on long term basis in the employment relationship with their existing employer. Intention to stay is also defined as the employees' willingness to remain with an organization (Tett and Meyer, 1993).

Mustapha, Ahmad, Uli and Idris (2011) stated that intention to stay is just the opposite of the turnover intention. Some of the past research has suggested that intention to stay is a good predictor of employee turnover as it negatively affects actual turnover (Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali, 2014; Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi and Shadman, 2013; Cavanagh and Coffin, 1992; Price and Mueller, 1981). When employees do not intend to stay in the company, this intention is often followed by turnover behavior (Othman and Lembang, 2017). Nevertheless, intention to stay is important because retention of talented employees with desired skills and attributes is the key for a

company in achieving success and maintaining its competitive advantage in the industry (Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali, 2014).

In every organization, employees need to feel that they are part of the firm and that their contributions to the firm are valued (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). Hence, the factors associated with an employee's intention to stay are essential for developing strategies that may fulfill an employee's needs and facilitate the urge to remain in the same organization (Othman and Lembang, 2017). A company that values its human capital, designs and/or implements practices and policies specially tailored for employee retention may sustain its success and competitive advantage in its industries (Nasyira, Othman and Ghazali, 2014).

According to Othman and Lembang (2017), effective Human Resources Management (HRM) practices are able to enhance the employees' willingness to stay longer in their current organisations. Some organizations have introduced incentive programs, competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits, and other similar initiatives and policies as their strategies to retain their employees (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). In this study, the dependent variable is the intention to stay whereas the HRM practices that will be discussed are career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation, which act as the independent variables.

## 2.1 Career Development Opportunity

Career development is a part of lifelong learning as personal and vocational skills are required to change and develop constantly in response to career changes and emerging opportunities over the course of one's life (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). Pittino, Visintin, Lenger and Sternad (2016) highlighted that career development aims at developing the abilities and self-efficacy of the workforce. In a company, career development is a formal approach adopted by a company to make sure that employees with the appropriate qualifications and experiences are available when required. It can help to prevent the threats of an unacceptable and obsolescent workforce, and provides a future direction for human resources department to further develop career advancement activities in the organization (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). The organization usually provides opportunities for the employees to develop their capabilities and personal career growth through career development planning and activities (Mathis and Jackson, 2003). When the employees experience personal and career growth, they may demand new tasks that are different from what they usually perform. As such, the company must be concerned and understand clearly employee demands regarding career development pathways in order to thoroughly plan and supporting those demands, thus eventually increasing the employees' intention to stay (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012).

Past studies have indicated that employees' intention to stay is positively influenced by career development opportunity (Yang, Liu, Liu and Zhang, 2015; Gamage and Herath, 2013; Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer, 2012; Chew and Chan, 2008). Yang, Liu, Liu and Zhang (2015) stated that an organization which provides career growth opportunities for its employees may increase the employee retention rate. Gamage and Herath (2013) and Chew and Chan (2008) also found that there is a positive and significant relationship between career development opportunity and intention to stay in which the employees will be more likely to stay in their organizations when they are provided with career development opportunities. Moreover, Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer (2012) presented that career development opportunity has a positive effect on

employees' intention to stay because it improves their motivation and enables them to enhance their abilities through performing a broader number of tasks or mastering new challenges, which then leads to employee retention.

According to Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad (2012), the presence of meaningful work, opportunities for promotion, and even the standard of evaluation used in the reward system may increase the employees' intention to remain. Othman and Lembang (2017) agreed with the sentiment, showing that employees who perceived personal contribution to the company increased their job engagement and were less likely to leave the company. Employees who perceived the possibility of promotions were also more likely to stay with the company. The employees will feel pleased and appreciated when the opportunity for a promotion arises, which affects their decision to remain or leave the company (Othman and Lembang, 2017). Moreover, Gamage and Herath (2013) mentioned that the employee's decision to stay or leave an organization is dependent on whether the work is challenging, support is given at the workplace, and if personal growth is allowed in the organization.

Hence, these lead to the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between career development opportunity and employees' intention to stay.

## 2.2 Work-life balance

According to Lockwood (2003), work-life balance is a state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person's job and personal life are equal. On the other hand, Noor (2011) and Edgar Geare, Zhang and McAndrew (2015) stated that work-life balance refers to the effective management between paid work and other activities, including unpaid work in families and the community, personal development, leisure, and recreation.

To provide proper work-life balance for employees, most organizations choose to develop and implement ideal work life practices within the organization (Burke, Burgess and Oberrlaid, 2004). Work-life balance policies include flexible work options (like flexible working hours, job-sharing), telecommuting facilities, sporting and leisure facilities, family leave policies that enable employees to take time off work to manage family matters, and childcare assistance (Suifan, Abdallah and Diab, 2016). By implementing good work-life balance practices in the workplace, employees tend to exhibit positive attitudes towards work as well as show improvement in their performance.

However, a lack of work-life balance practices will incite conflict between an employee's work and personal life. Employees struggle to maintain a balance and eventually quit their jobs (Suifan, Abdallah and Diab, 2016). Work-life conflict occurs when a person's work demand and life demand are conflicted (Sturges and Guest, 2004). This conflict will lead to stress, lack of focus in either role, and will influence performance in either role as well (Quick, Henley and Quick, 2004). As a result, the employees will feel highly pressured and reduce their engagement in the organization, thus lowering their productivity, satisfaction levels, and retention levels at the current employment status (Chimote and Srivastava, 2013).

Lindfelt, Ip and Barnett (2017), and De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott and Pettit (2005) found that intention to stay is positively correlated to work-life balance. According to Lindfelt, Ip and Barnett (2017), an effective work-life balance practice in the organization



may reduce employees' stress level and increase their occupational satisfaction, which enhances their intention to stay. They suggested that organizations may improve organizational work-life balance through restriction of working hours, mandatory time off, and accessibility of family-related attraction discounts. In addition, De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott and Pettit (2005) stated that when the work-life balance strategies in an organization increases, the employees will be more likely to utilize the options available, and reduce turnover rate caused by work-life conflict. During the progression in the implementation and management of work-life balance strategies, some substantial barriers may remain in the organizations. Therefore, the managers must involve effective communication with the employees so that the barriers of implementation and management of work-life balance strategies can be minimized.

Work-life balance initiatives can also be further explained to the extent that they can enhance employees' productivity, loyalty to the current company, job satisfaction, and also reduce their turnover intention (Malik, Gomez, Ahmad and Saif, 2010). In contrast, employees who experience critical work-life imbalance have increased their turnover intention and decide to seek alternative employment with a company that has better approaches towards work-life balance practices (Brough, Timms, O'Driscoll, Kalliath, Siu, Sit and Lo, 2014).

Hence, these lead to the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and employees' intention to stay.

### **2.3 Compensation**

Compensation represents the cumulative financial and non-financial rewards that are paid to employees in return for their services (Mondy and Noe, 2005). These rewards normally are given based on the job value, personal contributions, efforts and performance level (Milkovich and Newman, 2005). According to Heneman and Schwab (1985), compensation can be divided into two categories: direct compensation and indirect compensation. Direct compensation refers to salaries, wages, incentive bonus, and any other financial payments given by the organization, while indirect compensation is the benefits offered by the organization, such as employee's and their dependent's insurance.

According to Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad (2012), compensation is significant in attracting, retaining and motivating the employees at the organizational level, in order to increase their job performance, improve career satisfaction, and minimize their turnover intention. Compensation acts as one of the most important costs of business operation (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). This is because other HRM practices like employee training, career development, or rewards and recognition must be associated with sufficient pay in order to retain talented employees (Othman and Lembang, 2017). Furthermore, the organization also uses compensation to design and provide rewards for employees who fulfill the assigned specific goals, so that the company can align employee interests with organizational goals to achieve organizational success (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012).

Past studies have shown that sufficient compensation is a significant strategy that can retain talented employees, with attractive and effective compensation packages facilitate productivity, enhance organizational commitment, and increase intention to stay in the organization (George, 2015; Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Cho, Woods, Jang and

Erdem, 2006). George (2015) mentioned that the company must be transparent when offering compensation to the employees, meaning that salaries given should be fair, reflect a satisfactory balance between performance and rewards, and be consistent with capability, responsibility and workload, all of which will increase the intention to stay.

Furthermore, Walsh and Taylor (2007) also agreed that when employees are being compensated fairly and equitably, they tended to stay in the organization. They suggested that the company should allow employees to have a deeper understanding about company salary levels, external indicators that affect their compensation (such as industry averages and company location), and the range of performance level which determine the amount of their compensation increment. This way, fairness perception on how employees are being compensated will improve. Past research by Cho, Woods, Jang and Erdem (2006), also highlighted that competitive compensation enables a company to increase the intention to stay of its non-managerial employees.

Therefore, available research shows that companies that provide attractive and satisfactory compensation packages are more likely to entice employees into staying with the company (Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012). However, if employees think they are underpaid, their satisfaction will decrease and they become potentially to seek another company which will offer better compensation for them (Othman and Lembang, 2017).

The discussions above lead to the third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between compensation and employees' intention to stay.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This preliminary study used a quantitative research design. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), primary data refer to the original data gathered first-hand by the researcher when conducting a research. This kind of data tends to be more reliable compared to secondary data because researchers run the risk of secondary data being interpreted wrongly or being modified on purpose for a better outcome. Quantitative research is based on the positivism and neo-positivism methodological principles, and adheres to the criteria of a strict research design developed prior to the actual research (Adams, Khan and Raeside, 2014).

In terms of objectives, this is an explanatory study on causal and effect relationship. An explanatory study aims to describe social events or relations, enhance knowledge about the structure, process and nature of social events, connect elements and factors of issues into general statements, and revise a theory (Adams, Khan and Raeside, 2014). This study will test the ability of the Maslow Theory (Kaur, 2013) and Herzberg's Two Factors Theory (Wan Yusoff, Tan and Mohamed Idris, 2013) to explain the relationships and effects of HRM practices on intention to stay.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2015) highlighted that a survey is an effective tool for quantitative data collection as it allows the researcher to analyze the data easily using descriptive and inferential statistics. Hence, a questionnaire was constructed for use as the instrument for this study. Out of 400 questionnaires randomly distributed to IT employees in the Klang Valley, 123 were returned, yielding a response rate of 30.75%.

### 3.2 Measurement Tools

The questionnaire contained questions regarding individual profiles, intention to stay, career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation. Items for the dependent variable and independent variables were adopted from former research, such as Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009), Delery and Doty (1996), Brough, Timms, O'Driscoll, Kalliath, Siu, Sit and Lo (2014) and Heneman and Schwab (1985). To conclude, there are five items in the demographic section for IT employees in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, three items for intention to stay, and 26 items to measure the HRM practices that affect intention to stay on a five-point Likert scale which ranged from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 22.0 was used to answer the research objectives of this study. Normality analysis was used to test whether the sample data were normally distributed, reliability analysis was done to examine correlation between items in a set, and descriptive statistics were used to identify the mean and standard deviation of the items from data collected. This study included 2 negatively worded questions which were recorded on the reverse point scale. Furthermore, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was utilized to test the strength of relationship between dependent and independent variable. This coefficient has a range of possible values,  $r$ , from  $-1$  to  $+1$ , where the sign  $(-)$  indicates a negative correlation and the sign  $(+)$  indicates a positive correlation. The significance of the correlation coefficient will be represented as a  $p$ -value. Meanwhile, multiple regression was utilized to assess the best predictor among the independent variables (career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation) for intention to stay. The regression line is represented by the formula of  $Y' = bX + \alpha$ . Then, Guilford's rule of thumb, as shown in table 2, was used to explain the strength of relationship between independent variables and dependent variable of this study.

Table 2: Guilford's rule of thumb (Guilford, 1956, p. 145)

$r$	Strength of relationship
$> .9$	Very high correlation
$.7 - .9$	High correlation
$.4 - .7$	Moderate correlation
$.2 - .4$	Low correlation
$< .2$	Almost negligible relationship

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Socio-demographic Profile

A total of 123 respondents participated in this preliminary study. Out of these 123 respondents, 89 of them (72.4%) were male and 34 (27.6%) were female. This means that the number of male respondents participated in the survey was higher than the

number of female respondents. The youngest respondent was 23 years old while the eldest was 61 years old. The average age of all the respondents is approximately 31 years old, thus indicating that IT employees in Klang Valley are relatively young. Out of 123 respondents, majority of the respondents, which is 106 of them (86.2%) own a Bachelor Degree education qualification, 14 respondents (11.4%) possess a Master's Degree, and only 3 respondents (2.4%) had qualifications equivalent to secondary school/certificate/diploma/foundation. Furthermore, 99 respondents (80.5%) were Malaysians, making it the most common nationality in this survey. Other nationalities included 13 Filipino respondents (10.6%), 5 Indonesian respondents (4.1%), and 3 Indian respondents (2.4%). Lastly, there was one (0.8%) respondent with Sri Lankan, British, and Myanmar nationalities respectively. The length of service of the respondents ranged from one month (the shortest) to 12 years and 3 months (the longest). On average, the respondents served their organizations for a time horizon of about 3 years and 10 months.

#### 4.2 Empirical results

All variables in this study were normally distributed. Table 3 shows that all factor loadings were highly significant, representing the fundamental requirement for convergent validity was fulfilled. Since all standardized factor loadings were higher than the minimum acceptable value of 0.4, meaning convergent validity was adequate for these four scales (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The composite reliabilities based on Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients of all items in four different sets ranged from 0.73 to 0.97, which exceeded the minimum acceptable value of 0.70 (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Hence, all items met the standard and proved to be valid and reliable. In addition, the skewness values of all items were within the acceptable range of  $-2 \leq x \leq 2$ , therefore they were determined as normally distributed (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

Table 4 illustrates the relationship between IT employees' intention to stay and the three independent variables (career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation). The results indicate a significant positive relationship between all these independent variables with intention to stay. Career development opportunity is highly correlated to the intention to stay ( $r=0.71$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), followed by compensation which has moderate correlation with intention to stay ( $r=0.66$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and lastly, work-life balance has the lowest correlation with intention to stay among all three independent variables ( $r=0.45$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Based on the analyses, all hypotheses of this study are accepted.

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Reliability Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

Content of Items	Mean	SD	Factor Loading	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Skewness
<b>Intention to stay (DV)</b>	3.66	0.77		0.90	
If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working in this organization.	3.82	0.81	0.92		-0.789
As far as I can see, I would remain in this organization indefinitely.	3.50	0.92	0.93		-0.659
I expect to continue working as long as possible in this organization.	3.66	0.80	0.90		-0.780
<b>Career development opportunity</b>				0.73	

I have clear career paths within the organization.	3.65	0.84	0.82	-0.698
I have very little future within this organization.	3.63	1.00	0.70	-0.812
Employees' career aspirations within the company are known by their immediate supervisors.	3.51	0.73	0.80	-0.108
Employees in this job who desire promotion have more than one potential position they could be promoted to.	3.25	0.86	0.67	-0.128
<b>Work-life balance</b>				0.90
I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities.	3.93	0.91	0.91	-0.926
I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work activities.	3.71	0.96	0.75	-0.754
I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right.	3.71	0.88	0.90	-0.433
Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are balanced.	3.76	0.89	0.94	-0.731
<b>Compensation</b>				0.97
I am satisfied with my take-home pay.	3.40	0.99	0.84	-0.357
I am satisfied with my benefit packages.	3.58	0.88	0.80	-0.535
I am satisfied with my most recent raise.	3.24	0.85	0.79	-0.067
I am satisfied with the influence of my supervisor has on my pay.	3.32	0.78	0.65	-0.207
I am satisfied with my current salary.	3.31	0.95	0.88	-0.250
I am satisfied with the amount the company pays toward my benefits.	3.59	0.91	0.85	-0.454
I am satisfied with the raises I have typically received in the past.	3.27	0.81	0.81	-0.061
I am satisfied with the company's pay structure.	3.27	0.83	0.84	-0.191
I am satisfied with the information the company gives about pay issues of concern to me.	3.33	0.83	0.73	-0.515
I am satisfied with my overall level of pay.	3.33	0.90	0.89	-0.283
I am satisfied with the value of my benefits.	3.55	0.86	0.86	-0.636
I am satisfied with the pay of other jobs in the company.	3.25	0.73	0.77	-0.048
I am satisfied with the consistency of the company's pay policies.	3.39	0.89	0.85	-0.435
I am satisfied with the size of my current salary.	3.32	0.93	0.89	-0.248
I am satisfied with the number of benefits I receive.	3.59	0.81	0.78	-0.329

I am satisfied with how my raises are determined.	3.35	0.89	0.86	-0.393
I am satisfied with the differences in pay among jobs in the company.	3.27	0.77	0.80	-0.063
I am satisfied with how the company administers pay.	3.48	0.75	0.82	-0.107

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

No.	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Intention to stay	3.66	0.77			
2	Career development opportunity	3.51	0.64	.71**		
3	Work-life balance	3.78	0.79	.45**	.45**	
4	Compensation	3.38	0.70	.66**	.68**	.48**

Table 5: Result for Multiple Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.752	.566	.555	.51392	1.873

Table 6: Result for ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.012	3	13.671	51.761	.000
	Residual	31.429	119	.264		
	Total	72.441	122			

Table 7: Result for Coefficient

Model		Under standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.235	.288		.816	.416
	Career Development Opportunity	.556	.101	.462	5.527	.000
	Work-life balance	.104	.068	.107	1.524	.130
	Compensation	.320	.094	.291	3.408	.001

Based on table 5, 56.6% of the total variation (R-squared) in intention to stay can be explained by all the independent variables (career development opportunity, work-life balance and compensation). In table 6, the coefficient of determination (R=.752, p<0.01) indicated that the research model is fit for use in the data analysis.

Next, table 7 shows that career development opportunity is the best predictor for intention to stay ( $\beta=.462$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), followed by compensation. Whereas, work-life balance ( $\beta=.107$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) indicates that when all three variables present at the same time, work-life balance is no longer significant to the IT employees' intention to stay if compared to career development opportunity and compensation. Thus, the formula of this study's regression line will be:

$$Y' = 0.556(\text{Career Development Opportunity}) + 0.320(\text{Compensation}) + 0.235$$

## 5. Discussions

Past research has identified factors – related to HRM practices – that affect intention to stay, including career development opportunity, compensation, performance evaluation, work-life balance/ flexible work practices, job satisfaction, recognition and respect, organizational commitment, perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support. However, there is still a literature gap regarding studies focused on IT employees in organizations in Malaysia are limited. Hence, this study provides interesting findings that fill the gaps of knowledge regarding HRM practices in literature.

The results above have presented a significant moderate positive correlation between career development opportunity and intention to stay ( $\beta=.462$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). It indicates that when career development opportunities given by an organization increase, the intention to stay among IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia, will also increase. Besides that, the first hypothesis in this study is also consistent with the findings from past research done by Yang, Liu, Liu and Zhang (2015), Gamage and Herath (2013), Jiang, Lepak, Hu and Baer (2012) and Chew and Chan (2008).

Next, compensation is found to have a significant low positive correlation with intention to stay ( $\beta=.291$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). When the amount of compensation given by an organization increases, the intention to stay of IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia, also increases. In addition, the third hypothesis in this study is also consistent with the findings from past research done by George (2015), Walsh and Taylor (2007), and Cho, Woods, Jang and Erdem (2006).

Furthermore, work-life balance has no significant correlation with intention to stay ( $\beta=.107$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). It represents the intention to stay among IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia is not affected even when the level of work-life balance given by an organization increases. This finding is inconsistent with the second hypothesis of this study as well as the findings from past research done by Lindfelt, Ip and Barnett (2017) and De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott and Pettit (2005). However, it is consistent with the finding from the research done by Oosthuizen, Coetzee and Munro (2016) where no significant correlation between work-life balance and intention to stay was observed. This could be due to the direct positive correlation between work-life balance and employee job satisfaction instead of intention to stay. Thus, the intention to stay will only increase when job satisfaction level increases (Oosthuizen, Coetzee and Munro, 2016).

Lastly, career development opportunity and compensation were significant predictors of intention to stay, but work-life balance ( $\beta<.107$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) was not. Moreover, career development opportunity was the best predictor for intention to stay. As such, human resource practitioners should provide plenty of career development opportunities for employees to increase their intention to stay. At the same time, since compensation is the second significant predictor of intention to stay, human resource practitioners should conduct salary surveys to benchmark their company's salary levels against

industry salary levels so that IT company can provide competitive compensation to its employees and increase their intention to stay.

## 6. Conclusions

This study confirmed that HRM practices have positive significant relationships with the intention to stay among IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Based on the findings above, it showed that career development opportunity has a significant moderate positive correlation with intention to stay, while compensation has a significant low positive correlation with intention to stay. However, there is no significant correlation between work-life balance and intention to stay. This shows that intention to stay will only increase when career development opportunity or compensation given by the company is increased.

Furthermore, career development opportunity is found to be the best predictor of employees' intention to stay, followed by compensation. As such, it can be concluded that appropriate HRM practices are highly important for an organization to retain existing employees, hence, the company's HR department must be able to plan, implement, execute, and maintain HRM practices effectively and efficiently to increase the employees' intention to stay.

### 6.1 Recommendation

As a recommendation, companies in Klang Valley, Malaysia may improve their IT employees' intention to stay by offering a better and effective career development opportunities to fulfill their career aspirations. The companies may enhance the current career development opportunities by developing a framework for career development through communication with the employees to achieve a mutual agreement regarding short- and long-term development goals of both the organization and employee. Therefore, the company's HR department plays an important role in coordinating the top managers, line managers, and employees into the employee career development process (Khan, Rajasekar and Al-Asfour, 2015).

Besides that, the company may increase the employees intention to stay by improving work-life balance practices through implementation of flexible working hours, and supervisory support on work-life balance practices like allowing employees to work from home when required (Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent & Alegre, 2016). Whereas, compensation practices also can be improved to increase employees intention to stay by enabling the employees to have a clear understanding of the level of performance and average compensation of the industry that are used to determine their salary levels, so that a fair and transparent paying decision can be shown (Walsh and Taylor, 2007).

In addition, it is also recommended that other HRM practices like training and development, performance evaluation, job satisfaction, recognition and respect, and organizational commitment can be implemented and developed by the organization to increase the intention to stay of existing employees (Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi and Shadman, 2013; Johari, Tan, Adnan, Yahya and Ahmad, 2012).



## 7. Limitation and Future Research

There are some limitations in this study which should be taken into consideration. Firstly, this study only focuses on the IT employees who work in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Hence, the results of the study should not be generalized to represent those IT employees who work outside Klang Valley and other geographical regions. This is because they might have different organizational cultures and living standards.

Next, this study is limited to three independent variables, which are career development opportunity, work-life balance, and compensation. As shown in table 4, 56.6% of the total variation in intention to stay can be explained by all three independent variables of this study. However, there is still another 43.4% of the total variation in intention to stay that is affected by the factors which are not included in the present study.

For future research, it is suggested to examine the intention to stay of IT employees who work in other areas and explore the difference between them and the IT employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Future research can also include wider geographical area so that more IT employees can be surveyed and analyzed for more accurate findings. Furthermore, the intention to stay of IT employees can be examined by including more independent variables in the future research, such as organizational commitment, working environment, relationship with co-workers, and supervisor support. Lastly, the data is suggested to be collected for twice or more times in order to improve the consistency and reliability of the data.

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