The Relationships between Onboarding Program and Newcomers' Turnover Intention: The Role of Organizational Identification as Mediator

(Hubungan antara Program Onboarding dan Niat Pusing Ganti Pekerja Baru: Peranan Identifikasi Organisasi sebagai Pengantaraan)

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ABSTRACT

Research on turnover intention is gaining momentum again as Gen Y and millennials have dominated the workforce. While a growing body of work provides strategies on retaining them, not much is known about the importance of organizational identification in influencing turnover intention. To address this gap, this study investigates the role of organizational identification as mediator in the socialization—turnover specifically between onboarding program and turnover intention. Questionnaire survey were distributed to newly recruited employees who have less than 2 years working experience in ICT industry. A total of 320 samples were analyzed using PLS-SEM version 3.3.2. The results revealed that organizational identification significantly mediate the relationship between effective onboarding program and turnover intention. Theoretically, the present study contributed to knowledge by providing support for the significant role of organizational identification in reducing turnover intention. This study also contributes to the understanding on the importance of enhancing onboarding program as organization socialization mechanism in retaining newcomers. Practically, the organization should emphasise on onboarding program as it enables the newcomers to equip themselves with knowledge about the organization and the job-related tasks, but most importantly facilitate the development of organizational identification that stems from social relationship and sense of self-belongingness among the newcomers, so that they can become effective organizational members, which in turn may reduce their turnover intention.

Keywords: Onboarding program; socialization process; organizational identification; turnover intention

ABSTRAK

Kajian mengenai niat pusing ganti kini mendapat momentum kembali apabila Generasi Y dan milenial mendominasi tenaga kerja. Walaupun banyak kajian mengutarakan strategi bagaimana untuk mengekalkan generasi ini, tidak banyak yang diketahui tentang kepentingan identifikasi organisasi dalam mempengaruhi niat pusing ganti. Untuk menangani jurang ini, kajian ini menyiasat peranan identifikasi organisasi sebagai pengantara dalam sosialisasi— pusing ganti khususnya antara program onboarding dan niat pusing ganti. Soal selidik telah diedarkan kepada pekerja baru yang mempunyai pengalaman bekerja kurang daripada 2 tahun dalam industri ICT. Sebanyak 320 sampel telah dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM versi 3.3.2. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa identifikasi organisasi secara signifikan menjadi pengantara hubungan antara program onboarding yang berkesan dan niat pusing ganti. Secara teorinya, kajian ini menyumbang kepada pengetahuan dengan menyediakan sokongan peranan identifikasi organisasi dalam mengurangkan niat pusing ganti. Kajian ini juga menyumbang kepada pemahaman tentang kepentingan mempertingkatkan keberkesanan program onboarding sebagai mekanisme sosialisasi organisasi dalam mengekalkan pendatang baru. Secara praktikalnya, organisasi harus menekankan pada program onboarding kerana ia membolehkan pendatang baru melengkapkan diri mereka dengan pengetahuan tentang organisasi dan tugas berkaitan pekerjaan, dan yang paling penting memudahkan pembangunan identifikasi organisasi yang berpunca daripada hubungan sosial dan rasa kepunyaan diri dalam kalangan pendatang baru, supaya mereka boleh menjadi ahli organisasi yang berkesan, yang seterusnya boleh mengurangkan niat pusing ganti mereka.

Kata kunci: Program onboarding; proses sosialisasi; identifikasi organisasi; niat pusing ganti

INTRODUCTION

The high turnover of newly hired employees has become a serious problem in Malaysia especially with the entrance of generation Y (Gen Y) into the workforce (Abdul Latif & Saraih 2014). In 2017, the employee turnover rate in Malaysia amounted to 20 per cent, and the percentage is continually increasing (ILMIA 2018). According to Rishesingar Ramasamy, the Head of BAE Systems Malaysia Engineering Centre (2017), the average turnover for an employee in Malaysia is two to two-and-a-half years in any organization. This concurs with numerous surveys reported the average job tenure of newcomers especially Gen Y in the Asian Pacific

region is about eighteen months (Sheahan 2008) and 60 percent Gen Y plan to leave their organization within 3 years of tenure (Gedeon 2013). The organization's productivity, quality of service and its profitability will be affected when the organization lose its talented and skillful employees (Eckardt et al. 2014; Heavey et al. 2013). In addition, the cost to replace an employee who resign from the organization can total up to 33% of an employee's annual salary (Otto 2017). This cost includes the cost of advertising for vacant positions, screening and interviewing the candidates, carrying out background checks, medical check-ups, and training the new employee. More importantly, this issue not only affected the organization's financial and service performance but also become a threat to the economic growth of our country.

Previous studies reveal that among the problems that cause these newcomers to leave the job is that they feel isolated, have less sense of community (Carucci 2018), or do not feel belonging to the organization. Sense of belongingness is crucial as this feeling allows employees to have a sense of oneness and identify themselves with their organizations (Mael & Ashford 1992). This sense of oneness among the employees leads to organizational identification among the newcomers which refers to the degree that the employees define themselves as members of the organization (Ashforth & Mael 1989; Haslam 2004; Schuh et al. 2016; Tarakci et al. 2018). Once they feel part of the organization, they will accept the norms and values of their group which then will influence the way they think and act (Gautam et al. 2004). Remarkably, it also leads to attitudes and behavior changes that are beneficial to the organization such as it provides a sense of loyalty and commitment toward the organization (Ashforth & Mael 1989), has high tendency to enhance the company's performance and productivity (Astakhova & Porter 2015; Cordery et al. 2015; Chiu et al. 2006), and increase retention of newcomers (Henry & Escobedo 2015).

However, previous studies reveal that the newcomers have difficulties in adjusting themselves to the new environment; and making the transition from being outsiders to becoming effective members of the organization (Van Maanen & Schein 1979). Schein (2003) contended that the first few months of employment is crucial as inability to socialize will affect the adjustment process which subsequently affect the decision of the newcomer's whether or not to remain as an employee in the organisation. Hence, many organizations have strived hard to prevent their employees from leaving the organization via socialization mechanisms. Socialization mechanisms are the specific formal and informal tactics that organizations use as instruments to socialize their employees such as onboarding programs (Saks & Ashforth 1997).

Onboarding refers to a "process of introducing new hires into the new jobs, acquainting them with the organization's goals, values, rules, responsibilities, procedures, and socializing the new employee into organizational culture" (Chillakuri 2020: 3). Onboarding is one of the organizational socialization processes and it is a part of a lifelong learning process that requires newcomers to acquire new knowledge and skills to be applied in performing or delivering their work tasks as well as in adapting well in organizations (Mohd Ghanie et al. 2018).

Among the purposes of the onboarding program are to increase self-confidence and performance, reduce uncertainty (Bauer et al. 2012), and promote team spirit in reducing turnover among newcomers at the workplace (e.g., Caldwell & Peters 2018; Rush et al. 2013). Previous studies (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg 2003; Meyer & Bartels 2017; Song et al. 2015; Yoon & Park 2015) have stressed that onboarding program helps newcomers to socialize, adjust and adapt to the new working environment faster, make sense of their new work environment and provide them with both knowledge and relationship (such as friends). At the same time, the research shows that when employees identify with their organization and build organization identification, they tend to have higher levels of work performance and are less likely to quit (Riketta 2005; Schuh et al. 2016).

Despite the extensive contribution of researchers in identifying the causes and consequences of turnover of newcomers in the workplace (e.g., Lee et al. 2017; Hom et al. 2017; Porter et al. 2019), gaps are present in the knowledge of newcomers' turnover, which leads to the necessity for further research (Smiths et al. 2017). In particular, further studies are required to investigate the methods to retain the newcomers and underlying factors that might co-exist in performing this action in the workplace, particularly in the ICT industry.

Apart from this, a contextual gap is present in the literature addressing the association between onboarding and the intention to leave an organization in the information technology and communication (ICT) industry. Most of the research works focused on the health care industry, particularly the nurses (e.g., Garcia et al. 2017; Henry & Escobedo 2015; Kurnat-Thoma et al. 2017), education industry with an emphasis on librarian (e.g., Graybill et al. 2013; Lisbon & Welsh 2017; Peacock et al. 2019), and the service industry (e.g., Commeiras et al. 2013; Sarmento et al. 2016; Song et al. 2015). Addressing the methods of retaining talented new employees in the ICT industry is important, particularly in Malaysia as this industry experiences high turnover although the salary of IT employees is relatively high (Radford Trends Report 2016).

In addition, the ICT industry is currently growing rapidly in Malaysia, while the share of the ICT industry to the Malaysian economy amounted to 17.8 per cent in 2015 (PIKOM 2017), which was four times higher compared to the range from RM40 billion in the year 2007 to RM152.1 billion in the year 2015 (Department of Statistics Malaysia 2017). These statistics have proven the important role of the ICT industry in the

growth of the Malaysian economy (Ayob et al. 2021). Therefore, retaining talented newcomers is crucial for all companies, particularly the ICT industry as it would affect the companies' cost and profitably, including the growth of the Malaysian economy. Considering that, a significant number of research has yet to be performed on this industry and to find out the association between onboarding programs, organizational identification in reducing turnover intention among newcomers.

Underpinned by uncertainty reduction theory, this study posits that through onboarding program, uncertainty decreases as the newcomers will become familiar with the task and well equipped with information and consequently, have a high tendency to stay in the organization (Morrison 1993). Meanwhile, social identity theory posits that individuals who identify themselves with a group tend to satisfy their two basic needs which are self-enhancement and uncertainty reduction (Haslam & Ellemers 2005; Ashforth & Mael 1989). Therefore, the possibility of organizational identification as the mediating factor between the onboarding program and newcomers' turnover intention relationship required empirical examination (Smith et al. 2017). Henceforth, based on these gaps in the knowledge of newcomers' turnover literature, the present study aims to unravel the question "Does the newcomers who undergo onboarding program will develop their organizational identity and subsequently will remain in the organization?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

ONBOARDING PROGRAM AND TURNOVER INTENTION

According to uncertainty reduction theory, when newcomers join the organization, they may face various uncertainty because the job and working environment are new to them (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg 2003). Therefore, to reduce their doubt on their abilities in completing their job, the newcomers need to comprehend the organizations' culture, norms, and values (Griffin 2009). An effective onboarding program may give new employees a better understanding of the organization's performance expectations, social norms, and culture (Pike 2014; Stein & Christiansen 2010). Hence, many organization nowadays initiated onboarding program as help to the newcomers to develop their skills to function effectively in their new jobs. Beaver and Hutchings (2005) contended that onboarding program has resulted in reduction of turnover intention among the newcomers. Moreover, onboarding program provides organizational support to newcomers as the immediate superiors and coworkers coach and mentor them (Louis et al. 1983). This is important as the newcomers need to feel secure and confident in taking up the new job and role (Chappuis 1994 cited in Commeiras et al. 2013). Additionally, Bauer et al. (2010) argue that onboarding program are able to reduce the uncertainty among newcomers, develop their

self-efficacy, help to clarify work role opportunities, and reduce turnover rate. This is also evident in the empirical study carried out by Kurnat-Thoma et al. (2017) which clearly reveal that the onboarding program that has been implemented in a community hospital in the Washington DC metropolitan area has successfully reduced the turnover among new-hire nurses from 39.1% to 18.4%. This is further supported by another survey conducted by Gupta et al. (2018) on 596 newcomers in five industrial sectors, namely rapidly developing consumer goods, information technology (IT), pharmaceuticals, automobile manufacturing, and hospitality. It was found that onboarding had a negative influence on the turnover intention among newcomers in these five industrial sectors. Subsequently, the turnover intention among newcomers may be reduced as they become effective workers who have improved engagement in their job and working environment (Emma et al. 2017; Fang et al. 2011). Given these arguments, it can be posited that an effective onboarding program will enable newcomers to remain with the organizations.

H_1 An effective onboarding program is negatively related to newcomers' turnover intention

ONBOARDING PROGRAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

Uncertainty reduction theory posits that newcomers who join the organization will feel uncertain with their job scopes and organizational culture (Berger & Calabrese 1975). By interacting with superiors and coworkers during the onboarding program, it help reduced the uncertainty and insecurity among the newcomers (Saks & Ashforth 1997). Not only that, onboarding program enables newcomers to build social relationship with existing employees especially with those who help them in providing information such as about the company values, policy and norms (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005; Sluss & Thompson 2012; Kooij et al. 2010). The Gen Y employees values learnings as important and the opportunity would increase their intention to remain in the organization (Zabedah Othman et al. 2020). As a result, the newcomers feel socially accepted by their peers which creates a sense of attachment to the organization (Bauer et.al 2010). In addition, when the newcomers undergo the onboarding program, they will be motivated to change their identities to the group identity and consequently establish and clarify their organizational identity (Kooij et al. 2010). Previous study found that socialization such as onboarding program has positive effect on organizational identification (eg. Ahmadian et al. 2016; Hayashi 2013; Lee 2013; Smith et al. 2017; Zhu et al. 2016). For example, a study carried out by Hayashi (2013) among Japanese employees in semi-conductor manufacturing companies revealed that employees who experience proper socialization process tend to develop organizational identification. Parallel to this, another

study among the government and private employees confirms the positive relationship between socialization and organizational identification (Ahmadian et al. 2016). According to the researchers, provided that socialisation involves learning an organisation cultural perspective, an effective onboarding programme may develop and strengthen the coherent sense that conveys what is possibly represented by the organisation and how the events and meaning should be construed (Ashforth & Saks 1996). As a result, a relatively clear referent for identification is created. Hence, this research hypothesized a positive relationship between effective onboarding program and organizational identification.

H$_2$ Effective onboarding program is positively related to organizational identification

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND TURNOVER INTENTION

Social identity theory emphasized that employees feel attached with their organization when they are cognitively and affectively or emotionally engaged with the organization (Tajfel & Turner 1979). Both cognitive and emotional engagement are significance in building psychological connection to a group (Ayob 2020; Cameron 2004; Leach et al. 2008). During interaction with one another, the members of a community will embrace the values (cognitive) and express trust (emotional) in the relationship, which make them feel more integrated into the community (Bergami & Bagozzi 2000; Tajfel 1978). This feeling of attachment help developed psychological connection or social identity among them (Tajfel & Wilkes 1963). For example, newcomers may identify cognitively and emotionally with their senior colleagues, managers, and department or division as they work together in a group (Riketta & Nienaber 2007). When they possess a solid identity in the company, they would be present in the company for a longer time despite the adverse situations in the company (Henry 2014). Previous research found that high degree of organization identification among employees is negatively related to turnover intentions (e.g., Ramdani et al. 2013; Riketta 2005; Riketta & Van Dick 2005). This is because workers who are familiar with the company would possess the cognitions, affections, and desire, which are indicated through the dimensions of pride, categorisation, and cohesion (Romeo et al. 2011). These dimensions are presented as group identity, self-esteem, and the need to stay within the company (Bao & Zhong 2019; Romeo et al. 2011).Thus, this study hypothesized that:

H$_3$ Organizational identification is negatively related to newcomers' turnover intention

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, ONBOARDING PROGRAM AND TURNOVER INTENTION

Newcomers usually struggle with behavioral uncertainty and cognitive uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese 1975) as they enter the organization because they are uncertain with their new jobs, role clarity and social acceptance by other employees in the company (Bauer et al. 2007). Therefore, many companies have initiated onboarding program to assist the newcomers to obtain specific information pertaining to their new jobs and working environment, build relationship with senior colleagues, and understand the organizational policy and procedures better (Korte & Lin 2013). When the newcomers believe that they fit well with the job and company, and able to build good and strong relationship with their co-workers, they will become attached to the organization, that leads to the development of social identity organizational identification Henry et al. (2015).

More importantly, this identification with the organization among newcomers can lead to attitudes and behavior changes that are beneficial to the organization such as loyalty and commitment toward the organization (Ashforth & Mael 1989), increase job performance (Astakhova & Porter 2015; Walumbwa et al. 2008), and increase retention of newcomers (Henry & Escobedo 2015). In line with social identity theory, the new employees who get support during onboarding program identify themselves with the organizational faster and hence, are more willing to get involved with the organization activities (Baruch & Cohen 2007). In addition, highly identified employees view themselves as important to the organization (Galvin et al. 2015). Empirically, research has highlighted the mediating role of organisational identification in work psychology (e.g., Henry & Escobedo 2015; Yanadori & Van Jaarsveld 2014; Zhang & Chen 2013). To illustrate, Henry and Escobedo (2015) recorded that organisation identification plays a mediation role when newly recruited nurses are emotionally attached to the organisation that is impacted by affective commitment. As a result, their intention to withdraw is reduced (Schuh et al. 2016). Hence, we proposed that organizational identification become a mediator in the relationship between onboarding and newcomers' turnover intention.

H$_4$ Organizational identification mediates the relationship between effective onboarding program and newcomers' turnover intention.

RESEARCH METHOD

SAMPLING

The population of the current research consisted of the newly hired employees working in Information Communication Technology (ICT) companies in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The reason for concentrating on ICT companies as the target population of the current study is that ICT industry is currently growing rapidly in Malaysia and the share of the ICT industry to the Malaysian economy was 17.8 percent in 2015 (PIKOM 2017). However, the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers disclosed that compared to other sectors, ICT sector recorded the highest annual average turnover at 75.72 (Malaysian Employers Federation 2011). Most of these ICT companies initiate onboarding programs to facilitate their new employees' socialization process (e.g., IBM - Mesiniaga, Digi, Dell, DXC) to retain their recruits (Jo & Ellingson 2019).

The sampling frame from which the sample is drawn consists of newcomers working in the ICT companies in Klang Valley. The researcher identifies the respective ICT companies from the list obtained from the PIKOM website - http://www.pikom.org.my/directory-member-archive/. Then, the researcher contacted the various ICT companies by sending an email, making phone calls, and/or personal visits to the respective company's human resources personnel. This study employed a judgmental sampling method to collect the data as it focused on newly recruited employees at ICT companies. The respondents of this study are newcomers who have undergone onboarding program within the past two years at the time of data collection. Two years is considered as the best period to study socialization activities (Bauer & Green 1998) as the newcomers could still remember their socialization experience (Feldman 1994). Once, the researcher obtained the new employees' information from the human resource department of ICT companies in Klang Valley, Malaysia, self-reported questionnaires were distributed via an online survey through emails and personal visits. Overall, 328 questionnaires were collected, in which the collection of 72 questionnaires was performed manually, while the other 256 questionnaires were collected via an online survey. 8 questionnaires were removed because of invalid and incompletelessness.

MEASURES

The questionnaire was developed in the English language and it comprised four sections. The first section included 30 items related to the onboarding program. The second section has 6 items related to organizational identification. The third section consisted of 5 items on turnover intention, and the last section consisted of demographic information. Onboarding is defined as "a formal and informal practices, programs, and policies enacted or engaged in by an organization or its agents to facilitate newcomer adjustment" (Klein & Polin 2012). The measures for the onboarding program are adapted from Klein and Polin (2012). This variable is a multidimensional and there are five dimensions under this variable namely Inform-Resources, Inform-Communication, Welcome, Inform-Training, and Guide. The examples of questions are "I went to a question and answer session where new hires were able to ask senior leader questions", "I was encouraged to observe a fellow associate for a period of time", "A fellow associate was assigned as my 'buddy' to help answer my questions I might have", and one global question.

Organizational identification is defined as "a psychological linkage between the individual and the organization whereby the individual feels a deep, self-defining affective and cognitive bond with the organization as a social entity" (Edwards & Peccei 2007: 30). The examples of the questions are "My employment in this company is a big part of who I am", "I share the goals and values of the (company's name)" and "My membership of the (company's name) is important to me". Turnover intention is defined in this study as "the cognitive activities that consciously occur in people's minds before leaving their current job" (Vigoda & Cohen 2003). The turnover intention scale was adapted from Wayne et al. (1997). Examples of items included are: "I hope to find a new job next year" and "I am always thinking about quitting my current job." All the measures reported Cronbach's alpha above 0.7. A five-point Likert scale which ranged from '1' = strongly disagree to '5' = strongly agree was used in measuring all the items.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM through running the PLS algorithm and 5000-bootstraping procedure. This model constitutes both reflective and formative constructs. A two-step approach namely measurement and structural models were carried out to perform the analysis (Anderson & Gerbing 1988). The purpose of the measurement model is to measure the validity and reliability of the constructs. Meanwhile, the structural model intends to estimate the model's path relationships and the Goodness of Fit.

RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A total of 320 participants responded to the survey from various ICT companies in Klang Valley. Table 1 shows that there were 38.4% female and 61.6% were male who responded to this study. Majority of them age between 21 to 30 years old and 94.2 % of the respondents were Malaysian. Almost all of the respondents were degree holders (80.5%) and only one-fifth of them were master

holders (19.5%). About 55.15% of the respondents were executives, followed by management trainees (17.1%), then senior executives (11.3%). In terms of tenure, most of the respondents had working experience between 3 to 24 months while only 6.4% have less than 3 months of working experience.

MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT

The measurement model of the study reported the internal consistency, indicator reliability, convergent and discriminant validities of the constructs. All the indicator reliability indicated satisfactory reliability and the indicators loading for all variables were all above 0.6 which shows strong reliability. The composite reliability of all constructs is greater than 0.60 for all the three latent constructs while the AVE values are greater than the acceptable threshold of 0.50 that confirmed convergent validity.

Common Method Bias   The result shown in Table 2 revealed that there are no issues with common method bias as the correlation matrix procedure for all the latent variables indicates the values are less than 0.9 (Bagozzi et al. 1991).

The common method bias was also tested using the full collinearity test as suggested by Kock (2014) for both

TABLE 1. Demographic information about respondents

Demographic	Category	Frequency (n = 320)	Percentage %
Gender	Male	199	62.20
	Female	121	37.80
Age	21-30	276	86.30
	31-40	35	10.90
	41-50	9	2.80
Nationalities	Malaysian	301	94.10
	Others	19	5.90
Qualification	Degree	260	81.30
	Master	60	18.70
Position	Department Head	3	0.90
	Manager	34	10.30
	Senior Executive	29	9.10
	Executive	179	55.90
	Management Trainee	52	16.30
	Others	5	1.60
Tenure	Less than 3 months	20	6.30
	3-6 months	69	21.60
	7-12 months	87	27.20
	13-18 months	92	28.80
	19-24 months	52	16.20

TABLE 2. Latent variable correlation

	In_Com	In_Res	In_Train	Welcome	Guide	Onboard	OID	TI
In_Com	1							
In_Res	.381**	1						
In_Train	.399**	.777**	1					
Welcome	.456**	.643**	.630**	1				
Guide	.406**	.435**	.413**	.485**	1			
Onboard	.599**	.852**	.859**	.899**	.580**	1		
OID	.140*	.509**	.535**	.413**	.339**	.513**	1	
TI	-.272**	-.567**	-.593**	-.513**	-.307**	-.608**	-.579**	1

Note: In_Com – Inform Communication, In_Res = Inform Resource, In_Train = Inform Training, Onboard = Onboarding, OID = Organizational Identification, TI = Turnover Intention

formative items and the full model. No collinearity issue exists if the VIF values of a single source data are less than 5 (Hair et al. 2014). The analysis is shown in Table 3 and Table 4 both yielded VIF less than 5, thus there is no issue of common method biasness in this study.

TABLE 3. Full collinearity testing

Formative Construct	VIF values
Inform Communication	1.997
Inform Resource	2.960
Inform Train	2.998
Welcome	2.900
Guide	1.665

TABLE 4. Full collinearity testing

Onboard	OID	TI
1.646	1.737	1.430

Note: Onboard = Onboarding Program, OID = Organizational Identification, TI = Turnover Intention

Second Order Construct—Onboarding Program This research uses hierarchical component model (HCM) which is second-order constructs since the onboarding program variable has multidimensional constructs that represent a separate concept and it has been taken as a reflective-formative type II second-order construct which consists of five first-order factors namely inform resources, inform communication, inform train, welcome, and guide. The manifest variables of each dimension are shown in Table 5.

Table 6 for the first order construct and Table 7 for the second order construct indicate that CR and AVE are valid and reliable. All loadings were acceptable except four loadings {INC2 (0.622), IT1 (0.692), W8 (0.652) and W10 (0.695)} which are less than 0.708 (Hair et al. 2019).

The discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT (Henseler et al. 2015). Table 8 confirmed that the respondents understood the all the five dimensions in onboarding programs are distinct. All the values of

HTMT were lower than the stricter criterion of 0.90, thus fulfilling the HTMT criterion where it could be concluded that the confidence interval, which was lower than the value of 1, indicated that no discriminant validity was involved in this case (Henseler et al. 2015). Similarly, Table 9 also indicates that discriminant validity for all the constructs has been fulfilled for this study's PLS model.

STRUCTURAL MODEL

The purpose of the assessment of the structural model is to confirm the theoretical or conceptual model. The basic criterion for evaluation of the structural model is that it involved determining a) the path coefficient (β), b) the coefficient of determination (R^2), c) the effect size (f^2), d) the predictive relevance (Q^2), e) model fit, and f) mediation.

The summary of hypothesis testing is tabulated in Table 10. The effect of the two (2) predictors, namely onboarding program and organizational identification on turnover intention was analyzed and the coefficient of determination was $R^2 = 0.560$ and the predictive relevance was $Q^2 = 0.487$. It indicates that both the two predictors explained 56% of the variance in turnover intention among newcomers. This study supported H_1 and H_3 with Onboarding program (**β = -0.517, t = 9.812, p< 0.000**) and organizational identification (**β = -0.343, t = 6.338, p< 0.000**) were all negatively related to turnover intention. Next, the effect of the onboard program on organizational identification, with an R^2 of 0.334 ($Q^2 = 0.241$) which indicates that the onboarding program explains 33.4% of the variance in organizational identification. The result for the relationship between onboarding program and organizational identification (β = -0.578, t = 9.756, p< 0.000) was significant which gives support for H_2.

The mediation hypothesis was performed on the indirect effect using PLS bootstrapping (Hair et al. 2017; Preacher & Hayes 2008). As shown in Table 10, Onboard → OID → TI (**β = -0.194, p< 0.000**) was significant. The mediating role of organizational identification (H4) was confirmed as the confidence intervals bias corrected 95% did not straddle zero value. Meanwhile, the R^2 values of both organizational identification and turnover intention among newcomers are above 0.26 indicating the substantiality of the model (Cohen 1988). The effect size

TABLE 5. Indicators of constructs for onboarding program

Onboarding Program Dimensions (First-order constructs)	Manifest Variables of First Order Constructs	Number of Manifest Variables
Inform-communication	INC1, INC2, INC3, INC4	4
Inform-resources	INR1, INR2, INR3, INR4, INR5, INR6	6
Inform-training	IT1, IT2, IT3, IT4, IT5, IT6, IT7	7
Welcome	W1, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W8, W9, W10	10
Guide	GD1, GD2	2
Total items:		29

TABLE 6. Measurement model for the first order constructs

Constructs	Items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Inform-Communication	INC1	0.876	0.792	0.564
	INC2	0.622		
	INC4	0.734		
Inform-resources	INR1	0.778	0.900	0.644
	INR2	0.763		
	INR3	0.829		
	INR4	0.871		
	INR5	0.765		
Inform-Training	IT1	0.692	0.895	0.588
	IT2	0.817		
	IT3	0.825		
	IT4	0.725		
	IT5	0.740		
	IT7	0.792		
Welcome	W2	0.706	0.892	0.543
	W4	0.822		
	W5	0.719		
	W7	0.766		
	W8	0.652		
	W9	0.765		
	W10	0.695		
Guide	GD1	0.922	0.897	0.814
	GD2	0.882		
Global_Onboarding	OB30	SIM	NA	NA

Note: SIM = Single Item Measure (GLOBAL ITEM); NA = Not Applicable

TABLE 7. Measurement model for the second order constructs

Constructs	Items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Onboarding Program	IC	0.783	0.948	0.549
	IR	0.894		
	IT	0.839		
	WL	0.935		
	GD	0.769		
Organizational Identification	ORI1	0.811	0.953	0.771
	ORI2	0.859		
	ORI3	0.878		
	ORI4	0.927		
	ORI5	0.880		
	ORI6	0.908		
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.897	0.971	0.892
	TI2	0.964		
	TI3	0.967		
	TI4	0.948		

TABLE 8. Measurement model HTMT criterion for onboarding program *(First-Order)*

	In_Com	In_Res	In-Train	Welcome	Guide
In_Com					
In_Res	0.840				
In-Train	0.854	0.864			
Welcome	0.819	0.846	0.847		
Guide	0.720	0.673	0.655	0.698	

Note: In_Com – Inform Communication, In_Res = Inform Resource, In_Train = Inform Training

TABLE 9. Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	Onboard	OID	TI
Onboard			
OID	0.631		
TI	0.714	0.648	

Note: Onboard = Onboarding Program, OID = Organizational Identification, TI=Turnover Intention

(f^2) for all other path relationships is medium and large, indicating their importance to the endogenous variables. The result of Stone-Geisser's test (Q^2) for organizational identification (0.241), and turnover intention among newcomers (0.487) is more than zero (0) (Geisser 1974) indicating the model has possessed predictive relevance.

In addition, the Q^2 values produced by the PLS estimation (10-fold procedure) are larger than the LM model further supports the predictive capability of the model (Shmueli et al. 2019). Table 11 shows that the values of RMSE and MAE for PLS estimation are lower than that of the LM model except for items T1 and T2. Thus, we can conclude that this model has a medium predictive power.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The finding confirmed the significant mediating role of organizational identification in the association between effective onboarding programmes and turnover intention among newcomers with **β = -0.194, t = 4.758, p< 0.000**. To facilitate the understanding of the effect of this relationship, the discussion will starts with how organizational socialization affect organizational identification which consequently influence the the turnover intention. First, this result was in an agreement with past research, which highlighted that organisational socialisation tactics such as onboarding programmes may enhance employees' learning outcomes (Bauer & Erdogan 2012; Chao 2012; Klein & Heuser 2008) and create emotional attachments among the newcomers, which subsequently develop a sense of identification towards the company (Ge at al. 2010; Lee 2013; Hayashi 2013). After all, the goal of this initiative is among others

TABLE 10. Hypothesis testing direct effects

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	BCI LL	BCI UL	f^2	VIF	R^2	Q^2
H₁	Onboard à TI	-0.517	0.053	9.812**	0.000	-0.606	-0.398	0.381	1.501	0.560	0.487
H₂	OID à TI	-0.343	0.054	6.338**	0.000	-0.461	-0.247	0.171	1.501		
H₃	Onboard à OID	0.578	0.059	9.756**	0.000	0.444	0.678	0.501	1.000	0.334	0.241
H₄	Onboard à OID à TI	-0.194	0.041	4.758**	0.000	-0.285	-0.124				

Note: 95% confidence interval with a bootstrapping of 5,000; (i) H1-H3: Assessment of direct relationships; (ii) H4: Assessment of mediation relationship; Onboard = Onboarding Program, OID = Organizational Identification, TI = Turnover Intention; **p<0.001

TABLE 11. Assessment of PLS predict

	PLS			LM			PLS-LM		
	RMSE	MAE	Q^2_predict	RMSE	MAE	Q^2_predict	RMSE	MAE	Q^2_predict
OI1	0.554	0.373	0.480	0.597	0.421	0.397	-0.043	-0.048	0.083
OI3	0.566	0.471	0.294	0.594	0.493	0.221	-0.028	-0.022	0.073
OI4	0.588	0.462	0.361	0.619	0.495	0.292	-0.031	-0.033	0.069
OI6	0.669	0.493	0.325	0.671	0.537	0.320	-0.002	-0.044	0.005
OI5	0.617	0.485	0.288	0.613	0.505	0.297	0.004	-0.020	-0.009
OI2	0.577	0.432	0.211	0.550	0.442	0.283	0.027	-0.010	-0.072
TI1	0.877	0.589	0.520	0.877	0.576	0.520	0.000	0.013	0.000
TI2	0.729	0.490	0.468	0.714	0.488	0.490	0.015	0.002	-0.022
TI3	0.726	0.460	0.452	0.708	0.478	0.479	0.018	-0.018	-0.027
TI4	0.735	0.478	0.442	0.746	0.512	0.425	-0.011	-0.034	0.017

Note: OI – items under Organizational Identification; TI – items under Turnover Intention

to facilitate newcomers' learning and more importantly to assist the newcomers in becoming members of the organization (Klein et al 2015; Dutton et al. 1994). The Gen Y wants to evolve, to learn and to know "how" and "why" (Argiro et al. 2018) and hence, learning needs are highly valued by Gen Y and they are more prone to stay in the organization if their learning needs are fulfilled (Zaharah Othman et al. 2020).

The current study has highlighted the salient role of onboarding program as initiative undertaken by the organization to provide learning experience and to socially integrate the newcomers. In the onboarding program, the newcomers who at first experience uncertainty about their jobs, feel isolated and lost (Bauer & Erdogan 2012), are provided with relevant information about the organization and are placed at the various department to learn about the jobs. The newcomers also will be informed by the Human Resource about the organizational policies and culture (Klein & Heuser 2008). This practice will make them understand their work environment better and also increase their self-efficacy (Klein & Heuser 2008; Klein & Polin 2012). In addition, the training that the newcomers have attended during the onboarding program enables them to learn about their new roles and task effectively (Klein et al. 2015). Once the newcomers feel comfortable and knowledgeable about their new working environment and gain better role clarity, this will lead

to proximal outcome such as social integration (Bauer & Erdogan 2012). Social integration such as cooperation and friendship among the newcomers (Ashforth & Mael 1989) that are formed during onboarding program will create a sense of belonging that lead to organizational identification. The strong identification with the organization helps the newcomers to form their sense of self as organizational members.

Second, the result indicated the significant role of organizational identification in engaging and maintaining the newcomers at the workplace. At the empirical level, this result was in line with previous studies, which found that a high degree of organisation identification among employees presented a negative correlation with turnover intentions (Ramdani et al. 2013; Riketta 2005; Schuh et al. 2016). Organisational identification is driven by emotion, which indicates a strong emotional connection between the workers and the company due to the newcomers' transition from out-group to the in-group in their new organisation (Robinson & Morrison 2000). This condition develops a bonding emotion among the employees, which consequently established stronger emotional attachment towards the organisations and creates a sense of belonging and pride (Liu et al. 2016). However, if it is poorly defined and communicated, the clarity in the organization becomes ambiguous. When the newcomers particularly Gen

Y expectations are not met, they tend to feel isolated and disengaged with the organization. Therefore, it is important for them to perceive themselves as consistent with the interests and values of the companies and gain self-concepts in line with the organisational membership (Bao & Zhong 2019). As for the newcomers with a strong identification with the company, their thoughts and actions would be based on the norms and values of the company due to the incorporation of these standards into their self-concepts (Gautam et al. 2004). When they self-identified themselves with the organization, it could enhance the internalization of organizational values and belief (Ashform & Maek 1989) which create feeling of important among them (Galvin et al. 2015). The possibility for the newcomers to withdraw would decrease upon their identification with the company (Tse et al. 2013; Kumar & Singh 2013). In this case, we could conclude that organisational identification reduces turnover intentions among newcomers at the workplace.

This research has made contributions to the turnover literature by building a theoretical model to understand the antecedents of onboarding programmes as organisational socialisation mechanisms in influencing organisational identification and turnover intention. Specifically, this study extends the uncertainty reduction theory by explaining the important role of organizational socialization program such as onboarding that reduces the uncertainty face by the newcomers via promoting knowledge and social integration among them. This study suggest that emphasizing the socialization mechanism can make newcomers feel comfortable, knowledgeable about their job and the organization, sense of belonging and social acceptance in their new work environment. In this respect, the new comers will develop strong identification with the organization. The current study also extends social identity theory via the introduction of organizational identification as an important mediating element that can change employees' behaviors (Tajfel 1972). This study emphasized on the important role of organizational identification as it may invoke a psychological process particularly in regards to feeling and cognition when inividual's self-identify becomes interweaved with the organization's identity (Cole & Bruch 2006; van Knippenberg & Sleebos 2006). Consequently, this leads to long term committed relationship between newcomers and their organization which reduces turnover intentions among the newcomers.

For practical implication, the results of this study propose feasible ideas to be pursued by the management and human resource practitioners. In this competitive environment, it is highly important for companies to retain their newly recruited employees because recruitment and selection is not only time consuming but also involves high cost to the organization. First, the human resource management must create a well thought and effective onboarding program to promote a better socialization of newcomers. This research has proven that organizational socialization program such as onboarding promotes the development of organisational identification among newcomers which later could retain them at the workplace. Second, the management need to emphasize on the development of organizational identification. This can be done by adopting and inculcating a family-like culture to ensure the employees see and relate themselves with the organization and feel part of the "family" and a sense of belongingness which subsequently identify themselves with the organization. This not only will make them attach to the organization but also may make them want to remain in the organization.

LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is using a cross-sectional method for collecting data in which the researcher collected the data at single point of time. Since this study look into turnover of newcomers using turnover intention which is the perception of the newcomers whether wanted to remain in the organization or not therefore a cross-section method was deemed to be appropriate. However, the weakness of using this method is that organizational identification needs time to evolve. As the data were gathered using single point in time, this study was unable to establish the direction of causality (Ayob 2018; Zangirolami-Raimundo 2018). In other words, it might be concluded that, over time, effective onboarding program does not have a stronger effect on organizational identification and turnover intention. Hence, future research should embark into a longitudinal research design to account for the required time-based elements in understanding this relationship.

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