

# Academic Factors and Turnover Intention: Impact of Organization Factors

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## Abstract

Institutional support and recognition led to less happier and committed academicians. Previous empirical findings justified that intentions to leave an organization has been due to issues in commitment and job performance. The study observes 130 academicians in five Malaysian public higher learning institutions in a cross-sectional data collection collected through an online survey portal of surveymonkey.com. The results showed impact of academic development and organizational climate induced stronger organizational commitment and consequently reduced turnover intention. On the other hand, academic development and academic tasks and organizational happiness promoted higher organizational commitment and subsequently enhance job performance. Finally, limitations of the study, implication to theory, practice and future studies are suggested.

**Keywords:** academic factors, happiness, organizational commitment, job performance, turnover intention, public higher learning institutions, Malaysia.

## 1. Introduction

Inquiries into imperatives of academic career in organization study have entered scholarly publication for more than a century. However, theoretical and empirical evidences remain inconclusive due to several reasons. First, the studies heavily concentrate in developed nations where formal education institutions established since the early civilization. Second, the factors under investigation were diverse and fragmented, Sirat, Tan and Subramaniam (2010) in a OECD Reviews of Higher Education in Regional and City Development cited that in higher education development in Malaysia individual works seldom recognized and supported. And third, there were discrepancies in the methodology that may produce wide variations in the outcomes.

The study explores numbers of variables that explain the emotion, academic factors and organizational factors among academicians. A recent phenomenon of emotion connection found in empirical evidence proved happiness as a construct that explained better organizational performance (Argyle, 1989; Fisher, 2010). The academic factors consist of strategic leadership; administrative role, academic tasks and academic organizational climate have been central to present body of knowledge. Indeed, other variables were factors such as the academic job factors, organizational commitment and job performance prove vital in decades of organizational studies.

The study predicts on issue of turnover intention (TI) among academic staffs that prove detrimental to smooth running of higher learning institutions activities. TI remains an important phenomenon of "brain drain" where academic staffs leave to other job sectors from higher learning institutions (Khan, Nawaz, & Khan, 2013; Rageb, Abd-El-Salam, El-Samadicy, & Farid, 2013). The study capitalizes on organizational commitment (OC), academic job performance (JP) and turnover issues (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Tett & Meyer, 1993). We were

motivated to observe reducing turnover rate due to better-strategic leadership, academic role and academic job factors exercise in the institutions. However, administration role in academic institutions lead to higher turnover in the presence of OC and JP (Rageb et al., 2013).

The study adopts a rigorous analysis that employs exploratory factor analysis in determining the goodness of measures. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis is utilized in testing direct relationship. The process of direct relationship observes Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). Single and multiple mediated analyses follow the procedure in Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) and Hayes (2013).

The paper aims to establish knowledge base in academic and organizational studies in higher learning institutions in Malaysia. The call for the study also due to little knowledge in empirical evidence in relationship between happiness, academic factors and OC-JP-TI relationships. The study falls within the boundary of industrial psychology under the behavioral science study that investigates people at work with the aims to advance and apply the knowledge to solve problems in work situation (Muchinsky, Kriek, & Schreuder, 2003).

## **2. Turnover Intention Imperatives**

Some researchers ponder turnover intention as an intended psychological readiness to leave the institutions (Alniacik, Cigerim, Akein, & Bayram, 2011; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaetner, 2000; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Panatik, Rajab, Shaari, Saat, Wahab, & Noordin, 2012; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Despite its importance, there was a gap of limited empirical research regarding this subject in the literature (Awang, Amir, & Osman, 2013; Rageb et al., 2013). Some studies in job performance and organizational commitment prove that they are good inverse predictors of turnover intention (Alniacik et al., 2011; Chen, 2006). Tett and Meyer (1993) defined turnover as “the termination of an individual’s employment with a given company” and they also defined turnover intention as “the last in a sequence of withdrawal cognitions, a set to which thinking of quitting and intent to search for alternative employment also belongs.” (p. 262). Hence, TI is the cognitive state of the incumbents that leaving the organization they currently work is among a worthy alternative.

## **3. Organizational Commitment**

The main emphasis of organizational commitment is on psychological state that exhibits a high sense of belonging, acceptance, identity, loyalty, support, passion and pride feelings towards the institution (Aghdasi, Kiamanish, & Ebrahim, 2011; Cho, Rutherford, & Park, 2011; Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005; Lee, Park, & You, 1999; Le Rouge, Nelson, & Blenton, 2006; Sverke & Sjöberg, 1994). Furthermore, committed employees remain loyal and render themselves to extend their best knowledge, skills, experience, abilities and effort for their institution’s benefits (Alniacik et al., 2011; Golden & Veiga, 2008; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1979; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Riketta, 2002; Yang & Chang, 2008; Yamaguchi, 2012; Yucel & Bektas, 2012).

Porter et al. (1974) defined organizational commitment as “the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization”. (p. 604). Mowday et al. (1979) defined organizational commitment as “an active relationship with the organization such that individuals are willing to give something of themselves in order to contribute to the organization’s well-being”. (p. 226). Thus OC indicates specific psychological state that instils employees’ free will to contribute for the reciprocal benefits between them and the hiring organization.

Organizational commitment is inversely or negatively related with turnover intention (Camp, 1994; Jaramillo, Nixon, & Sams, 2005; Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Lambert, 2006; Robinson, Porporino, & Simourd, 1992). The phenomena get stronger when various researchers examined the relationship between job performance and turnover intentions and keep finding negative relationship between these two constructs (Huselid, 1995; Huselid & Becker, 1996; Kim & Brymer, 2011).

## **4. Job Performance**

Number of studies have employed the use of job performance as an outcome to determine empirical research construct; however, relatively limited effort utilized in verifying the performance concept. Campbell, McCloy, Oppler and Sager (1993) defined performance as “... what the organization hires one to do, and do well.” (p. 40). Hence, job performance is what a staff member implements and achieves in the job setting. The organizations need and cherish staff member who perform better. Hence, high performers deserved treatment as valuable asset for the organization. Organizations require high performers in order to meet their expectations, to extend excellent services, and ultimately to achieve competitive advantage. On the other hand, performance is important for the staff members as well for their source of satisfaction, that instill feelings of pleasure and pride. Moreover, highly acknowledged job performance often deserve rewards in financial or other forms of remunerations such

as reasonable promotion exercises and offered with better career enhancements. On the contrary, low job performance could lead to job dissatisfaction or even connoted with personal failure (Aghdasi et al., 2011; Arnold et al., 2009; Babin & Boles, 1996; Bhuian & Menguc, 2002; Brown & Peterson, 1993; Kim et al., 2005; Le Rouge et al., 2006; Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 1998; Yang, 2010; Yucel & Bektas, 2012).

Employees with strong affective commitment would be motivated to higher levels of performance (Alniacik et al., 2011). Furthermore, employees who identify with and are involved in their organization are committed presumably want to maintain membership in the organization and exert efforts on its behalf (Scarborough & Somers, 2006). Aghdasi et al. (2011) noted that uncommitted employees not only had the lowest level of acceptance of organizational values, but they also felt alienated from the organization. Hence, organizations are the source of motivation for their employees who reciprocated it with performance level. On the other hand, low performing organizations are paving the path for staff members to leave the organization or else retaining under performers and laggards.

## **5. Relationship between Academic Factors, Happiness, Strategic Leadership, Organizational Commitment and Job Performance**

### *5.1 Academic Factors*

Kogan and Teichler (2007) edited an extensive review on academic development under the UNESCO Forum for Higher Education in Kassel, Germany in 2006. The forum focused on the academic changing roles that shape academic institutions into a conflict of academic freedom against institutional autonomy. According to Arimoto (2007) academic development is the function of three productivities, research, teaching and service.

More recent review in Clarke, Hyde and Drennan (2013) reiterated on academic professionalism and identity issues getting more complex than ever. Gurin, Dey, Hurtado and Gurin (2002) noted that roles of academicians were beyond classroom environment where they were also expected to inculcate in the students with social growth apart of the academics.

A review in Musselin (2007) reiterated that academic tasks observed critical changes that contributed to a transformation process. Academic profession now is extended far beyond teaching and research as she noted,

“An in-depth investigation of academic work would probably have shown that many academics were already engaged in many other activities. It is at least what can be deduced from reading biographies of Pasteur by B. Latour (2001), Nash by S. Nasar (1998) or autobiographies (Friedel, 1994; Mendras, 1995; Crozier, 2002, 2005) whatever the period concerned, they were all engaged in a multiplicity of activities. This confirms the importance of what Latour (1987) and Callon (1989) would describe as the building of socio-technical networks, for their careers and in turn for their scientific reputation, today and in the past. Thus, even if one could distinguish, as Bourdieu (1984), between two types of careers (Note 1) the core activities were teaching in classes and publishing results in academic journals. Other activities were necessary but were not expected and were not explicitly rewarded.

Today, this is no more the case. Writing proposals, developing contracts, elaborating e-learning programmes, being engaged in technology transfers, etc. are part of the tasks achieved by faculty members nowadays and they are no longer considered as peripheral, not compelling and secondary, but recognised as important aspects of academic work. Academics are expected to make these endeavours in order to gain scientific reward. In Germany and in the USA for instance, the ability to raise money and to manage research projects based on external funding is one of the criteria of judgment when hiring professors (Musselin, 2005b). It is no longer something academics can do: it is something they must do. For example, scientific productivity (in terms of number and impact of publications) is of course one of the explicit criteria expressed by the direction of the INRA (a French national research institution in agronomy) in order to be promoted from the corps of *chargés de recherche* (tenured research fellow) to the corps of *directeur de recherche* (senior research fellow). But management competencies are as important as the scientific profile: being responsible for a small research team within a lab, leading a European research project, being in charge of contracts are necessary in order to have a chance for promotion (Carrère et al., 2006).” (Musselin, 2007, p. 177).

Moreover, Kogan (2007) and Musselin (2007) argued that the academic power nowadays were slowly eroded or blurred with administrative prerogatives from other authoritative governance assessing academic tasks among the academicians. The situation then seems to accept and submit to the hybrid criteria in their judgment making the academicians were appraised with not only academic elements. As Kogan and Teichler (2007) cited that as nowadays the academicians' role are changing when they also observe gradual loss of professional autonomy, pressures to consider external less related social expectations, loss of power in shaping their own organizational

environment and increasing control on their performance. The consequences have been due to changes in status of power termed university trained persons in higher education whose prime roles are managerial support or service provision and have to be both highly qualified in their domain of shaping the institution and highly knowledgeable in the core functions of the academics. Academics have to adapt in communication with these professionals to the fact that they are professionals in academic matters but amateurs in matters of shaping the university and have to cooperate with a new group of experts who are amateurs in academic matters but professionals in shaping the university.

According to Arimoto (2007), in the Carnegie Survey, the Japanese academic profession was the highest among fourteen countries in the levels of stress experienced. It is likely that these levels are now higher because there are many more pressures working in academia such as severe competition, rationalization, bureaucratisation and alike. Hence, tendency of quitting could be very likely where other pastures seem greener. On the contrary, Douglas (2010) noted that the organizational climate comprises of collegial leadership, professional behavior and achievement press explain higher organizational commitment in a study among 67 elementary teachers in Alabama.

Hence, we posit:

*H1(a): Academic factors explain lower turnover intention*

*H1(b): Academic factors explain higher organizational commitment*

*H1(c): Academic factors explain higher job performance*

### *5.2 Happiness in Organization*

Chronic happiness or subjective well-being has the important outcome in addition to indicating a better quality of life. In a massive review of the literature, Lyubomirsky, King, and Diener (2005, p. 803) conclude, "Numerous studies show that happy individuals are successful across multiple life domains, including marriage, friendship, income, work performance and health." The argument was that these relationships found not just due to success drives happiness, but happiness, in the form of trait and state positive affect then causally effect success. Those who are happy employ specific behaviors that set up to create improved outcomes in psychological, tangible, and even physiological domains. A meta-analytic review concluded that trait positive affect is a strong determinant of reduced morbidity and of enhanced longevity among older adults, and that both state and trait positive affect related with reduced symptoms of ill health and pain (Pressman & Cohen, 2005).

At the state level, emotions associate with characteristic action inclinations. For example, anger associates with the action tendency of attack, and fear associates with escape. Action tendencies for happiness are less specific but involve approach, outgoings, and expansiveness (Lazarus, 1991). The safety indicated in happiness permits for play and experimentation. Fredrickson's broaden and build theory (2001) explains the mechanisms further by which momentary positive affect may promote success.

Specifically, positive emotions "broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources." Positive emotions also increase broad-minded coping, speed recovery from negative states, and may "trigger upward spirals toward enhanced emotional well-being" (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002, p. 172). Positive activated moods have been found to enhance creativity and may facilitate goal attainment (Aspinwall, 1998; Baas, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2008). There is also a substantial literature investigating the complex manner in which positive mood may affect information processing and memory though the effect is not universally helpful to task performance (c.f. Forgas, 1995; Forgas & George, 2001; Martin & Clore, 2001).

While the most-common effect of momentary happiness on work behavior appears to be positive; moods and emotions could harm concurrent work performance. Beal, Weiss, Barros, and MacDermid (2005) suggest that all emotions, positive or negative, have the potential to reduce task performance by redirecting scarce attentional resources away from the task and toward the source of the effect.

Large number of person level research in happiness-related constructs and work outcomes suggest that positive attitudes, and experiences related with beneficial consequences for both employees and organizations. For instance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are negatively related to intention to quit and actual turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002), absence (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), and counter-productive work behavior (Dalal, 2005), and positively related to organizational citizenship behavior/contextual performance (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002). Job satisfaction is negatively related to depression, anxiety, and burnout, and positively related to physical health (Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2005).

Happiness construct prevailed and reflected in the relationship of overall job satisfaction to individual job performance that has long been of concern to organizational scholars (c.f. Brief, 1998; Fisher, 1980, 2003; Vroom, 1964), and the relationship even been categorized as “the Holy Grail” of organizational behavior body of knowledge (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Fisher (2003) noted in his study that lay people strongly believe that happy employees are more likely to be productive employees, even though the reviews consistently showed weak correlation score of .18 or less (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Judge, Thoreson, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Vroom, 1964). Note that the existence of this relationship does not warrant satisfaction as the cause and performance as the effects. A number of causal explanations for the relationship offered (see Judge et al., 2001 for a review), including that performance causes satisfaction, especially when contingent reward systems are in place (Lawler & Porter, 1967). However, two meta-analyses involving panel data support the predominant direction of causality (for person level relationships) being from job attitudes to job performance (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Riketta, 2008).

Numbers of management scholars have spent decades attempting to disabuse students of the common sense belief that “a happy worker is a productive worker”. Our stance based on discouraging reviews of the job satisfaction—job performance relationship going back as far as Brayfield and Crockett (1955). Subsequent reviews (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Judge et al., 2001; Vroom, 1964) confirmed that the uncorrected relationship between satisfaction and performance is modest. However, the weight of evidence suggests that it is time to revise this pessimistic conclusion in some ways. When corrections for unreliability and sampling error applied, meta-analytic studies show moderate relationships between job satisfaction and both core and contextual performance (Judge et al., 2001; LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002). We don’t have good evidence that positive individual and collective attitudes (engagement, satisfaction, commitment, involvement) are not only related to, but also predictive of, organizationally desired outcomes including individual and unit performance, employee retention, safety, customer satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006; Riketta, 2008).

Relationships among narrow measures of specific attitudes and uni-dimensional performance constructs are not always large, but they are consistently non-zero. When multiple attitude and performance measures combined into composite criteria, the relationships between them are much stronger. The estimated population correlation between overall attitudes and broadly defined performance estimated by Harrison et al. (2006) was a convincing .59, with evidence that causality flows from the attitude to performance.

In some, the evidence suggests that happiness at work does matter, not just to employees but also to organizations. In relation to academic a study in Goh and Sandhu (2013) suggest that Malaysian public academicians should foster more positive emotional ties to their institutions in order to deliver and share knowledge more effectively.

Hence, we posit:

*H2(a): Happiness explains lower turnover intention*

*H2(b): Happiness explains higher organizational commitment*

*H2(c): Happiness explains higher job performance*

### *5.3 Strategic Leadership*

Leadership at strategic level is one of the principal issues facing organisations in the 21st century—nevertheless, little empirical evidence has emerged on the effects of leadership at strategic level on organisational processes with distinct strategic importance (Elenkov, Judge, & Wright, 2005, p. 667). Moreover, study in strategic leadership was found lacking in academic sectors.

According to Lear (2012) that cited a strategy as a plan, while strategic leadership is the thinking and decision making required to develop and affect the plan. Strategic leadership is concerned with leadership “of” organizations rather than leadership in the organization (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). The study of strategic leadership focuses on executives with the overall responsibility for an organisation (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996) and includes not only the titular head of the organisation but also members of what is referred to as the top management team (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). Through their leaders, organisations make strategic choices about the strategies they adopt to enhance their competitive advantage. From a strategic management standpoint, organisational effectiveness is the degree to which the composite outputs an organisation produces align with the demands of its environment in order to achieve a competitive advantage, and strategic leadership is a primary determinant of this set of outputs. Identifying these outputs and the process through which they contribute to effectiveness is the key to understanding the organisational effectiveness construct (Sanders & Davey, 2011, pp

43-44).

Strategic leadership is the leader's ability to anticipate, envision and maintain flexibility and empower others to create strategic change as necessary (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2001, p. 500; Jooste & Fourie, 2009, pp. 52-53; Serfontein, 2009). The phrase "strategic leadership" emerged from work on strategic management and involves the following: (1) determining strategic direction; (2) exploring and maintaining unique core competencies; (3) developing human capital; (4) sustaining an effective organisational culture; (5) emphasizing ethical practices; and (6) establishing balanced organisational controls (Hagen, Hassan, & Amin, 1998; Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 1995; Hitt et al., 2001, p. 500; Jooste & Fourie, 2009). According to Sosik, Jung, Berson, Dionne and Jaussi (2005, p. 47), outstanding strategic leaders are those executives who display key behaviours that enable the organization to execute its strategy effectively. In essence, they are "strategy-focused leaders". This view confirms the criteria identified in previous studies (Hagen et al., 1998; Hitt et al., 1995).

Leaders plays the critical role in influencing the employees to be highly committed to the organization and consequently help them achieving better performance. Khalil, Ismail, Suandi and Silong (2008) noted that firm performance in agricultural extension and strategies were the function of leadership competencies. And in similar vein Zigarmi, Huoson, Witt and Diehl (2011) iterated that strategic leadership has indirect relation to customers devotion.

Hence, we posit:

*H3a: Strategic leadership explains lower turnover intention*

*H3b: Strategic leadership explains higher organizational commitment*

*H3c: Strategic leadership explains higher job performance*

## **6. Relationship between Organizational Commitment, Job Performance and Turnover Intention**

Studies in direct relationship between organizational commitment, job performance and turnover intention have been in the literature for quite sometimes and the findings start getting the consistency. Yeh and Hong (2012) noted that organizational commitment significantly and positively affect job performance. Number of studies have shown some consistency in the relationships (Chi, Tsai, & Chang, 2007; Chi, Yeh, & Chiou, 2008; Luthans, McCaul, & Dodd, 1985; Wang, 2006). Similarly in OC, JP and TI relationships, Jaramillo et al. (2005) substantiated in meta analysis work of Brown and Peterson (1993) that organizational commitment was negatively related to turnover intention among police officers in Florida. However, Rageb et al. (2013) found only JP was negatively related with TI but OC showed positive relationship, the study failed to substantiate the hypothesis due to insignificant beta.

Hence, we posit:

*H4a: Organizational commitment explains higher job performance*

*H4b: Organizational commitment explains lower turnover intention*

*H4c: Job performance explains lower turnover intention*

## **7. Mediator Effect of OC and Job Performance in Turnover Intention Relationships**

Yeh and Hong (2012) discovered partial mediation of OC on leadership type and job performance. An empirical study of Yiing, Zaman and Ahmad (2009) suggested that leadership style would affect organizational commitment and in turns, organizational commitment will influence job performance and mediate the relationship between leadership style and job performance. In the same vein Ahmad and Schroeder (2003) found OC as the mediator of human resource practices and job performance.

Another reason that concerned employee happiness is the important mediating role that attitudes and affect appear to play. The effects of work environments, job design, personality, and psychological climate on more distal outcomes such as performance, organizational citizenship behavior and turnover are often mediated through happiness related constructs such as job satisfaction, affective commitment, and mood at work (c.f. Carr, Iacoboni, Dubeau, Mazziotta, & Lenzi, 2003; Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006; Patterson, Frank, Kristal, & White, 2004; Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007).

Hence, we posit:

*H5a-c: OC and JP mediate the relationship between (a) the academic factors, (b) happiness, (c) strategic leadership and turnover intention*

*H6a-c: OC mediates the relationship between (a) the academic factors, (b) happiness, (c) strategic leadership*

and job performance

H7: JP mediates the relationship between OC and turnover intention.

## 8. Theoretical Framework

Works of Meyer and Allen (1997) and other scholars (e.g. Chen, 2006; Tett & Meyer, 1993) have been inconclusive to a certain extent, especially in the mediated relationship. Moreover, those empirical evidences need more fine tune investigations about academic, organizational and emotion variables such as, the strategic leadership, happiness and academic variables, level of measurement and cultural background. We suggest the mediated variables such as the OC and JP variables in between the conventional bi-directional relationship that could help enhance the theory. Advancement in quantitative research in dependent method suggests that the inclusion of the third variable into the regression equation shall help improve the coefficient of determination shown in adjusted R-square and R-square change (Hair et al., 2006).

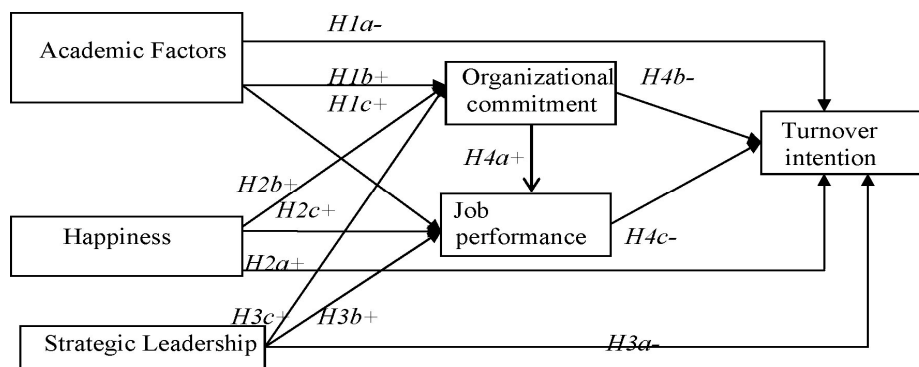


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

## 9. Methodology and Findings

The response rate was quite low when out of 827 samples randomly selected 130 were returned and usable. The collection process managed to secure 16 percent response rate. The majority of them were 89 percent Malay, 3 and 4 percent were Indian and Chinese respectively. The respondents were mainly in younger age bracket, and most of them were in junior academic position, 62 percent of them were less than 40 years and 70 percent were those employed less than ten years respectively. They represented eight Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) campuses (87 percent) and four other Malaysian public universities composed of University of Malaya (2 percent), Universiti Malaysia Pahang (2 percent), Universiti Utara Malaysia (8 percent) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (1 percent).

Goodness of measures of the studied variables verified in terms of construct validity, reliability analysis, measures of central tendency and correlation analysis. We execute the exploratory factor analysis and reliability, and final output presented in Table 1. The data analysis were run using EFA in SPSS 19. The surveymonkey.com compiled the responses into a spreadsheet. The data then transferred to SPSS 19 data input generator for further analysis. The demographic items analyzed in terms of frequencies in percentages. The studied variables run in EFA principal component analysis (PCA) that further analyzed and interpreted. Some items of the variables were run several times until stable loading achieved. Main indicators as indicated in Hair et al. (2006) such as Kaiser-Meyer-Olin (KMO), anti-image, communalities and variance were observed and manipulated in capturing verified factor loadings. Loaded factors then verified with reliability analysis that finally exhibit the Cronbach's alpha for each variable. The variables were formed using the mean composite score. Two variables were found loaded with two factors each and we have to add new labels. For the measures of central tendency and correlation the results presented in Table 2.

The intercorrelation results showed that the junior academician was a positive correlate of turnover intention, on the other hand, job performance, academic with administration free and academic organizational climate were the negative correlates. The academic development, organizational happiness and academic tasks were positively correlated with job performance. But on the contrary, academic organizational climate was negatively correlated. Positive correlates of organizational commitment were the strategic leadership, academic development, both organizational and personal happiness and organizational tasks (Please refer Table 2).

Table 1. Factor analysis and reliability

Variable/Item	KMO, Bartlett Test of Sphericity & DF	(Percent of total variance)/ Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha
<b>Strategic leadership</b>		(63.95)	
Determine strg direction		.178	
Establish org control		.173	
Sustain org culture	.82, 591.47, 21	.186	.91
Emphasize ethical practice		.190	
Exploit core competence		.190	
Develop human capital		.152	
Develop social capital		.179	
<b>Academic and Admin</b>		(65.07)	
Acad prefer admin (rec)		.755	.84
Admin taking control (rec)		.753	
Admin erosion (rec)	.56, 87.57, 10	.708	
<b>Academic development</b>			
Acad with new knowledge		.881	.72
Acad development has future		.875	
<b>Organization happiness</b>		(63.97)	
Fair treatment		.826	.80
Org value employees		.785	
Understand org objectives		.667	
Develop full potential	.83, 285.40, 21	.650	
Org trust relationship		.642	
<b>Personal Happiness</b>			
Feel empowered with autonomy		.869	.67
No intrusion in personal life		.784	
<b>Academic Tasks</b>		(54.97)	
Administering		.284	
Researching	.66, 115.90, 6	.311	.72
Training		.398	
Social work		.345	
<b>Organizational Climate</b>		(54.40)	
Transparent in promotion		.157	
Flat org structure		.122	
Professional in DM		.174	
High job security	.90, 567.84, 36	.108	.89
Reliable management		.165	
Up to date technology		.139	
Strong work culture		.168	
Cohesive formal group		.160	
Close relation with peers		.150	



<b>Organizational Commitment</b>		(65.16)	
Put effort beyond normal task		.211	
Promote organization to others	.86, 283.13, 10	.254	.86
Accept any job assigned		.251	
Similar value with organization		.260	
Loyalty to organization		.259	
<b>Turnover intention</b>		(61.36)	
Always think to leave		.258	
Expectation not met	.83, 240.31, 10	.269	.84
Organization does not deliver		.264	
No work life balance		.248	
Better external attraction		.235	
<b>Job Performance</b>		(62.69)	
Overall job performance		.196	
Relationship with all staffs		.181	
Achieve job performance goal	.85, 399.46, 15	.229	.88
Achieve target as set		.221	
Achieve quality performance		.225	
Ability to complete tasks		.207	

Table 2. Measures of central tendency and correlation

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Turnover Int	2.71	.85														
2. Job Performance	3.83	.63	-.36**													
3. Organization commitment	4.00	.45	-.15	.37**												
4. Female (dummy)	.64	.48	.01	.01	-.05											
5. Malay (dummy)	.90	.30	.17	-.08	.07	.09										
6. Chinese (dummy)	.04	.20	-.14	-.06	-.16	-.10	-.63**									
7. Young (dummy)	.64	.48	.15	.12	-.01	.24**	.14	-.18*								
8. Junior (dummy)	.72	.45	.21*	.01	.05	.25**	-.03	-.05	.66**							
9. Strategic leadership	3.09	.90	-.09	.17	.27**	-.12	-.04	-.07	-.14	-.17						
10. Free from administration	2.33	.66	-.35**	.03	-.08	-.19*	.00	.02	-.14	-.18	.08					
11. Academic development	3.60	.84	-.15	.32**	.21*	.08	.07	.01	.15	.12	.08	.05				
12. Organizational happiness	4.25	.52	-.14	.27**	.37**	.14	-.10	.06	-.03	.06	.17*	-.24**	.17			
13. Personal happiness	4.19	.72	.16	.09	.20*	.13	.07	-.05	.17*	.24**	.03	-.15	.14	.48**		
14. Academic tasks	3.20	.70	-.06	.34**	.47**	-.01	.03	-.14	.13	.05	.29**	.02	.23**	.09	.05	
15. Academic org climate	3.55	.67	-.32**	-.61**	.09	-.05	.03	-.01	.21*	.10	.08	-.08	.21*	.22*	.27**	.21*

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

## 10. The Inferential Statistics

Hypothesis testing was executed using multiple regression analysis that observed direct relationship between control, independent and mediating variables. The analysis was executed on a three-stage lower order regression analysis. Each stage should show sufficient variance in the adjusted  $R$ -square verifies the significant coefficient of determination before examining the beta coefficients of the relationship.

Table 3. Relationship between organizational factors, commitment, job performance and turnover intention

Independent variable	Job performance		Organizational commitment		Turnover intention	
	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>B</i>	SE
Control variables						
Intercept	4.07	.19	4.28**	.26	2.06**	.35
Female (dummy)	-.08	.09	-.11	.13	-.13	.16
Malay (dummy)	-.05	.18	-.46	.25	.47**	.33
Chinese (dummy)	-.44	.27	-.54	.37	-.17	.49
Younger (< 40 years old) (dummy)	-.10	.12	.30	.16	-.07	.21
Junior (< 10 years of service) (dummy)	.15	.12	-.19	.17	.49**	.23
Adjusted $R^2$	.00		.02		.04	
<i>F</i> -Value	1.06		1.43		2.13	
SEE	.45		.63		.83	
Durbin Watson	1.82		2.05		1.95	
Organizational and Academic						
Intercept	1.99**	.41	1.03	.55	4.69**	.79
Strategic leadership	.03	.04	.00	.05	.02	.08
Admin free academic	-.04	.04	.04	.07	-.24**	.08
Academic development	.04	.04	.13*	.06	-.08	.09
Happiness (organizational)	.29**	.08	.24*	.10	-.35*	.16
Happiness (personal)	.01	.06	-.12	.07	.33**	.11
Academic tasks	.26**	.05	.14*	.07	.03	.10
Academic organizational climate	-.06	.06	.50**	.07	-.47**	.11
Adjusted $R^2$	.31		.46		.26	
<i>F</i> -Value	8.54**		14.27**		5.80**	
SEE	.37		.47		.73	
Durbin Watson	1.82		2.05		1.95	
Organizational commitment						
Intercept	4.09**	.19			2.11**	.35
Organizational commitment	.27**	.06	-na	-na	-.51**	.11
Adjusted $R^2$	.13				.1	
<i>F</i> -Value	19.18**				20.33**	
SEE	.42		-na		.77	
Durbin Watson	2.03				1.94	
Job performance						
Intercept					3.64	.35
Job performance	-na	-na	-na	-na	-.37*	.17
Adjusted $R^2$					.08	
<i>F</i> -Value					5.10*	
SEE	-na		-na		.81	
Durbin Watson					2.14	

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , na=not applicable.

All control variables were evidenced insignificance in affecting the turnover intention showed in a low coefficient of determination that failed to secure sufficient variance in the model's  $F$  value at  $p < .01$ . However, both predictors and mediators showed statistically significant effect. Predictors explained the mediators and criterion significantly when all models fit in explaining the relationship. Organizational happiness and academic tasks were positive significant predictors of job performance. Academic development, tasks and organizational climate and organizational happiness explained organizational commitment positively. On the contrary, administration free academic, organizational happiness and academic organizational climate negatively explained turnover intention. But, unexpectedly personal happiness was positively related to turnover intention. Hence,  $H1a$  was partially supported when administration free academic and academic organization climate were statistically significant at  $p < .01$ .  $H1b$  also partially supported when academic development and tasks were significant at  $p < .05$  and academic organizational climate significant at  $p < .01$ .  $H1c$  was also partially supported when academic tasks found significantly explained job performance at  $p < .01$ .

On the other hand,  $H2a$  was partially supported at  $p < .01$  when organizational happiness explained turnover intention as hypothesized. Both  $H2b$  and  $H2c$  was also partially supported at  $p < .01$  when organizational happiness explained organizational commitment and job performance.

All  $H3a$ ,  $H3b$  and  $H3c$  were not statistically significant indicating that strategic leadership could not establish sufficient variance in explaining the relationship.

Organizational commitment explains job performance positively, whereas, both organizational commitment and job performance explain significant and negative relationship with turnover intention as expected. Hence all  $H4a$ ,  $H4b$  and  $H4c$  were supported at  $p < .01$ .

### 11. Mediated Relationship

The mediated relationship conducted in three sets of analyse. First, whether the relation between academic and organizational factors and turnover intention was mediated by job performance and organizational commitment. Second, whether the relation between academic and organizational factors and job performance was mediated by organizational commitment. And third, the relationship between organizational commitment was mediated by job performance. We detected two significant mediated relationships in the first set, three relationships in the second set but no significant relationship in the third set.

These analyses based on a bootstrapping method recommended for smaller samples (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Preacher & Hayes, 2004) and were computed with an SPSS macro that estimates direct and indirect effects with multiple mediators (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The bootstrap estimates presented here are based on 5,000 bootstrap samples. Statistical significance with alpha set at .05 indicated by the 95% bias corrected (BC) confidence intervals (CI) not crossing zero. (See Figure 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 for graphical displays of the mediation models.)

The analysis was observed in Preacher and Hayes (2008) as they cited:

"... multiple mediation model with  $j$  mediators. 1 As in Figure 1, Figure 2A represents the total effect of  $X$  on  $Y$  (path  $c$ ). Figure 2B represents both the direct effect of  $X$  on  $Y$  (path  $c'$ ) and the indirect effects of  $X$  on  $Y$  via the  $j$  mediators. The *specific indirect effect* of  $X$  on  $Y$  via mediator  $i$  (Brown, 1997; Fox, 1985) is defined as the product of the two unstandardized paths linking  $X$  to  $Y$  via that mediator. For example, the specific indirect effect of  $X$  on  $Y$  through  $M1$  is quantified as  $a1b1$ . The *total indirect effect* of  $X$  on  $Y$  is the sum of the specific indirect effects,  $\sum_i(aibi)$ ,  $i$  5 1 to  $j$ , and the total effect of  $X$  on  $Y$  is the sum of the direct effect and all  $j$  of the specific indirect effects:  $c + \sum_i(aibi)$ ,  $i$  5 1 to  $j$ . The total indirect effect can also be calculated as  $c - c'$ " (p. 881).

First, the mediation model involving academic development was significant overall  $F(3, 123)=6.69$ ,  $p < .001$  and accounted for 14 percent of the variance in turnover intention. The total effect of academic development on turnover intention ( $c$  path),  $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < .05$ , became non-significant ( $c'$  path),  $\beta = -.06$ ,  $p = .49$ , when the mediators of organizational commitment and job performance were included in the model. The total indirect effect through organizational commitment was statistically significant, but job performance was not statistically significant, with a point estimate (PE) of  $-.1148$  and 95% BC/CI of  $-.2321$  to  $-.0245$ . The specific indirect effects of organizational commitment (PE =  $-.1132$ , BC/CI =  $-.2126$  to  $-.0451$ ) was statistically significant and job performance (PE =  $-.0016$ , BC/CI =  $-.0491$  to  $.0421$ ) was not statistically significant. These results indicate that the organizational commitment was a full mediator in the relation between academic development and turnover. However, job performance proved otherwise.

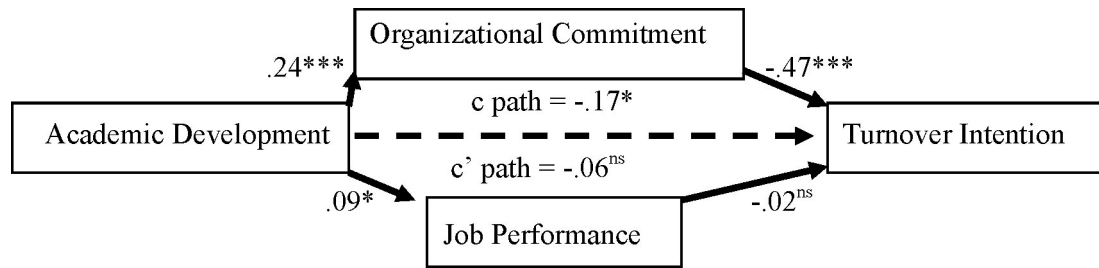


Figure 2. Mediation effect of job performance and organizational commitment in academic development-turnover intention relationship

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Second, the mediation model involving academic organizational climate was significant overall  $F(3, 124)=7.67$ ,  $p < .001$  and accounted for 16 percent of the variance in turnover intention. The total effect of academic organizational climate on turnover intention (c path),  $\beta = -.41$ ,  $p < .001$ , became non-significant (c' path),  $\beta = -.20$ ,  $p = .13$ , when the mediators of organizational commitment and job performance were included in the model. The total indirect effect through organizational commitment was statistically significant, but job performance was found not statistically significant, with a point estimate (PE) of  $-.2054$  and 95% BC/CI of  $-.3818$  to  $-.0299$ . The specific indirect effects of organizational commitment (PE =  $-.2029$ , BC/CI =  $-.3832$  to  $-.0195$ ) was statistically significant and job performance (PE =  $-.0025$ , BC/CI =  $-.0711$  to  $.0179$ ) was not statistically significant. These results indicate that the organizational commitment was a full mediator in the relationship between academic development and turnover. However, job performance proved otherwise. Hence  $H5a$  was partially supported and  $H5b$  and  $H5c$  were unsubstantiated.

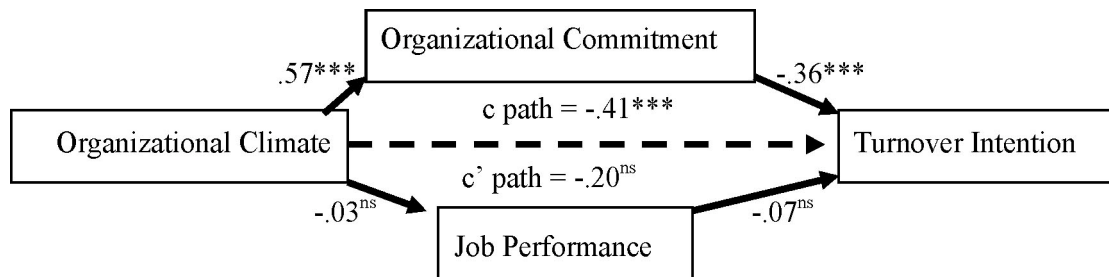


Figure 3. Mediation effect of organizational commitment and job performance in organizational climate-turnover intention relationship

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Third, the mediation model involving academic development was significant overall  $F(2, 124)=7.63$ ,  $p < .001$  and accounted for 11 percent of the variance in job performance. The total effect of academic development on job performance (c path),  $\beta = .09$ ,  $p < .05$ , became non-significant (c' path),  $\beta = .04$ ,  $p = .38$ , when the mediators of organizational commitment was included in the model. The total indirect effect through organizational commitment was statistically significant with a point estimate (PE) of  $.0521$  and 95% BC/CI of  $.0132$  to  $.1177$ . The specific indirect effects of organizational commitment (PE =  $.0521$ , BC/CI =  $.0132$  to  $.1177$ ) was statistically significant. These results indicate that the organizational commitment was a full mediator in the relationship between academic development and job performance.

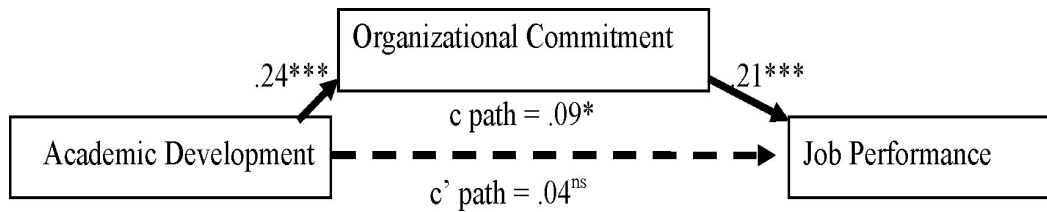


Figure 4. Mediation effect of organizational commitment in academic development-job performance relationship  
 Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Fourth, the mediation model involving organizational happiness was significant overall  $F(2, 124) = 13.54, p < .001$  and accounted for 18 percent of the variance in job performance. The total effect of organizational happiness on job performance (c path),  $\beta = .31, p < .001$ , was also significant (c' path),  $\beta = .25, p < .001$ , when the mediators of organizational commitment was included in the model. The total indirect effect through organizational commitment was statistically significant with a point estimate (PE) of .0564 and 95% BC/CI of .0133 to .1368. The specific indirect effects of organizational commitment (PE = .0564, BC/CI = .0133 to .1368) was statistically significant. These results indicate that the organizational commitment was a partial mediator in the relationship between organizational happiness and job performance. Hence, *H6a* was substantiated.

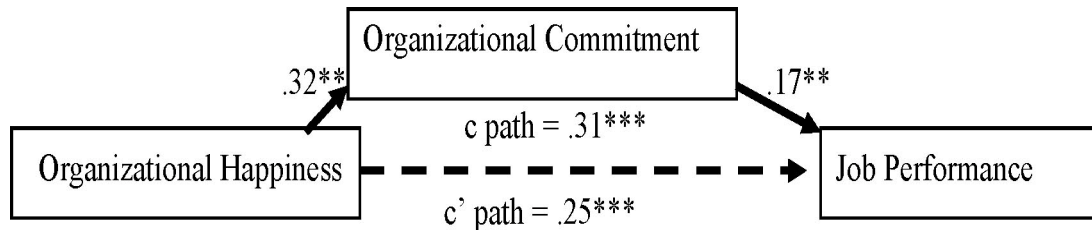


Figure 5. Mediation effect of organizational commitment in organizational happiness-job performance relationship

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Fifth, the mediation model involving academic tasks was significant overall  $F(2, 123) = 18.66, p < .001$  and accounted for 23 percent of the variance in job performance. The total effect of academic tasks on job performance (c path),  $\beta = .29, p < .001$ , was also significant (c' path),  $\beta = .25, p < .001$ , when the mediators of organizational commitment was included in the model. The total indirect effect through organizational commitment was statistically significant with a point estimate (PE) of .0421 and 95% BC/CI of .0043 to .1123. The specific indirect effects of organizational commitment (PE = .0421, BC/CI = .0043 to .1123) was statistically significant. These results indicated that the organizational commitment was a partial mediator in the relationship between academic tasks and job performance. Hence both *H6a* and *H6b* was partially supported and *H6c* was not supported.

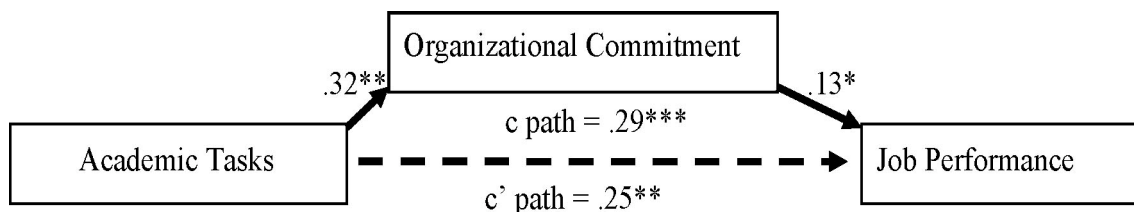


Figure 6. Mediation effect of organizational commitment in organizational happiness-job performance relationship

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

The results failed to establish OC-JP-TI relationship when path b was found not statistically significant. Hence *H7* was not supported.

## 12. Discussions and Conclusion

This study fills some gaps found in previous literature that signifies inconsistent and mixed results in detecting direct and mediated relationship between the studied variables. We managed to justify direct relationship that approved some previous empirical findings. Moreover, the mediated relationships discover some new findings that contributed to organizational and personnel psychology dimensions of industrial psychology theory (Muchinsky et al., 2003). Organizational commitment and job performance serve as mediators of academic and organizational factors relationship with turnover intention and on the other hand, organizational commitment serves as a linking pin for relationship between organizational happiness, academic task and development and job performance.

The study withholds some empirical evidence as found in previous studies, besides approving and disproving some relationships. Organizational happiness clearly substantiate both mediators that show higher job performance and organizational commitment. On the other hand, organizational happiness seems important in reducing the turnover among academic staff. However, unexpectedly, personal happiness supports higher turnover intention. The finding suggests that personal happiness in academic career is pertinent in Malaysian public higher learning institutions that consequently encourages higher intention to leave among the academicians. In other word, the enjoyment of personal happiness in executing academic task does not prevail in Malaysian public academic institutions. Hence, the findings were contrary with a study of Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) where the situation showed otherwise.

The study proves a number of academic and organizational factors directly explain better job performance, organizational commitment and reduced turnover intention among academic staffs in higher learning institutions in Malaysia. Academic tasks and academic organizational development and tasks predicts higher job performance and organizational commitment respectively. Statistically significant relationship between job performance, organizational commitment and turnover intention proved previous conjectures in direction as expected (c.f. Aghdasi et al., 2011; Huselid, 1995; Huselid & Becker, 1996; Kim & Brymer, 2011; Rageb et al., 2013). Thus these findings lent support to job performance, organizational commitment and turnover intention empirical evidence to date.

The mediating effect among the variables showed mixed results. Organizational commitment plays important role as the mediator between academic development-turnover intention and academic organizational climate-turnover intention relationships. Both academic and organizational factors explained lower turnover intention when organizational commitment is higher. Specifically, “brain drain” or intention to leave among the academicians in Malaysian public academic institutions could be hindered if they manage to strengthen their academic development and sustain their academic organization climate. Thus academic institutions management should focus their effort on ensuring new knowledge to grow and bloom in campus, and academic development should be shown and clearly portrayed as a mechanism shaping the future of the academic. In addition, the development also transpires through right organizational climate in the form of transparency and reasonableness in promotional exercises, flat organization structure, professionalism in decision making, high job security, reliable management, up to date technology, strong work culture, cohesive formal group, and close relation with peers.

On the other hand, we discovered that both academic development, academic tasks and organizational happiness explained higher job performance in the presence of high organizational commitment. We hereby suggest that academic development, appropriate academic tasks and organizational happiness are important in ensuring high commitment among the academic staff, the condition then in turn helps in securing better job performance. And in other word, academic job performance shall be improved with presence of academic tasks and development in the institution and the organizational happiness, however without organizational commitment those variables could be ineffective. Thus, beside instilling new knowledge and shaping clear future of academic in campus, institutions management should schedule relevant academic tasks such as administering, researching, training and social work apart from teaching. Moreover, the findings suggest that organizational happiness proves important in securing organizational commitment then in turn contribute to higher job performance. Specifically, elements of organizational happiness comprise of staff expectations on organizations that provide fair treatment to their staff, working in organizations that value or appreciate their employees, getting clear information to understand the organizations’ objectives, working in organizations that develop full potential of their staff and organization that embraces trust in relationship with the staff.

The study proves Meyer and Allen (1991) who claimed that organization commitment also plays the role as the mediator. Turnover intention remains as the criterion that inversely related to most of academic and organizational factors. Happiness is found an important predictor in organization that deserve specific attention in the policy formulation. The practical implications of the study suggest that the higher learning institutions management should adopt and adapt those issues specifically posed by happiness factors.

Unexpectedly, this study disproves Malaysian academicians in associating their strategic leadership capability with any outcomes variables. Thus the research setting could be inappropriate to support strategic aspects in relation to neither organizational commitment nor job performance nor turnover intention in public higher education. However, to a lesser the extent strategic leadership showed a strong correlation with organizational commitment.

The study indeed has limitations associated with self administered procedures and quantitative method. The generalization may be restricted to certain extent where not all public institutions were involved, hence proper care should be taken in interpreting the results that applied to all Malaysian public institutions. We hereby suggest that future studies should consider both public and private institutions as unit of analysis for the base of comparison. Furthermore, more recent academic organization variables such as the organizational flexibility, teaching styles, and ICT based learning are suggested for in-depth scrutiny that could explain higher commitment and performance.

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### Note

Note 1. In his work published in 1984 (in English: 1988) from a study led on French academics in 1967, P. Bourdieu distinguishes between “pure” scientific careers and careers built on the participation in the management of science (sitting in evaluation commissions, being elected in national bodies, etc.).

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