The Influence of Career Adaptability and Career Commitment to Minimize Intention to Leave Among ICT Professionals

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ABSTRACT
This research measures career adaptability among Malaysian ICT professionals using career adaptabilities scale (CAAS). Career adaptability were analyzed for direct relationships with career commitment and intention to leave. Career commitment was also tested as mediator between career adaptability and intention to leave. Samples consist of 393 ICT professionals and data was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results showed that career adaptability has positive influence on career commitment and negative influence on intention to leave. Career commitment was negatively related to intention to leave and it mediates the relationship between career adaptability and intention to leave. In conclusions, intention to leave among Malaysian ICT professionals are due to their career adaptability and career commitment.

KEYWORDS
Career Adaptability, Career Commitment, ICT Professionals, Intention to Leave

1. INTRODUCTION
Studies on intention to leave receive great attention among researchers in relation to employees’ retention. This may be due to possible impact after having the thought of leaving such as the increase of absenteeism and the possibility of having lower work engagement which occurs before the actual act of leaving (Kivimaki et al., 2007). In relation to that, turnover rates especially in information and communication technology (ICT) industry reportedly to be high (Malaysia Employer Federation, 2012). Skills shortage is forecasted due to the imbalance growths between technology and skills development (McLaughlin et al., 2012; MDec & Synovate, 2011). The growth of technology development is much faster than the growth of skills in human capital. This could lead to massive shortage of skill supplies that can comply to support future technologies development especially in building the capability for Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) (Imran, Salisu, Aslam, Iqbal, & Hameed, 2019). In Malaysia, although ICT development are getting wider and greater the number of students taking ICT related courses in higher educational institutions are much lower now as compare to the years in early 2000s (Wong, 2010). In relation to that, number of ICT graduates who work in ICT industry are also decreasing (Rajendran & Zawawi, 2019). One reason could be related to the nature

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of the job itself, which are not attractive for ‘Generation Y’. They associated ICT field as a career with long work hours and not a famous-related job (Goh, 2012). Apart from that, the rise of high turnover rates among Malaysian ICT professionals is also a serious issue (Hassan, Juhdi, & Ali, 2019; Malaysia Employer Federation, 2012). In a more worrying situation, the ICT professionals not only have the tendencies to leave the organization, they also leave the ICT career and work in a different career field (JobStreet.com, 2010; Omar & Noordin, 2013). Therefore, this research assessed the factors of intention to leave the organization in order to reduce the risk of insufficient skill supplies in ICT industry. Preventive actions can be carried out through enhancing and/or discouraging the factors that might influence such thought of leaving.

This study is based on the career construction theory. The theory asserts that individuals build their careers by imposing meaning on their vocational behavior and occupational experiences (Savickas, 2005). One of major components in career construction theory is career adaptability. According to career construction theory (Savickas, 2013), career adaptability is adaptability resources that may influence constructs relating to adapting responses and adaptation results (Johnston, 2018; Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). Adaptation results previously were connected with the work and career success such as career satisfaction (Chan & Mai, 2015), organization commitment and turnover intentions (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005), work related engagement (Merino-Tejedor, Hontargas, & Boada-Grau, 2016), as well as subjective well-being (Maggiori, Johnston, Krings, Massoudi, & Rossier, 2013). Conceptualized as adapting responses, Hirschi et al. (2015) measured career planning, career exploration, career decision-making difficulties, and occupational self-efficacy beliefs as the outcome for career adaptability. Recent meta-analysis study (Rudolph et al., 2017) found that other variables that were assessed as adapting responses are career exploration (Li, Hou, & Feng, 2013), and career decision-making self-efficacy (Duffy, Douglass, & Autin, 2015; Guan et al., 2016). It was assumed in the career construction model of adaptation that adapting responses may also mediates the relationship between career adaptability as the adapting resources with the constructs that falls under adaptation results such as turnover intentions, engagement, and subjective well-being (Rudolph et al., 2017; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Career adaptability being the resource that promotes independency found to be inconsistently to have both negative (Chan & Mai, 2015; Ferreira, Coetzee, & Masenge, 2013; Omar & Noordin, 2013; Zhu, Cai, Buchtel, & Guan, 2019) as well as positive relationship to individual’s intention to leave (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005; Yu & Zheng, 2013). Such inconsistencies raise the needs to further explore career adaptability assessments in relation to intention to leave as well as other potential factors and outcomes.

There are issues that still remain which opens for further empirical elaborations in relation to the role of various adaptive capacities, adaptability resources, adapting responses, and adaptation results, in career development and vocational behavior studies (Johnston, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017). Thus, this research intends to answer the following two research questions. (1) Whether there is any relationship between career adaptability (adapting resources), career commitment (adapting responses) and intention to leave (adaptation results) and (2) whether the uses for career adapt-ability scales (CAAS) within Malaysian professional employees’ work context is valid and reliable. To add, this research contributes to current literature in two ways. First, to test whether career commitment can be the outcome for career adaptability and as mediator for career adaptability and intention to leave. Second, this research answered the call to further examine the validity for CAAS among international employees (Porfeli & Savickas, 2012). Moreover, Career Adapt-Ability Scale (CAAS) was validated by previous studies as a psychometrically sound instrument that assesses career adaptability. Nevertheless, Savickas and Porfeli (2012) called for further research on the instrument’s validity and nomological net (Zacher, 2014). Therefore, this research aims to examine the validity of CAAS for Malaysian employees.