



## **Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POWER BASES LEADERSHIP STYLE AND EMPLOYEE'S TURNOVER INTENTION**

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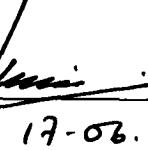
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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POWER BASES LEADERSHIP STYLE AND  
EMPLOYEE'S TURNOVER INTENTION**

**NOORFAZLINAH BINTI HAJIHIL**

This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a  
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**(2019)**

The project entitled 'The relationship between power bases leadership style and employee's turnover intention' was prepared by Noorfazlinah binti Hajihil and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honors (Human Resource Development)

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## **Abstract**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POWER BASES LEADERSHIP STYLES AND TURNOVER INTENTION**

***NOORFAZLINAH BINTI HAJIHIL***

The aim of this study was conducted to study the relationship between power bases of leadership styles and employee's turnover intention. The study was carried out among 86 employees working in a statutory body organization which had been chosen according to convenience sampling method. Survey technique was used for data collection. The population of employees in the selected organization was approximately 130 employees. 100 questionnaires were sent to the organization for three weeks and 86 questionnaires were returned for analysis. For the data analysis, Spearman Correlation was used to determine the relationship between power bases and turnover intention variable; and Multiple Regression was used to determine whether power bases predict job satisfaction. The findings found out that, only coercive power was positively and significantly related to turnover intention. This is because coerciveness that being practiced towards employees can increase dissatisfaction, the development of fear emotions among employees and the action can lead to turnover. In this research, the expert power variable has shown positive correlation as well however, the relationship was not significant. This emphasizes that an incompetence leader can lead to turnover as well. As for the dominant factor, the result showed that only coercive power predicted turnover intention significantly. The findings of this study contributed to the aspect of organization, human practitioner and to the body of knowledge. From this study, organization should understand the importance of controlling their power that has been granted and how it can affect employee's decision to quit. As for the recommendation, it is advised to the organization to utilize Denning's Model to control utilization of coercive power.

**KEYWORDS:** *Power Bases, Turnover Intention, Coercive Power, Reward Power, Legitimate Power, Referent Power, Expert Power.*

## **Abstrak**

### **KAJIAN HUBUNGAN DIANTARA JENIS-JENIS KUASA PEMIMPIN DAN NIAT PEKERJA UNTUK BERHENTI**

***NOORFAZLINAH BINTI HAJIHIL***

Tujuan kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan diantara jenis kuasa pemimpin dan niat pekerja untuk berhenti daripada pekerjaan. Kajian ini dijalankan di kalangan 86 pekerja yang bekerja di organisasi badan berkanun yang telah dipilih mengikut kaedah pensampelan secara kebetulan. Teknik kaji selidik telah digunakan sebagai proses pengumpulan data. Populasi pekerja di organisasi terpilih adalah kira-kira 130 pekerja. 100 soal selidik telah dihantar ke organisasi selama tiga minggu dan 86 soal selidik telah dikembalikan untuk proses analisis. Bagi menguji korelasi diantara pembolehubah, ujian Korelasi Spearman digunakan untuk menentukan hubungan diantara jenis kuasa kepimpinan dan niat pekerja untuk berhenti daripada pekerjaan; manakala ujian Regresi Berganda digunakan bagi menentukan faktor dominan bagi jenis kuasa kepimpinan yang lebih mempengaruhi niat pekerja untuk berhenti. Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa, hanya kuasa paksaan yang menunjukkan hubungan positif dan hubungan yang ketara dengan niat pekerja untuk berhenti. Ini kerana kuasa paksaan yang diamalkan terhadap pekerja boleh meningkatkan rasa tidak puas hati, pembentukan emosi negatif dikalangan pekerja dan tindakan tersebut boleh menyebabkan pekerja ingin berhenti daripada pekerjaan. Dalam kajian ini, pemboleh ubah kuasa pakar menunjukkan hubungan yang positif, walaupun bagaimanapun, hubungannya tidak signifikan. Keputusan ini menekankan bahawa ketidakcekapan ketua juga boleh membawa kepada kesan yang negatif. Bagi faktor dominan, hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa hanya kuasa paksaan sebagai faktor dominan yang membawa kepada keputusan pekerja untuk berhenti. Penemuan kajian ini seterusnya memberi sumbangan kepada organisasi, pengurusan sumber manusia dan pengetahuan. Daripada kajian ini, organisasi harus memahami betapa pentingnya untuk mengawal kuasa yang telah diberikan dan bagaimana ia dapat mempengaruhi keputusan pekerja untuk berhenti. Cadangan kepada organisasi bagi mengawal penggunaan kuasa adalah dengan mengaplikasikan Model Denning kerana model ini mencadangkan kuasa pemimpin yang mana seharusnya perlu diaplifikasi bagi mencapai keberkesanan organisasi dan kepimpinan.

**KEYWORDS:** *Jenis kuasa kepimpinan, Niat untuk berhenti, Kuasa Paksa, Kuasa Ganjaran, Kuasa Sah, Kuasa Rujukan, Kuasa Pakar.*

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the concept of this research will be discussed through background of study, problems of statement, research objectives and definition of terms. Research hypothesis, research question, the significance of the study and the limitation involves also will be included in this chapter.

### **1.1 Background of Study**

Among the industries with the highest turnover was recorded by the manufacturing industry, conglomerates and financial services sectors with 24%, 14% and 13.3% respectively (Tower Watson, 2013). In fact, manufacturing industry in Malaysia recorded the highest turnover with the increment of rate from 13.2% in 2014 to 14.3% in 2015 (Mystarjob, 2015). High turnover rate is a concern because it can affect productivity and increase the cost of an organization (Butali, Mamuli & Wesangula, 2014).

Nowadays, organizations are increasingly aware of the competitive environment and hence one of the organizational strategies to survive is to have an effective strategy leadership (Amagoh, 2009). Although there are various arguments about leadership, in essence leadership is a leader's ability to influence and motivate followers without involving coerciveness (Popper and Lipshitz, 1993). Leadership is an attempt to influence (Shriver, 2016) and leadership is a process of influencing a group of workers to achieve organizational goals (Northouse, 2016). In order for leaders to influence their followers in achieving the goals, a leader needs to have the ability to influence. Thus, the ability that a leader can use to influence his followers is through the power they have (Hughes, Ginnett & Curphy, 1993). According to Shriver (2016), power is the influence potential. Power may be used positively or negatively. Ormond (2011),

stated that power that used negatively will cause conflict and when it used positively, it can overcome any conflict. This statement is supported by Graham (2015), which states that the leader who exercises his power positively, able to provide motivation and job satisfaction while the power used negatively causes dissatisfaction, absenteeism and turnover. So, what is employee's perception of their leader's power? Do employees perceive their leader's power as positive or negative?

On the other hand, many past studies have been done to determine which types of power bases are used to influence others and researchers also use these power bases variables according to issues that they want to address following their interest. According to Bagci (2015), the power concept that brings attention to researchers is the power bases model by French and Raven (1959). In fact, some have tested the relationship between these power bases with employee's turnover intention. However, there are differences in findings for each study conducted. Therefore, in this study, we want to see the relationship between these two variables but for the context within Malaysia.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Turnover intention has become the focus of study by scholars, academicians, researchers and the human resource managers (Khan & Aleem, 2014). However, despite being one of the concerns by the experts, turnover among employees has not yet decreased (Husain, Siddique, Ali, Ali & Akbar, 2015). The turnover issue is not something new in Malaysia whereas it has surfaced since early 1991 and gradually increase due to high labour demand and wide opportunities in the labour market (Keni, 2013). In Malaysia, the employee turnover rate in 2009 was 9.3% and it increased to 10.1% in the year of 2010 (Hewitt Asia Pacific, 2010). Meanwhile, through the HR statistics in Asia, Malaysia recorded the second highest involuntary turnover rate at 6.0% and third highest voluntary turnover rate at 9.5% this year in South East Asia in 2015 (Jayaram, 2015). In addition, based on the Productivity Report 2013/2014, one of the big challenges faced by the manufacturing industry in Malaysia was to retain talents (Foong, S'ng, Lim, Phang & Tiong, 2015).

According to Md Nor, Omar, Sumilan, Heng & Johari (n.d), due to the large investment in the economic activities, the development of economy has become strong in the manufacturing industry since 2010 and manufacturing industry has started competing globally (Siew-Yean, 2001). Because of the competitive environment, employees under the manufacturing firms have to work harder, facing overload and longer working hours owing to the fact of this industry's high demands and this will eventually lead to turnover due to dissatisfaction among the employees (Visvanathan, Muthuveloo & Teoh, 2018).

Every leader has its own manner in leading followers and it can be different across the organizations based on the culture or theories practiced (Visvanathan, Muthuveloo

& Teoh, 2018). Other than that, according to Visvanathan, Muthuveloo & Teoh (2018), there is no fixed leadership practices being practiced since the situational needs can be differed from the others. For example, some organization can give positive output from practicing coerciveness leadership style and some organization may result negative impact.

Turnover intention has been the main focus by researcher and numerous empirical researches on the turnover factors has been done before. For example, researchers like (Akinyomi, 2016; Husain et al., 2015; Iqbal, 2010; Arshad & Puteh, 2015; Hee & Ann, 2019; Perumal., 2018; Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Al-Qahtani, Gadhoun & Fahd, 2016; Chan., 2010) have studied about the factors that influencing turnover intention. Meanwhile, (Chin, 2005; Chaw, 2010; Faiz, 2013; Bagci, 2015; Elangovan & Jia., 2000; and Kim & Low, 2008) have studied about the bases of power on employee's job satisfaction. Despite turnover intention has been the main concerned for some researchers, however, there are limited empirical studies that focuses on the power bases of leadership styles and turnover intention.

Previous studies did not find specific types of power that leads to turnover intention although there are few studies related to relationship between power bases and turnover intention. According to Ramezani, Nedaei, Ali & Firouzjah (2013), the findings of the studies found that there is positive relationship between coercive power and intend to stay. The result was in contrast with results obtained by Wallace (2010), in which he found that there is negative relationship between coercive power of managers and employees intend to stay. Meanwhile, Ha (2007), in his research, did not find any significant relationship between coercive power and employee job behaviours. Although coercive power is seen as a type of power that can negatively affect the worker, Yeager (2014), stated that the use of coercive power can be seen as extreme

but, in some cases, such power is needed. For example, coercive power is needed to threaten employees with poor discipline.

Consequently, this study tends to identify the relationship between power bases and employee turnover intention. Additionally, this study will also be identified the dominant factors that contributes to the employee turnover intention.

### **1.3 Objectives of Study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To study the relationship between five power bases towards employee turnover intention.

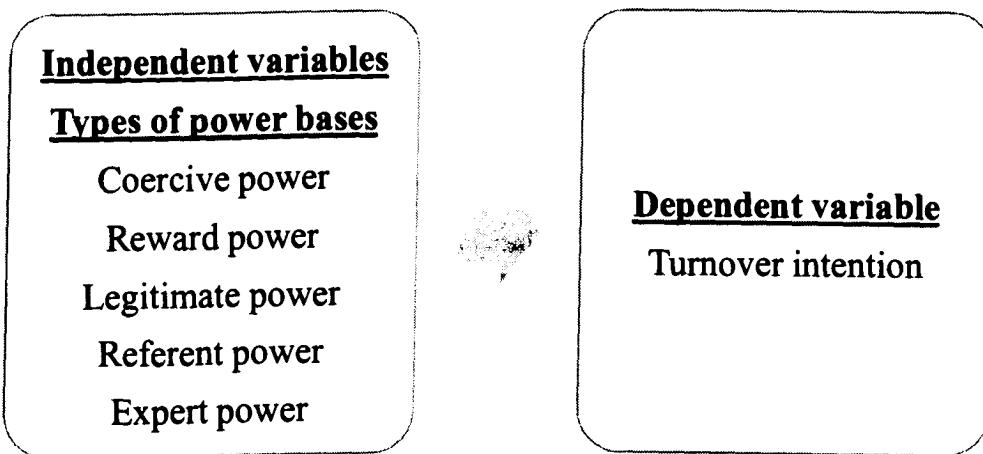
#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

1. To identify the relationship between coercive power towards employee's turnover intention
2. To identify the relationship between reward power towards employee's turnover intention
3. To identify the relationship between legitimate power towards employee's turnover intention
4. To identify the relationship between referent power towards employee's turnover intention
5. To identify the relationship between expert power towards employee's turnover intention
6. To identify the dominant factor that leads to employee turnover intention.

## **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

- Ha1 : There is a significant relationship between coercive power and employee's turnover intention
- Ha2 : There is a significant relationship between reward power and employee's turnover intention
- Ha3 : There is a significant relationship between legitimate power and employee's turnover intention
- Ha4 : There is a significant relationship between referent power and employee's turnover intention
- Ha5 : There is a significant relationship between expert power and employee's turnover intention
- Ha6 : There is a dominant factor among variables that lead to employee's turnover intention

## **1.5**



### **Conceptual Framework**

*Figure 1: Conceptual framework. Adapted from “Power and Leadership: An Influence Process,” by Lunenburg, F.C. (2012), *International Journal of Management, Business and Administration*, 15(1).*

## **1.6 Significance of Study**

The input from this study will contribute to the body of knowledge and insight in the field of leadership and turnover intention to the current related literature. This is because, many academic journals or past research findings are used to obtain information and later to be used as supportive information to the concepts discussed in the study. Thus, information in this research will be the added value to the current related literature and will provide references to the academicians in terms of power bases leadership styles and turnover intention.

This research is important to organization because the dependent variable of this research could affect the organization effectiveness, mainly in organization's productivity and budget. From the discussion of this research later, organization will see that there are other factors that lead to turnover intention and which part of leadership practice that can be maintained or improve in order to retain their talents. In addition to that, from the discussion and suggestions that will be provided in this research, organization can consider to apply the suggestions given as their leadership strategy. Usually, leaders whom are based in Human Resource department acquire these five power bases. For example, HR practitioners have the power to reprimand staff or even promote them. This study will help HR practitioners to consider the utilization of each power because it affects their decision making and at the same time, to avoid any over-using the powers during managing the employee's performance or during developing retention strategies. This study will show how important the consideration of utilizing each power because though certain power could result positive consequences (eg: reward power), it could still give negative impact to employee's behaviour.

Other than that, this study will increase managers understanding of different characteristic for each of the power bases, which they may apply in the workplace to influence the employee's job behaviour. Thus, this research will help supervisors to use their powers according to the suitability of the situation and to control the usage of their power. This research is important as

it may sharpen supervisor's decision making in using their power appropriately in order to avoid any abuse of power. Furthermore, the study will also make organization aware of the diverse each power bases and the impact of their power to employee's behaviour.

The method used in this study will help future researcher especially the instrument used, literature and findings of this research. The questionnaire in this study can be adopted or adapted by future researcher that has the same topic of interest with this research. The literature review in this study can be cited or used to explore the concept between power bases and turnover intention. Lastly, the findings of this research may be different from other research, thus, it can be used to compare these findings with similar past findings from other sectors.

### **1.7 Limitation of Study**

This study is a quantitative research, and the instrument that will be used for data collection is questionnaire. Researcher will adopt questionnaire from past research to be distributed to respondents. The problem with this method is that the answers obtained from the respondents may not reflect the actual situation that is closely related to them as it is the choice of answers and in some cases, it might just be the closest match to them. Furthermore, all the answers acquired may not be answered honestly by respondents. Therefore, this will make the results inaccurate.

Next, this study involved time constraints. The data collection process for this research will involve third-party, specifically respondents were among organization members from organization that has been selected. The data collection was not based on respondents' willingness to participate but it requires official process to get approval from the third party. Researcher had to wait for organization's approval to approve researcher's application to conduct a research in their organization. Since the expected results are not yet confirmed, therefore, the data collection process is delayed.

Lastly, it is a requirement for researcher to use the latest information to be used as a reference material because old information can be outdated, not in line with the current trends and some issues have been solved. However, in some studies, there are still outdated information being used as supporting materials. Thus, it is a constraint to get latest literature with regards to the types of power bases.

## **1.8 Definition of terms**

### **1.8.1 Power**

Power is the ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or a course of events (Handgraaf, Dijik, Vermunt, Wilke & De Dreu, 2008; French & Raven, 1958).

Additionally, power is a potential that one actor could exert on another (French & Raven, 1958). As for the operational definition, power refers to the ability of a leader to influence his followers to gain desired outcome.

### **1.8.2 Coercive power**

According to French & Raven (1958), coercive power is the removal of incentives by leaders through punishment, termination or undesirable work assignments. Other than that, coerciveness is a perception or expectation by followers as an instrument of punishment for any failure (French & Raven, 1958). In this study, coercive power refers to the leader utilization of such power and how it can affect the employee's turnover intention.

### **1.8.3 Reward power**

Reward power is contrary with coercive power. It is a power that able to provide what is desirable by an individual (Ramezani, Nedaee, AliMohammad & Firouzjah, 2013). According to French & Raven (1959), it is follower's perception of being rewarded by leader for achieving desired outcomes. In this study, reward power refers to leader's attempt to reward his followers and how it can impact the turnover.

### **1.8.4 Legitimate power**

Legitimate power is a leader's ability to influence his followers' behaviour because of the job position held by the leader in the organization (Lunenburg, 2012). Meanwhile, French & Raven (1959) defined legitimate power as followers' belief that their leaders