

# Turnover Intention among Employees in the Restaurant Industry: A Lesson Learned from Covid-19 Pandemic

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## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted the restaurant industry and its employees. There is no questions that during COVID-19 it was very challenging times for both, employers and employees. During this time, many restaurants faced a huge loss of sales, resulting in many of them being cash strapped and, as a result, unable to fulfil their employee commitments. By no fault of theirs, employees are often faced with work insecurities. As their employers are pushed into a retrenchment exercise to save their company, many employees have had to accept a pay cut or have faced the risk of losing their jobs. This study aimed to examine potential factors that contribute towards the turnover intent among restaurant employees in restaurant industry during COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, this study also identified the most influential factors for turnover intent in restaurant industry. Furthermore, this study also to examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and turnover intent. The factors that used to conduct this study were job satisfaction, job engagement, and job insecurity. This study used quantitative approach through an online self-administered survey. Questionnaires were distributed through an online platform and there were only 125 valid questionnaires returned for further analysis. Data obtained were analysed by using Statistic Packages for Social Science (SPSS) latest version. Based on the analysis, job satisfaction (0.349) was the most influential factor of turnover intent and followed by job insecurities (0.294). Meanwhile, job engagement (0.066) factor did not significantly influence the turnover intent among the restaurant employees in this industry. Findings of this study intended to help managers or the strategic management division of the organisation identify

factors that contribute to employee turnover intentions during pandemics and develop tactical solutions to deal with them in the future, should an unanticipated pandemic occur again. Although it is difficult to predict the future, it is crucial that we utilise what we learn from what had happened to direct our future.

**Keywords:** Restaurant Employees, Turnover Intent, Job Satisfaction, Job Engagement, Job Insecurity, Covid-19 Pandemic

## **Introduction**

The first 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) detected was in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. On 11th March 2019, The World Health Organization (WHO) had declared the pandemic to the world. Number of COVID-19 cases in Malaysia has reached 1.26 million with 10 749 total death cases (Ministry of Health, 2021). In attempt to curb the spread of the virus, the first of a partial lockdown called the Movement Control Order (MCO) was call on March 19, 2020. This was followed by the Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) which was end on 9 June 2020. Subsequently, the Prime Minister of Malaysia announced that the CMCO ended and replaced with the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) which took effect from June 10, 2020 until August 31, 2020 with more lenient restrictions. However, due to the increasing number of cases every day, Malaysia todays had reach up to the MCO 3.0 that end on 28th June 2021. Followed by the rising number of death and number of cases day by day, Malaysian had been vaccinated under the Malaysia's National COVID-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK) which have three phases. According to the Special Committee for Ensuring Access to COVID-19 Vaccine Supply's statistics, there are 528 vaccination centres in Malaysia with 15,248,934 Malaysians registered for vaccination, of which 4,086,087 are vaccinated.

In particular, before the vaccination programme, the restaurant industry has endured dramatic revenue losses as occupancy rates have fallen primarily due to social distancing and the drastic decrease in the number of customers. In this sector, the restaurant industry suffered a job shock with a drastic increase in the number of workers and a dramatic jump in temporary leave numbers. Thus, jobs instability in these sectors, which has been enhanced by the virus, thus presents an urgent threat to organizational efficiency and profitability, an unprecedented situation that requires the hospitality industry to look for a number of solutions (Carnevale and Hatak, 2020). It is obvious that, during these pandemics, there is greatest decline in staff numbers was reported in the hospitality sector – hotels and restaurants, while even at the beginning of the pandemic about 65% of tourism businesses reported difficulties in paying invoices and reported liquidity problems. As a result of the crisis, millions of people in hospitality sector have already lost their jobs and have been thrown into the poverty abyss (Jones, Comfort, 2020) while others were experiencing extremely high levels of job insecurity and physical and psychological risks associated with it (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020). Based on the previous study, two factors namely available job alternatives; and work-life balance have significant impact on employee turnover (Arshad, H., & Puteh, F., 2015). Moreover, quitting behaviour of adolescent workers in the restaurant industry, that employees were more likely to leave if they saw their peers quitting. However, the turnover intent has a relationship between antecedents. As the hospitality industry is known for its lack of job resources, emotional labor, and exceptionally high turnover rates compared to other industries, major antecedents and the magnitude of their effects on turnover may be different from those in the general industry context. Identifying such differences may lead to effective strategies to manage human resources in the hospitality industry (Holtom et al., 2018; Park and Min, 2020).

The main objectives of this present study were therefore to address these limitations by correlating factors in the hospitality literature on turnover intent. More specifically, by correlating the job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement with turnover intent. There were many research regarding the factors of turnover intent, and most researchers include the work life balance would affect the job satisfaction which the main factors of turnover intent. However, the researchers have mixed finding the factors that lead to turnover intent which are still not clearly verified yet in the restaurant industry. Therefore, this study was conducted in order to emphasize the factors and the development retention strategies for hospitality organizations. This study has the following objectives:

- (1) To examine potential factors that contribute to turnover intent among employees in the restaurant industry
- (2) To identify the most influential factors that influence turnover intent among employees in the restaurant industry
- (3) To examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and turnover intent

## **Literature Review**

### **Turnover intention in the hospitality industry**

Turnover intention is expressed as employee's awareness or thoughts about resigning the job (Park et al., 2020). Prior studies have found various factors (e.g., job satisfaction, work-life balance, organizational support, job insecurity, etc.) that influence employee turnover and turnover intention across the disciplines (e.g., Marjan Fayyazi and Farshad Aslani, 2015; Carol Dole and Richard G. Schroeder, 2001; D. Demirovic Bajrami et al., 2020). Furthermore, our industry continues to hold one of the greatest turnover rates across its segments primarily due to low wages, shift schedules, and social perception of entry-level jobs (Cho et al., 2009). Despite the amount of research focused on turnover, the issue still continues to dominate as a major problem within the hospitality industry (Tracey and Hinkin, 2008, Woods, 2001). A meta-analysis by Park and Min (2020) stated due to its unique industry characteristics, much hospitality research has investigated turnover intention and suggested the factors that may give a greater influence on hospitality employees' turnover intention, however, major factors of turnover intention that have been identified such as job satisfaction, job engagement, and satisfaction with work itself. The effects of generational characteristics on jobs have been studied with a focus on job-related factors, such as work-related values, attitudes, and preferences in an organizational context, and such effects are considered significant variables in an organization (Schuman and Scott, 1989; Park and Gursoy, 2012; Goh and Jie, 2019; H.S. Jung et al., 2021). As the hospitality industry is known for its lack of job resources, emotional labor, and exceptionally high turnover rates compared to other industries, major antecedents and the magnitude of their effects on turnover may be different from those in the general industry context. Besides, compared to other industries, the hospitality industry is often characterized by long work hours, low pay, and frequent interactions with customers and other team members (Kim, 2008).

In this research, researchers focused on the most frequently used factors that are job satisfaction, job insecurity, and job engagement. Table 1 provides the definitions of each factor.

Table 1

*Definition of factors*

| Factor           | Definition  |
|------------------|---|
| Job satisfaction | An individual's feelings toward work role or position (Harrison et al., 2006).  |
| Job insecurity   | An employee's fear of losing their job and being unemployed (De Witte, 1999).   |
| Job engagement   | A positive and fulfilling state that is characterized by the vigor, and absorption of employees (Schaufeli et al., 2002). |

**Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction can affect a person's physical health, mental health and also social life of people (Minaya, 2016). Those persons who are satisfied with their jobs have the same attitude with their lives and experienced happiness. While satisfied workers tend to perform better at their jobs and this would lead to increase job security in the organizations for a sustainable period of years, dissatisfied workers would experience intentions of leaving from working places. In addition, satisfied workers show positive attitude with customers who would perceive this behaviour and as an outcome customer will feel more satisfied and loyal to the company (Teck-Hong & Waheed, 2011).

**Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover intent**

Many researchers have shown that job satisfaction has a negative relationship with an employee's intention to leave an organization. There are two factors that cause job satisfaction. Based on Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, employees are under the influence of that job satisfaction (motivators) and job dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). The motivators factors are achievement, working conditions, responsibility, advancement, growth and work itself while hygiene factors are related to company policies, supervision, salary and job insecurity (Aziri, 2011). After reviewing research from previous studies, most factors that influence job satisfaction were recognition, supervisor, co-workers and salary. However, job satisfaction was one of determinant of turnover. Satisfaction is the perception about a job or job situation; in contrast, dissatisfaction can influence employee intention to quit. Thus, a positive appreciation can contribute to the employee's intention to stay (Dorance, 2014).

**Job insecurity**

Job insecurity was described as one of the most stressful moments in the career of every employee (Reisel et al., 2010). Job insecurity accelerated and encouraged development of turnover intentions since employees saw it as one of the effective ways to deal with the stress caused by not knowing whether they would keep their job (Artz, Kaya, 2014). Job insecurity and turnover intentions were positively related, showing that the more employees felt insecure about keeping their current job, the more they would think about leaving the organization (Lee, Jeong, 2017). Shropshire and Kadlec (2012) and Akgunduz and Eryilmaz (2018) highlighted that job insecurity and burnout were the strongest factors that caused the development of turnover intentions in information technology and hospitality sectors and even made employees think about changing careers (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020).

Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the state of global panic that was caused by the threat of the disease spreading, was accompanied by the introduction of strict safety measures, causing anxiety and frustration (Mao et al., 2020), especially among the workers in the service-providing sector. Hence, it can be argued that COVID-19 is highly dangerous for an employee's mental health and may trigger financial stress (Sarwar et al., 2021)

### **Relationship between Job insecurity and Turnover Intent**

There were many studies about job insecurity and turnover intent. Arnold and Feldman (1982) reported that job insecurity was one of potential cause of increasing employee turnover intent. Stiglbauer et al., (2012) recognized that job insecurity raises the intent of employee turnover and noted that it is critical to reduce the management of stress caused by job insecurity. Moreover, job insecurity and turnover intent can have a particularly strong relationship, as reported by Mauno et al., (2013) and can be significant in decreasing job insecurity, which could decrease turnover intent. Lee and Jeong (2017) have also argued that job insecurity has a clear connection with the intention of turnover. Karatepe et al., (2020) added that job insecurity increases the tendency to leave early and arrive late for work.

### **Job engagement**

Work engagement is a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). In general, high job engagement means having a positive mental state on the job, and employees with high job engagement can be a particularly important variable in performance because they improve organizational effectiveness, create more productive work environments, and reduce employee turnover (Caplan and Whitemore, 2013). Many studies have found that higher engagement induces lower turnover intent and that engagement is the most influential psychological variable in reducing the turnover of employees (Jones and Harter, 2005; Rafiq et al., 2019; Shin and Jeung, 2019). Absorbed employees are volitionally immersed into and display an intense focus on their work so much that detaching from it becomes difficult; vigorous employees possess a considerate reserve of energy and mental resources that they do not withhold while performing their respective tasks, even much when facing adversity; dedicated employees feel enthused, proud and inspired by their work, and usually express a sense of significance towards their tasks.

### **Relationship between job engagement and turnover intent**

Many studies have found that higher engagement induces lower turnover intent and that engagement is the most influential psychological variable in reducing the turnover of employees (Jones and Harter, 2005; Rafiq et al., 2019; Shin and Jeung, 2019). According to Hughes and Rog (2008), employee behaviors are the most important factor for organizational success, and employees who are actively engaged in their job with enthusiasm have relatively low intent to leave their current organizations. Erdil and Muceldili (2014) provided empirical evidence showing that job engagement is sufficiently and closely related to reducing employee turnover intent, and Sibiya et al. (2014) noted that employee engagement plays an important role in reducing turnover intent. Similarly, Timms et al., (2015) found that the turnover intent of employees can be reduced by creating a work environment that encourages job engagement, and Lu et al. (2016) stated that employee engagement can increase personal satisfaction and thereby reduce turnover intent, even under a variety of hardships.

## **Methodology**

This research employed quantitative approach and sample of this study obtained by applying convenience sampling design. The sample of this research consists of employees' population from restaurant industry within Klang Valley area. This study employed a convenient approach and questionnaires were distributed conveniently by using an online platform to employees who were working at quick service restaurant and the casual dining restaurant within Klang Valley area. Data was gathered online through social media platforms including WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram to speed up the process. Using a snowball sample strategy, the researchers first shared the survey link with close friends and family before extending it to more contacts. The link to the Google form was provided to respondents through the internet platform so they were able to complete the questionnaire. Respondents were local or Malaysian and have at least worked in restaurant industry. After screening and analyzed the data, finally, a total 125 questionnaires were usable and analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 26.

## **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic analysis for the respondents consists of gender, age, race, marital status, highest education level, current position, and working experience in the restaurant industry, current department, and the average working hours per day. Based on table 2, the number of male respondents were 68 respondents (54.4%) higher than number of female respondents which were 57 respondents (45.6%). Majority of the respondents were between 20-29 years old. There were 82 respondents (65.6%) followed by the age group of 30-39 years old with the number of the respondent was 25 (20%), for age group less than 20 years old was 15 respondents (12%), and the last age group which is 40-49 years old the number of respondents is 3 (2.4%). Most of the respondents were Malay with 71.2%, followed by Chinese respondents with 14.4%, while Indian respondents were 12.8%. Next, for the marital status question, most of the respondents is single with the number of respondents of 97 (77.6%) followed by the married status respondents are 28 (22.4%) respectively.

For the highest education level category, there are 49 respondents (39.2%) from diploma holder, followed by 34 bachelor's degree respondents (27.2%), Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) were 25 respondents (20%), certificate holder (8.8%), and others education (8.8%) respectively. Basically, major of respondents participated in this study were full time crew (68.8%) followed by 30 respondents (24%) as part time crew. There were also others position like the casual crew with the number of respondents only 9 staff (7.2%).

For working experience in food service industry category, 33 respondents (26.4%) have 2-4 years of working experience, 29 (23.2%) respondents with 1-2 years of working experience, 27 (21.6%) respondents with 6-12 months of working experience, 22 (17.6%) respondents have less than 6 months working experience, 7 (5.6%) respondents with 5-7 years of working experience and 7 (5.6%) respondents with 8 years and above of working experience. Next, most of the respondents were from non-managerial line with the numbers of the respondents was 81 (64.8%) and for the managerial line was 44 respondents (35.2%). In this study, majority of the employee average working hours were about 8 hours a day with 91 respondents (72.8%) followed by 10 hours with 18 respondents (14.4%), 6 hours with 9 (7.2%) respondents, and more than 10 hours with 7 (5.6%) respondents respectively.

**Table 2.***Demographic Profile of The Respondents*

| Variables                                   | Categories                              | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---------------|----------------|
| Gender                                      | Male                                    | 68            | 54.4           |
|   | Female                                  | 57            | 45.6           |
| Age   | Less than 20 years old                  | 15            | 12.0           |
|   | 20-29 years old                         | 82            | 65.6           |
|   | 30-39 years old                         | 25            | 20.0           |
|   | 40-49 years old                         | 3             | 3.0            |
|   | 50 years old and above                  | 0             | 0.0            |
| Race  | Malay                                   | 89            | 71.2           |
|   | Chinese                                 | 18            | 14.4           |
|   | Indian                                  | 16            | 12.8           |
|   | Others                                  | 2             | 1.6            |
| Marital status                              | Single                                  | 97            | 77.6           |
|   | Married                                 | 28            | 22.4           |
|   | Others                                  | 0             | 0.0            |
| Highest education level                     | Malaysia Certificate of Education (SPM) | 25            | 20.0           |
|   | Certificate                             | 11            | 8.8            |
|   | Diploma                                 | 49            | 39.2           |
|   | Bachelor's degree                       | 34            | 27.2           |
|   | Master's degree                         | 0             | 0              |
|   | Others                                  | 6             | 8.8            |
| Current position                            | Full time                               | 86            | 68.8           |
|   | Part time                               | 30            | 24.0           |
|   | Others                                  | 9             | 7.2            |
| Working experience in food service industry | Less than 6 months                      | 22            | 17.6           |
|   | 6-12 months                             | 27            | 21.6           |
|   | 1-2 years                               | 29            | 23.2           |
|   | 2-4 years                               | 33            | 26.4           |
|   | 5-7 years                               | 7             | 5.6            |
|   | 8 years and above                       | 7             | 5.6            |
| Average working hours (daily)               | 4 hours                                 | 0             | 0              |
|   | 6 hours                                 | 9             | 7.2            |
|   | 8 hours                                 | 91            | 72.8           |
|   | 10 hours                                | 18            | 14.4           |
|   | More than 10 hours                      | 7             | 5.6            |

**Reliability Analysis**

Based on the table 3 below, the reliability analysis for pilot study and actual study were shown. All variables were reliable and valid for further analysis. For the pilot study result, the dependent variable of this study which is employees' turnover intent, the value was 0.958. As for the independent variables, the Cronbach Alpha value for job satisfaction was 0.790, job insecurity was 0.783, and job engagement was 0.825. The reliability analysis for actual data collection was also reliable with dependent variable value 0.930. Then followed by the

Cronbach Alpha value for job satisfaction 0.653, job insecurity 0.876, and job engagement 0.847.

**Table 3:***Result for Reliability Analysis*

| Types of Variables                                      | Total Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha Values for Pilot Study | Cronbach's Alpha Values for Actual Data Collection |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| <b>Dependent Variable</b><br>Employees' Turnover Intent | 7                     | 0.958                                   | 0.930  |
| <b>Independent Variable</b><br>Job satisfaction         | 8                     | 0.790                                   | 0.653  |
| Job insecurity  | 8                     | 0.783                                   | 0.876  |
| Job engagement  | 8                     | 0.825                                   | 0.847  |

#### Identification of Possible Factors Influencing Turnover Intention Among Employees During COVID-19 Pandemic

Descriptive statistics analysis was used to identify possible factors influence turnover intention among employees. Based on result below, the mean score for dependent variable was 3.34 which indicated from moderate to agreement level. Additionally, all the three independent variables score was from moderate and agree level. Thus, this result implied that most employees agreed that identified factors could possibly influence their intention to leave the restaurants during COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 4.***Descriptive Statistic for All Variables*

|   | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|------|----------------|
| <b>Dependent Variables</b><br>Employee Turnover Intention | 3.34 | 0.58           |
| <b>Independent Variables</b><br>Job Satisfaction          | 3.91 | 0.67           |
| Job Insecurity  | 3.69 | 0.87           |
| Job Engagement  | 3.92 | 0.57           |

\* 1=strongly not agree, 2=not agree, 3=moderate, 4=agree, 5 =strongly agree

#### Relationship Between Identified Variables and Employee's turnover Intention During COVID-19 Pandemic

Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between identified variables and employees' intention to leave during COVID-19 pandemic. Table 7 shows that the correlation of each independent variable tested in this research which are job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement were significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). As the result shows that value indicates that there was a statistically significant correlation between the job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement towards turnover intent among restaurant employee industry since the value of significance (2-tailed) are less than

0.05. Additionally, the Pearson's  $r$  value between turnover intent and the job satisfaction show that there is positive correlation since the value of Pearson's  $r$  is 0.602 which stated as strong relationship. Next, the Pearson Correlation  $r$  between turnover intent and the job insecurity is 0.580 and this also showed positive correlation. Lastly, the Pearson's  $r$  value between the turnover intent and job engagement is 0.364 which moderate relationship between the variables. This value shows that there is positive correlation between the dependent variables and independent variable. Hence, since the value of Pearson's  $r$  is closed to 1, it shown that there is strong positive relationship between variables. Moreover, the Pearson's Correlation  $r$  value between turnover intent and job insecurity is 0.580 which indicated that there is positive correlation between those variables. Thus, there is strong positive relation between the turnover intent and job insecurity since the value is close to 1.

**Table 5.***Table of Pearson Correlation*

|                    |                     | Turnover Intention | Job Satisfaction | Job Insecurity | Job Engagement |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Turnover Intention | Pearson Correlation | 1                  | .602**           | .580**         | .364**         |
|                    | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                    | .000             | .000           | .000           |
|                    | N                   | 125                | 125              | 125            | 125            |
| Job Satisfaction   | Pearson Correlation | .602**             | 1                | .747**         | .517**         |
|                    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000               |                  | .000           | .000           |
|                    | N                   | 125                | 125              | 125            | 125            |
| Job Insecurity     | Pearson Correlation | .580**             | .747**           | 1              | .404**         |
|                    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000               | .000             |                | .000           |
|                    | N                   | 125                | 125              | 125            | 125            |
| Job Engagement     | Pearson Correlation | .364**             | .517**           | .404**         | 1              |
|                    | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000               | .000             | .000           |                |
|                    | N                   | 125                | 125              | 125            | 125            |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Identification of The Most Influential Factors That Influence Employees' Turnover Intention During COVID-19 Pandemic

Additionally, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to identify the most important factors influencing turnover intention among employees during the COVID-19 and to predict factors linked to turnover intention. Table 6 below shows the summary of regression analysis in this study. Based on the analysed data, the R Square ( $R^2$ ) was 0.404. The result shows that 40.4% of variance in turnover intention was explained by the independent variables used in this study which are job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement.

**Table 6.***Multiple Linear Regression of Studied Variables (Model Summary)*

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .636 <sup>a</sup> | .404     | .389              | .45464                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Engagement, Job Insecurity, Job Satisfaction

Based on table 7, three independent variables were highlighted in determining the turnover intention towards restaurant employees during COVID-19 pandemic. According to the results, the variables of the job satisfaction and job insecurity had a significant  $t$  value of 0.002 and 0.006 respectively. This showing the values were less than the acceptable significant  $t$  value of 0.05. since the sig- $t$  value obtained is 0.002 and  $0.006 \leq 0.05$ , the result indicated that the job satisfaction and job insecurity were significant predictors that influence the turnover intention among the restaurant employees during this pandemic. On the other hand, the sig- $t$  value for the job engagement is 0.799 shows this variable was not significantly determinant to the turnover intent, since the sig- $t$  value obtained and 0.799 is greater than the acceptable significant  $t$  value of 0.05. Thus, the result had shown that the influential predictors of the turnover intent was the job satisfaction and job insecurity due to less than 0.05; meanwhile, for the predictor job engagement was not the factor that contributed toward the turnover intent among the restaurant employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 7.***Result of Standard Multiple Regression Analysis on Possible Factors of Turnover Intent (Coefficient)*

| Model |                  | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T     | Sig. |
|-------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|       |                  | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1     | (Constant)       | 1.162                       | .304       |                           | 3.829 | .000 |
|       | Job Satisfaction | .305                        | .099       | .349                      | 3.093 | .002 |
|       | Job Insecurity   | .196                        | .070       | .294                      | 2.780 | .006 |
|       | Job Engagement   | .066                        | .083       | .066                      | .799  | .426 |

Predictors: Job satisfaction ( $t = 3.093$ , sig- $t = 0.002$ ); Job insecurity ( $t = 2.780$ , sig- $t = 0.006$ )  
Job engagement ( $t = 0.799$ , sig- $t = 0.426$ )

Table 8 below shows that the data analysed provide the information about the levels of variability within a regression model and to test the significance between variables. The result shows that the  $p$ -value is less 0.05 and indicates that a statistically significant relationship exists between the turnover intent and factors that influence it. The regression model fits the data well since,  $F$  value is 27.359, and sig- $F$  value is 0.000. To sum up, the  $R$  value is 0.636 which signifies strong relationship between the turnover intention and job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement.  $R^2$  value is 0.404 that showing 40.4% variance in the turnover intention is explained by job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement. Thus, from the three independent variables, job satisfaction  $t$  is 3.093 and job insecurity  $t$  is 2.780 which both sig- $t$  values are 0.002 and  $0.006 \leq 0.05$  respectively significantly influence the turnover intent. From the standardized coefficient value, job satisfaction has the strongest impact on turnover intention, followed by job insecurity and job engagement.

**Table 8.***Result of Multiple Linear Regression of ANOVA Analysis*

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 16.965         | 3   | 5.655       | 27.359 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 25.011         | 121 | .207        |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 41.976         | 124 |             |        |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Engagement, Job Insecurity, Job Satisfaction

Furthermore, Independent T-Test was performed to measure the relationship between demographic factors and turnover intent. Based on the table 9 below, the data for turnover intent shows the mean score for the male (3.4790) is higher than then mean score for female (3.1679). The data clearly stated that male employees in the restaurant industry were likely to have a degree of agreement toward turnover intent. Hence there was a significant difference in the mean score turnover intent for male and female, gender; since the sig-t value  $.003 < .05$ . Next, for the managerial and non-managerial department, the mean score of non-managerial department (3.3616) was higher than the mean score of managerial departments (3.2922). This was determined that the non-managerial departments have higher levels of agreement in turnover intent. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean score turnover intent between both groups, department; since the sig-t value  $.0527 > .05$ . Lastly, for the single and married, the mean score of married (3.5102) is higher than the mean score for single group (3.2872). Despite, this was determined that married employee or those with family have higher levels of agreement in turnover intent during this pandemic. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean score turnover intent between single and married groups; Marital Status, since the sig-t value is  $.074 > .05$ .

**Table 9.***Independent T-Test for Turnover Intent*

|                 | Group          | N  | Mean   | Std. Deviation | T- test for Equality of Means |        |     |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|----|--------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------|-----|-----------------|
|                 |                |    |        |                | Sig-F                         | t      | Df  | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Turnover Intent | Male           | 68 | 3.479  | .52693         | .084                          | 3.077  | 123 | .003            |
|                 | Female         | 57 | 3.1679 | .60315         |                               |        |     |                 |
|                 | Managerial     | 44 | 3.2922 | .66004         | .081                          | -.635  | 123 | .527            |
|                 | Non-Managerial | 81 | 3.3616 | .53742         |                               |        |     |                 |
|                 | Single         | 97 | 3.2872 | .54104         | .332                          | -1.803 | 123 | .074            |
|                 | Married        | 28 | 3.5102 | .68834         |                               |        |     |                 |

Note: sig-t &lt;0.05

**Discussion and conclusion**

Overall, findings of this study showed that respondents agreed that the job satisfaction, job insecurity, and job engagement predicted variables have a substantial impact on employees' turnover intention. The results of the multiple regression analysis showed that these three variables tested accounted for about 40.4% of the variance in the restaurants outlets. As a result, it is possible to emphasise these three factors because identified factors could possibly influence employee's intention to leave the restaurants during COVID-19 pandemic.

To answer research question one, a Pearson's Correlation Analysis was done to determine the factors that influence the turnover intent among employees of the restaurant industry. Based on the results, findings of the correlation analysis found that all three variables: job satisfaction, job insecurity, and job engagement were statistically significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed) turnover intent. As the results shows that the value for independent variables was .000 which are less than .05. Next, the Pearson's Correlation  $r$  value between the turnover intent and job satisfaction is .602.

Other than that, Descriptive analysis also had been done to answer the research question one. Descriptive Analysis was done for all variables used in this study which are turnover intent, job satisfaction, job insecurity and job engagement. Data obtained from this analysis stated that turnover intent possesses the mean score of 3.34. which means, the respondents participated in this study had intention to turnover intent in their current job from moderate to agree with the scale between 3 to 4. Meanwhile data showed that the highest means score among the independent variables possess by variable job engagement with the mean score of 3.92 followed by job satisfaction and job insecurity which the mean score are 3.91 and 3.69 respectively. Hence, based on all the independent variables' mean score the level of the factors influence turnover intent among restaurant employee in restaurant industry is between moderate and agree with the scale 3 to 4.

To answer research question two, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was carried out to determine the most influential factors that influence turnover intent among restaurant employees in the restaurant industry. Results obtained from the analysis shown that job satisfaction is the most influential factor of turnover intent. Based on the questionnaire, the intrinsic job satisfaction had been done. In the previous study, job satisfaction can be classified as extrinsic job satisfaction and intrinsic job satisfaction. Findings revealed intrinsic motives are most often obscured by the more 'materialistic' extrinsic job traits which seem to have a determining role influencing both the overall job satisfaction and turnover intention (Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous, 2014).

Finally, to answer research question three, Independent T-test, One-way ANOVA analysis had been done to determine how did the gender, working department, marital status and position will influence the restaurant employee to have turnover intention.

**The influence of gender**

For the Independent T-test analysis male respondents had achieved 3.4790 while female respondents mean score achieved 3.1679. Result obtained from the analysis show that the male respondents are more toward turnover intent according to Likert scale mean score. However, there is significant difference in turnover intent for male and female gender since the  $p$  value  $.003 < .05$ . However, this finding is contradicted with the finding which found females have higher turnover intention than males (Emiroğlu, Akova, & Tanrıverdi, 2015).

**The influence of working department**

For the department, Independent T-test analysis results showed that non managerial departments respondents obtained higher mean scores than managerial department respondents with 3.3616 and 3.2922 mean scores respectively. This shows that the non-managerial departments have higher levels of agreement in turnover intent. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean score turnover intent between both groups, department; since the p value  $.0527 > .05$ . This finding is consistent with the previous study that found employee who have higher position have lower turnover intention compared to people who have lower positions (Abdullah et al., 2010; Radzi et al., 2009).

**The influence of marital status**

For the Independent T-test analysis results stated the highest mean score was perceived by married group respondents. The married group shows the means score of 3.5102 for the turnover intent variable. As the single group of respondents, the mean score is 3.2872 for the turnover intent. Thus, results show that the married group of respondents agree for turnover intention for their work in this situation of pandemic due to avoid anything happened to their family as they go to work later. Consequently, there is no significant difference in the mean score turnover intent between single and married groups since the p value is  $.074 > .05$ . This finding is opposite with the previous finding by the study that concluded single people have a higher turnover intention than married people made by Carbery et al., 2003, Emiroğlu, Akova, & Tanriverdi, 2015 and Cotton and Tuttle, 1986.

**The influence of work position**

One-way ANOVA analysis had been done in order to analyse position group. The findings showed that those with part-time jobs had higher mean scores for turnover intent (3.4571). As for full time employee group (manager, assistant manager and etc) of respondents, the mean score is 3.3106 and for the other group position is 3.1905. Consequently, there was no significant difference in the turnover intent for full time, part time and others position group since the p-value for the analyses was more than  $.05$ . This finding is consistent with previous studies that found people who have higher position have lower turnover intention compared to people who have lower positions. (Abdullah et al., 2010; Radzi et al., 2009).

In summary, theoretical, and managerial implications arise from this study's conclusion. From a theoretical standpoint, this study adds to the body of knowledge by providing an empirical illustration of how these three factors that have been identified impact on employees' intent to quit the restaurant business in Malaysia. Regarding managerial implications, findings of this study intended to help managers, or the strategic management division to highlight variables that contribute to turnover intent among employees during pandemics and develop tactical solutions to deal with them in the future, should an unanticipated pandemic occur again. Even though the future is unpredictable, it is imperative that practitioners use the lessons they have learned from the past to guide the present and future. Furthermore, it is intended that the results of this study can assist in constructing a framework that provides details on the variables that affect employees' intentions to leave their jobs.

**Limitations and recommendations**

The main objective of this study was to identify possible and the influential factor that causes turnover intent among the restaurant employees in restaurant industry. While there is no way to predict the future, learning from the current situation to inform our future is critical. The limitations of this study offer some insight for the future research. First, the results are generally restricted because the samples are limited to Klang Valley restaurant employees which involved mostly quick service restaurant employees and casual service restaurant. Furthermore, the quick service restaurant employees and casual service restaurant were not equally sampled in examining the workload and job duty. Secondly, since this study is cross-sectional, it cannot be extrapolated over time; longitudinal studies and comparative studies at different cultural levels are needed. A problem might arise from the uniqueness of the data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. The other things, this study relied on self-reporting and understanding to measure job satisfaction, job insecurity, engagement, and turnover intent, and thus the respondents might have answered what they think is desirable, depending on their subjective views and the measurement tools. Despite the fact, the MCO restriction had affected the number of respondents of this study since the survey only can be conducted by online platform only.

Recommendations are needed for this research in order to improve the weaknesses that occurred to ensure better research is developed in the future. One of the suggestions offered in this study is to focus the study's target demographic to specific sector. Given that the research location is the Klang Valley and the current study is focused on quick service and casual service restaurants. By focusing the type of restaurant and including the target population, it would be able to generate more effective findings. Besides, this study also recommends future research to apply large sample size. Since, the larger the sample size, the more reliable the result will be obtained and generalised. Large sample size more reliable results with a greater precision will be obtained and it will more closely approximate the population of the employees in restaurant industry. Lastly, other possible variables could be further explored to represent different views, attitude and thoughts on employees' job stress.

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