

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE
WORK ATTITUDE AND EMOTION
ON INTENTION TO LEAVE AMONG
ICT PROFESSIONALS IN
MALAYSIA**

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of the requirements for the degree of
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree of qualifications.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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ABSTRACT

The disequilibrium growth between the skills supplies and the growth of technologies raise a concern for this study to carry out research in the area of intention to leave among the ICT Professionals in Malaysia. This is due to the statistics report on the high rate of turnover in the ICT industry. At the same time the role of the ICT industry is also very important in contributing to the growth of the country. Two types of intention to leave were tested in this study which is the intention to leave the organization and the intention to leave the career. A considerable amount of literature has been published on intention to leave but mostly studied from the negative perspectives such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, work conflicts, psychological distress, and employee disengagement. This study answering the call from the positive psychology movement where the study area focus on positive side and the strengths of individual such as positive work attitude and work emotion in determining the factors to reduce the levels of intention to leave. The constructs are career commitment, positive organizational behaviour (POB), work happiness as mediator, and career adaptability as moderator. Using questionnaires as the main assessment instruments, this study adopts quantitative approach for the analyses and using mainly on structural equation modelling (SEM). Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted among all the constructs prior to the hypothesized testing. Results from the CFA suggested that the hypothesized framework needed to be separated between intention to leave the organization and intention to leave the career. The two hypothesized framework were tested using SEM and good model fit indices were achieved for both framework. Both Framework 1 (intention to leave the organization) and Framework 2 (intention to leave the career) found that POB was negatively related to intention to leave and positively related to work happiness, while work happiness was negatively related to intention to leave. Career commitment was found to be negatively related to intention to leave but not to work happiness. Work happiness also partially mediates the relationships between positive organizational behaviour and intention to leave for both frameworks. The analyses also showed that career control and career curiosity in the constructs of career adaptability moderate the relationships between work happiness and intention to leave both in Framework 1 and Framework 2. The findings indicated that the encouragement of positive attitudes such as hope, optimism, resilience, the commitment that individuals have over their career, and the emphasis on positive emotions such as work happiness can contribute to reduce the level of intention to leave. The existence of career adaptability did not increase the level of intention to leave when work happiness exist which means organization may encourage and provide adaptability trainings to increase the career adaptability level among the ICT professionals. The research findings are discussed in relation to the literature. Implications and recommendations for the future research are also presented.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Turnover phenomena have been studied by many researchers as early as in the 1950s until now when we reach the 21st century (H. Ito, Eisen, Sederer, Yamada, & Tachimori, 2014; Jenkins, 1993; W. H. Mobley, 1977; Omar, Majid, & Johari, 2012; Peters, Jackosfky, & Salter, 1986). Numerous theories and models (Hom, Leong, & Golubovich, 2010) have been tested in order to investigate the factors and antecedents which may explain turnover behaviours. Researchers from around the world including in the United States, Europe, Asia, Middle East, and Africa are all eager to find the best factors that explain turnover that best suits its culture and the industries.

Measuring actual turnover is not simple as it is hard to recognize those who has already left the organization (Khatri, Chong, & Budhwar, 2001). Therefore many studies depend on intention that includes turnover intention and intention to leave. The concept of intention to leave is interchangeable with the term 'turnover intention' (Cho, Johanson, & Guchait, 2009). Studies of intentions are relevant in order to measure the actual turnover because intention will explain behaviour of an individual (Sommer & Haug, 2010) and it remains as the best predictor to turnover (Azjen, Czasch, & Flood, 2009; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). This study focused on intention to leave because it explains the final outcome of the behaviour which is leaving. Although several criticisms argued that intention to leave will not necessarily end up with the real turnover (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004), studies of intention to leave can benefits in determining the current state of an individual who is working at the particular organization and profession. Decrease in work performance and increase in absenteeism might occur when a person has high level of intention to leave (Hayes et al., 2006; Kivimaki et al., 2007) regardless whether actual leaving is taken place or not. Therefore intention to leave is very important to be studied to investigate the employment turnover phenomena.

The increasing trend of the employment turnover in Malaysia showed that studies of turnover are very important (Liew & Sharan, 2008). Relevant solutions with