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The link between training satisfaction, work engagement and turnover intention

Work
engagement
and turnover
intention

407

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the casual relationship between training satisfaction, work engagement (WE) and turnover intention and the mediating role of WE between training satisfaction and turnover intention.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were collected from 409 oil and gas professionals using an email survey questionnaire. Structural equation modelling, using Analysis of Moment Structures (IBM AMOS) 22.0, was performed to test the hypothesized model.

Findings – The results suggest that training satisfaction is significantly positively related to employees' level of WE and is negatively related to turnover intention. The results also reveal that WE mediates the relationship between training satisfaction and turnover intention.

Practical implications – Training has long been thought to play an important role in achieving positive attitudinal and behaviours outcomes among employees. This study reconfirms these ideas and highlights the importance of training satisfaction as being key to achieving greater WE and reducing voluntary turnover. Therefore, the finding of this study have a number of implications for research and human resource development practitioners.

Originality/value – This study makes a significant theoretical contribution to the literature as this is the first study to demonstrate the significance of training satisfaction and the mediating effects of WE in reducing the turnover intention of employees.

Keywords Training satisfaction, HRM practices, Work engagement, Turnover intention, Oil and gas, Malaysia

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The issue of voluntary turnover has been rigorously studied over the past few decades. Empirical evidence indicates that a high rate of voluntary turnover is costly for organizations because it negatively affects organizational effectiveness and success (Han *et al.*, 2016; Holtom *et al.*, 2005; Michell *et al.*, 2001; Rahman and Nas, 2013; Zheng and Lamond, 2010). Losing good employees can negatively affect an organization's competitive advantage, lowering the morale of other staff (SanjeevKumar, 2012), as well as reducing productivity and work quality (Holtom and Burch, 2016; Juhdi *et al.*, 2013). Despite these unfavourable consequences, the voluntary turnover rate across the globe



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remains relatively high. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), 2.8 million quits (i.e. voluntary separations) were documented in the month of November 2015. An international survey of 2,500 business leaders by Deloitte (2014) revealed that employee retention was one of the top challenges facing businesses today. These statistics suggest that voluntary turnover is a global phenomenon that is rapidly becoming a significant barrier to organizations achieving their strategic objectives. Despite the volumes of literature already on the subject, it is clear that we do not yet understand the factors affecting voluntary turnover.

Previous research suggests that high work engagement (WE) leads to lower voluntary turnover (Bailey *et al.*, 2015; Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Shuck *et al.*, 2014). Highly engaged employees exhibit higher quality behaviours and performance (Bechtoldt *et al.*, 2011; Hsieh and Wang, 2015; Muduli *et al.*, 2016). The evidence suggests that having engaged employees results in greater profitability, shareholder returns, productivity and customer satisfaction (Harter *et al.*, 2002; Huang and Su, 2016; Saks and Gruman, 2014). Despite the considerable attention that engagement has received over the past two decades, the research literature indicates a low level of engagement among employees globally (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015; Richman, 2006). For instance, a recent international study conducted by Aon Hewitt (2014) indicates that 39 per cent of employees are not engaged. Significantly, 16 per cent out of 39 per cent employees are actively disengaged (Aon Hewitt, 2014). This engagement gap costs billions of dollars in lost productivity each year (Bates, 2004; Saks and Gruman, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative that researchers investigate new ways that enhance WE.

The findings of previous studies suggest that employee satisfaction with on-the-job training is an important human resource management (HRM) practice for improving employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, user satisfaction, organizational commitment and burnout (Bradley and Lee, 2007; Joung *et al.*, 2010; Latif *et al.*, 2013; Liu, 2007; Msaouel *et al.*, 2010; Schmidt, 2004, 2007). Researchers believe that training can also be a significant predictor of WE and turnover intention (Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Saks, 2006; Shuck *et al.*, 2014). Despite the fact that there are abundance of studies exploring the linkages among training and employee outcomes, few studies to date have investigated the association between training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention.

The purpose of this study is to examine the causal relationship between training satisfaction, WE and employee turnover intentions. In achieving this aim, the present study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, in the past, training has been often investigated under the auspice of HRM or high-performance work systems (Snape and Redman, 2010; Suan and Nasurdin, 2014; Sun *et al.*, 2007). Research that focuses on training and employee outcomes is lacking. The present study, therefore, fills this gap in the research literature by examining training satisfaction as a predictor of WE and the intentions of employees to quit. Second, past research on training and turnover intentions has conceptualized the training construct through various means, such as training systems, training size, amount of money spent on training activities and hours of formal training (Bawa and Jantan, 2005; Gardner *et al.*, 2011; Zheng and Lamond, 2010; Zheng and Wong, 2007). Furthermore, recent studies have investigated training in the context of the human resource development (HRD) climate and prevailing HRD practices, again ignoring employees' actual satisfaction with that training (Chaudhary, 2014; Chaudhary *et al.*, 2014; Shuck *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, research that considers employees' satisfaction with training while examining training turnover models is

conspicuously absent from the literature. The present study fills this gap by investigating training satisfaction as an antecedent of WE and turnover intention.

Last, previous research provides evidence that HRM practices positively influence employee and organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, organizational citizenship behaviour, job embeddedness, job performance, organizational performance and organizational effectiveness (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Boon *et al.*, 2011; Delery and Gupta, 2016; Huselid, 1995; Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Obedat *et al.*, 2016; Petrescu and Simmons, 2008; Weia *et al.*, 2010). However, the mechanisms through which HRM practices influence employee outcomes require more attention (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Boon *et al.*, 2011; Mostafa and Gould-Williams, 2014; Muduli *et al.*, 2016). As such, recent research emphasizes on the role of constructs mediating between various HRM practices and employee outcomes (Obedat *et al.*, 2016; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2009). Similarly, although WE may be a mechanism linking various HRM practices and voluntary turnover (Andrew and Sofian, 2012; Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), little is known about the mediating role of WE between training satisfaction and turnover intention. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap in the literature in response to earlier calls for research (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015; Muduli *et al.*, 2016; Saks, 2006) by examining the mediating effect of WE between training satisfaction and turnover intention. In a nutshell, it is expected that the training satisfaction–turnover relationship operates via WE. The findings of this study may be of benefit to human resource managers in designing effective strategies to reduce voluntary turnover.

The following section describes concepts that will be explored throughout the study. Drawing on the social exchange theory (SET; Blau, 1964) and the job demand-resource theory (JD-R; Bakker and Demerouti, 2014; Bakker *et al.*, 2003; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), links between training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention are hypothesized in the following section. The Methods section details the steps undertaken to collect and analyze the data. The Results section presents the findings of this study; and the Discussion section reports and explains the findings in detail and provides a detailed account of the research and practical implications. This paper concludes by reporting the limitations of this study.

Definition of key concepts

This study examines the causal ties between training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention. How this study articulates these concepts, however, might require some further explanation. The following section, therefore, describes training, WE and turnover intention based upon previous literature, providing a clear understanding of the concepts operationalized in the present study.

Turnover intention

Employee turnover refers to the termination of an official and psychological contract between an employee and an organization (Krausz, 2002; Macdonald, 1999). There are two major types of employee turnover: involuntary and voluntary. Involuntary turnover is initiated by the organization to terminate the relationship with an employee, whereas voluntary turnover is primarily initiated by the employees themselves (Cao *et al.*, 2013; Price, 1977). In the academic literature, turnover intention is commonly used as a measure of anticipated workplace turnover (Bigliardi *et al.*, 2005). Intent to leave, intent to quit, intention to leave and turnover intention are often used interchangeably.

Although turnover intention does not necessarily equate with actual employee turnover, turnover intention is a strong predictor of turnover behaviour (Mobley, 1982). The relationship between employee turnover intention and actual turnover has been confirmed by previous studies (Bluedorn, 1982). For example, Lucas *et al.* (1993) found that a turnover intention model successfully predicted 73 per cent of actual turnover among registered health staff.

Training satisfaction

Training is often defined as:

[...] a set of planned activities on the part of an organization to increase job knowledge and skills or to modify the attitudes and social behaviour of its members in ways consistent with the goals of the organization and requirements of the job (Landy, 1985, p. 306).

According to Patrick (2000), cited in Schmidt (2007, p. 483), “training is systematic development of the knowledge, skills, and expertise required by a person to effectively perform a given task or job”. Schmidt (2007) later coined the term job training satisfaction, incorporating earlier ideas of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997) and job training (Landy, 1985; Patrick, 2000). Training satisfaction refers to “the extent to which people like or dislike the set of planned activities organized to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to effectively perform a given task or job” (Schmidt, 2007, p. 483). It is important to note that training satisfaction is concerned with employees’ feelings about training as whole, not any one specific training intervention, and is a measure of formal or planned training activities offered by the organization (Schmidt, 2007, 2009).

Work engagement

To date, engagement remains a somewhat elusive concept in the literature with various definitions offered (Kahn, 1990; Rothbard, 2001; Saks, 2006). Bailey *et al.* (2015) noted several definitions of engagement following a systematic review of 214 studies. The definition of WE offered by Schaufeli *et al.* (2002), however, has been the most extensively used and cited in the literature, used by 86 per cent of the studies reviewed by Bailey *et al.* (2015). According to Schaufeli *et al.* (2002, p. 702), WE is “a positive fulfilling work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption”. Vigour refers to mental resilience while working, persistence when faced with issues and a willingness to invest effort in one’s role performance, whereas dedication is characterized as one’s enthusiasm, sense of inspiration and response to challenges at work. Absorption is concerned with being focused upon and engrossed in one’s work (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006; Strom *et al.*, 2014). To illustrate, “engaged employees have high levels of energy and are enthusiastic about their work and are often fully immersed in their work so that flies” (Saks and Gruman, 2014, p. 159). In this study, unless otherwise stated, engagement refers to WE.

Theoretical background and hypotheses development

Social exchange theory

SET (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961) is one of the most influential and widely used theories for understanding workplace behaviour (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). SET assumes that one’s actions are contingent upon the reactions of others (Blau, 1964). As such, greater effort is likely to be applied where such efforts are seen to be

met by rewarding reactions. Where such actions are mutually rewarding, SET describes this process in terms of a series of exchanges (Emerson, 1976). Blau (1964) defines social exchanges as “voluntary actions” performed by an organization for their employees with the expectation that such actions will eventually be reciprocated. In short, parties enter into and maintain exchange relationships with others with the expectation that doing so will be rewarding (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961; Miles, 2012). Therefore, social exchange theorists suppose that ‘social exchange is premised on a long-term exchange of favours that precludes accounting and is based on a diffuse obligation to reciprocate (Aryee *et al.*, 2002, p. 267). Eisenberger *et al.* (1990) states that the exchange relationship starts when an organization contributes towards and cares for the well-being of its employees. Consequently, employees perceive themselves to be valued by the organization and to be in an equitable relationship with them, thus prompting them to reciprocate in the form of positive work attitudes and behaviours (Aryee *et al.*, 2002; Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005). For example, several studies have noted that when organizations invest in individual training and development programmes, employees reciprocate through desirable work-related behaviours (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005; Shuck *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, SET provides a solid theoretical foundation for the present study.

Job demands-resources theory

The JD-R model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti and Bakker, 2011; Demerouti *et al.*, 2001) has been used extensively to provide theoretical support for several studies in predicting job burnout, organizational commitment, work enjoyment, job performance, employee turnover and WE (Bakker *et al.*, 2005, 2007, 2008; Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Hakanen *et al.*, 2006). The JD-R model has subsequently matured into a theory because of its flexibility and wide acceptance in the research literature (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). The JD-R theory assumes that each occupation is associated with a unique pattern of job stress, and these stresses assume two basic forms: job demands and job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Job demands include the physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained cognitive and emotional effort or skill, measurable by a way of their psychological and physiological consequences (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job resources, on the other hand, are those physical, social or organizational aspects of the job that are functional in achieving work goals, reduce job demands and associated physiological and psychological costs and, most importantly, stimulate personal growth, learning and development. Previous research suggests that resources are not only necessary to deal with job demands but also are important in their own right (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti and Bakker, 2011). As such, individuals are more ready and available to engage in their roles when they can cope with the various demands and when they have the ability to engage in coping strategies (Gruman and Saks, 2011, p. 131; Kahn, 1990). Consequently, theorists believe that training is an important resource for preparing individuals to handle the demands of a job more effectively, thus leading them to be highly engaged (Gruman and Saks, 2011). Based on the aforementioned discussion, the JD-R theory was adopted, as it provides theoretical support for the model hypothesized in the present study.

Hypotheses development

Previous studies have demonstrated that training is significantly negatively associated with employee turnover intentions (Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Shuck *et al.*, 2014). Employee satisfaction with training is essential for maintaining employee motivation and for achieving desirable attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Huang and Su, 2016; Schmidt, 2007). Employees are led to believe that training and development activities are indicators of their value to the organization (Lee and Bruvold, 2003). Taking into account the reciprocity rule of SET, training is thought to help employees to perform their job roles better, thus increasing employee satisfaction with training and, in turn, increasing their sense of obligation to the organization. Consequently, in the course of a reciprocal relationship, the employee is less likely to leave the organization (Huang and Su, 2016; Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Shuck *et al.*, 2014).

A number of studies have indicated a negative relationship between training and turnover intention. For example, in a study of employees from a local state subdivision in south-eastern USA, Owens (2006) found that supervisory training had an effect on employees' turnover cognitions. Likewise, Rahman and Nas (2013) investigated the training–turnover relationship among academics from 16 public universities in Pakistan, observing that employees' perceptions of their training and development predicted their turnover intentions. Recently, Huang and Su (2016) found a significantly negative relationship between job training satisfaction and employee turnover intentions among Taiwanese employees. Therefore, we postulate the following:

H1. There will be a negative effect of training satisfaction on turnover intention.

Training is also expected to be a strong predictor of WE (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015; Saks, 2006). The functionality of this relationship can be supported by way of the JD-R theory (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014; Bakker *et al.*, 2003; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). As such, we posit that training is a job resource that acts not only as a buffer against job demands (i.e. performance) but also as an organizational mechanism for employee growth. Based on Kahn's (1990) psychological conditions, Gruman and Saks (2011, p. 131) argue that "training is especially relevant for providing employees with resources that will make them feel available to fully engage in their roles" (p. 131). Therefore, if employees believe that they are able to fulfil the demands of their job, their level of engagement increases (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015; Luthans *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, empirical evidence also suggests a positive relationship between training and WE. For instance, Salanova *et al.* (2005) noted that training was a key resource that was positively associated with WE among the employees of 114 hotels and restaurants. Following a meta-analysis of 55 studies, Crawford *et al.* (2010) found that organizations that provide extensive training and development opportunities to their staff experience significantly higher levels of engagement. The following is, therefore, hypothesized:

H2. There will be a positive effect of training satisfaction on WE.

Shuck *et al.* (2014) stress the robust relationship between engagement and turnover intention. Engagement generates fulfilling, positive work-related experiences and a state of mind that is correlated with good health and progressive work efforts (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag, 2003). These positive experiences and emotions lead employees to exhibit more positive work-related outcomes, hold their employer in higher regard and are less likely to leave the organization (Saks, 2006; Schaufeli and

Bakker, 2004). Additionally, the engagement theory (Kahn, 1990) suggests that availability, meaningfulness and safety are essential pre-conditions to engagement. Therefore, one's satisfaction with the organization's investment in their training and development (i.e. availability) might instil a sense of importance among employees (i.e. meaningfulness). Consequently, employees feel safe or secure in their current employment and tend not to look for other employment options. Previous studies suggest that engagement is a strong predictor of employee quit intentions. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) reported that engagement is negatively associated with turnover intentions among employees in The Netherlands. Likewise, Bailey *et al.* (2015), in their meta-analytical study, reviewed 21 studies in which a significant negative relationship was revealed between engagement and employee turnover intentions, thus providing strong evidence for a link between these constructs. We, therefore, hypothesize:

H3. There will be a negative effect of WE on turnover intention.

Taking into account that training is significantly positively related to higher levels of engagement (Crawford *et al.*, 2010; Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Salanova *et al.*, 2005) and engagement is significantly negatively linked to employees' intention to leave (Bailey *et al.*, 2015; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Shuck *et al.*, 2014; Soane *et al.*, 2012), it is expected that engagement will act as a mediator between training and turnover intention. The engagement research suggests that WE might mediate between several job resources and turnover intentions (Salleh and Memon, 2015). Studies drawing upon the JD-R model, suggest that HRM-related job resources, including training, are positively related to WE, which in turn mediates the relationship between job resources and positive outcomes, such as low turnover intentions (Salanova *et al.*, 2005; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Therefore, according to SET, training satisfaction is expected to create a state of fulfilment and meaningfulness in which employees reciprocate in the form of high levels of engagement. Being highly engaged, in turn, reduces the likelihood of an employee leaving the organization. That is to say, organizations that invest in the skill development of employees and provides them with continuous opportunities to nurture their personal and professional skills create a sense of obligation among their employees. Consequently, to abide by the unwritten rules of exchange, employees reciprocate with their partner (i.e. the organization) by means of engagement, and, as evidenced by earlier studies, highly engaged employees are less likely to leave an organization voluntarily (Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Saks, 2006).

Several studies have reported that WE mediates between various HRM practices and HR-related outcomes. Recently, Muduli *et al.* (2016) reported that engagement acts as a mediator between high-performance work systems and organizational performance among employees in the Indian banking sector. More importantly, Shuck *et al.* (2014) found that engagement partially mediated the relationship between HRD practices and turnover intentions among health care workers. Several studies have also reported that engagement explains the relationship between various endogenous and exogenous variables (Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Rich *et al.*, 2010; Saks, 2006; Salanova and Schaufeli, 2008), suggesting that WE is the mechanism that links training satisfaction and turnover intention. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H4. Training satisfaction will have a negative effect on turnover intention when WE mediates the relationship (Figure 1).

Methods

Sampling

The hypotheses of the present study were tested using data collected from employees in Malaysia's oil and gas (O&G) sector. O&G is one of the most important sectors in the Malaysian economy, contributing almost 40 per cent to Malaysia's total revenue (*Kuala Lumpur Post*, 2013). However, Malaysia's O&G industry faces a disconcertingly high rate of employee turnover (*Met and Ali, 2014; TalentCorp, 2012; YeeCheong et al., 2015*). Malaysia's O&G professionals tend to move to the Middle East, Canada or other rich O&G countries, depriving local organizations of their talent. It is, therefore, noteworthy that the present study looks to find a way to retain Malaysian O&G professionals in the domestic industry.

Data were collected through an e-mail survey. The e-mail survey format enables respondents to reply at their own convenience, helps to access a geographically dispersed population and lessens social desirability bias (*Heerwegh, 2009*). Considering that O&G professionals typically work in a high-risk environments, have very tight schedules and are geographically dispersed, the e-mail survey method was considered appropriate for obtaining high-quality, relatively unbiased data. Having e-mailed the online survey to 1,802 O&G professionals, 422 responses were received over a three-month period, representing a response rate of 23 per cent. A response rate 11 per cent or lower is reasonable with e-mail surveys (*Saunders et al., 2007*). Therefore, the 23 per cent response was considered highly acceptable for the present study. Six suspicious samples (e.g. straight lining) were excluded (*Hair et al., 2006*). Based upon a further examination of the data, we identified and eliminated seven more samples: those working as interns ($n = 3$) and those working on contract ($n = 4$). Therefore, the results of this study are based on an analysis of 409 responses. The profile of respondents is summarized in *Table I*.

Instrumentation

A four-item scale of training satisfaction was adapted from the job training satisfaction instrument by *Schmidt (2007)*. The coefficient α reliability value of the scale in the present study was 0.91. A sample item is "Overall, the training I receive on the job meets my needs". A widely accepted nine-item short version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, developed by *Schaufeli et al. (2006)*, was adapted to measure the three dimensions of WE. The coefficient α value of the eight remaining items was 0.89. A sample item is "My job inspires me". A five-item scale of turnover intent was adapted from *Jung and Yoon (2013)* to measure turnover intention. The reliability of this instrument (i.e. coefficient α value) was 0.92. A sample item is "I am currently seriously considering leaving my current job to work at another company". All the items were measured on a

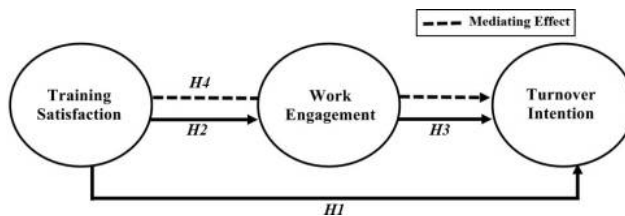


Figure 1.
Research model

Table I.
Respondents profile
(*N* = 409)

Demographic variables	Categories	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	229	55.9
	Female	178	43.5
Age (years)	18-29	155	37.8
	30-39	250	61.1
	40-49	1	1.4
	50 and above	1	1.4
Tenure (years)	1-2	46	11.2
	3-4	59	14.4
	5-6	66	16.1
	7-8	131	32.0
	9-10	62	15.1
	More than 10 years	42	10.2

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All items are presented in the [Appendix](#).

Results

A two-stage structural equation modelling approach was used to analyze the research model ([Andersen and Gerbing, 1988](#); [Hair et al., 2010](#)). The Analysis of Moment Structures (IBM AMOS) version 22 was used to test the hypothesized model (i.e. confirmatory factor analysis), followed by examination of the structural model (i.e. hypotheses testing; [Hair et al., 2006](#)).

Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to measure the factor loading of items for each construct ([Andersen and Gerbing, 1988](#)). The parameter estimates show that all items achieved the desired cut-off criterion with a factor loading of 0.6 ([Chin et al., 1997](#)), except three WE construct items: WE7 (0.433), WE8 (0.575) and WE 9 (0.568). WE7 was excluded, but WE8 and WE9 were retained because the average loading of the remaining eight items was 0.737 (>0.708) ([Hair et al., 2014](#)). [Table II](#) shows the factor loading of the items. Additionally, we examined the model's fit by following the criteria described by [Hair et al. \(2006\)](#). For instance, a higher value of the comparative fit index (CFI) indicates a better model fit, and the normalized fit index (NFI) should be equal to or greater than 0.90. However, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) should be less than 0.08, and the χ^2/df value must be less than 0.3 to be considered a good model fit ([Hair et al., 2010](#)). Although the results of CFI (0.935) and NFI (0.912) were acceptable, the RMSEA (0.081) and χ^2/df (>3) indicated a poor fit. Therefore, modification indices (MI) were observed to identify a model that better represented the sample data ([Byrne, 2010](#)). The output of MI suggested the error terms of two items, WE2 ("At my work, I feel bursting with energy") and WE3 ("At my job, I feel strong and vigorous") of WE scale, to be co-varied (MI = 76.62). Given the high similarity among both items, it was logically acceptable to co-vary error terms of WE2 and WE3, as recommended by [Byrne \(2010\)](#). The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was tested again, the second run results indicating that all desired indices met standard cut-off values. The CFI (0.954), NFI (0.931), RMSEA (0.068) and $\chi^2/df = 2.895$ ($\chi^2 = 332.904/df = 115$) confirmed a good model fit.

EJTD 40,6					
	Construct	Item	Factor loading	CR	AVE
416	Training satisfaction	TS1	0.810	0.911	0.721
		TS2	0.770		
		TS3	0.927		
		TS4	0.880		
	Work engagement	WE1	0.692	0.903	0.543
		WE2	0.736		
		WE3	0.783		
		WE4	0.872		
		WE5	0.883		
		WE6	0.719		
	Turnover intention	WE8	0.575	0.920	0.697
		WE9	0.568		
		TI1	0.840		
		TI2	0.806		
		TI3	0.892		
	TI4	0.842			
	TI5	0.790			

Table II.
Factor loadings, CR
and AVE

Reliability and validity

The composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values were used to test the reliability and validity of the constructs, as illustrated in Table II. CR is the degree to which the construct's indicators indicate the latent construct. Bagozzi and Yi (1988) recommended a composite value of 0.6 or above as a cut-off when assessing CR. The results of CR for all constructs exceeded 0.6: WE (0.903), training satisfaction (0.911) and turnover intention (0.920). Convergent validity (CV) refers to "the degree to which multiple items to measure the same concept are in agreement" (Surienty *et al.*, 2013). CR is confirmed when an AVE value is 0.5 and higher (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The AVE values of WE (0.543), training satisfaction (0.721) and turnover intention (0.871) meet the standard criteria of CV. After confirming CR and CV, discriminant validity (DV) was tested. DV refers to the degree to which items differentiate among constructs or measure different concepts (Cheung and Lee, 2010). DV was tested by analyzing the correlation between constructs and the square root of the AVE of that construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The DV results indicate that the square root of the AVE for each construct is higher than both correlation values (i.e. row and column values), thus indicating adequate DV, as presented in Table III.

Construct	Training satisfaction	Work engagement	Turnover intention
Training satisfaction	<i>0.849^a</i>		
Work engagement	0.458	<i>0.737^a</i>	
Turnover intention	-0.321	-0.434	<i>0.835^a</i>

Table III.
Construct DV

Note: ^aDiagonal italic values represent square root of AVE of each construct

Common method bias

Given the use of a self-report survey questionnaire, a Harman (1967) one-factor test was used to determine whether common method bias represented as an issue. Exploratory factor analysis was performed by including all constructs: training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention. The results of factor analysis indicate that none of the constructs accounted for the majority of the variance. The first factor accounted for 27 per cent of the variance, whereas the other two factors accounted for 23 and 18 per cent of variance, respectively, thus confirming that common method bias was not a problem in the present study (Podsakof *et al.*, 2003).

Structural model estimation

The structural or causal model represents the causal relationship between the constructs in the hypothesized model (Sang *et al.*, 2010). We tested several structural models: *H1*, *H2*, *H3* and *H4*. In *H1*, we tested the direct relationship between training satisfaction and turnover intention. The output of the first structural model indicated a good model fit, $\chi^2/df = 2.365$, CFI = 0.986, NFI = 0.977, RMSEA = 0.058. Parameter estimates indicate that training satisfaction has a negative direct relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = -0.320$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.10$); therefore, *H1* was supported. For *H2*, the relationship between training satisfaction and WE, the results of the structural model showed acceptability, $\chi^2/df = 2.908$, CFI = 0.950, NFI = 0.936, RMSEA = 0.078, and a positive strong relationship between training satisfaction ($\beta = 0.458$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.210$) as hypothesized. Next, *H3* was tested, with all indices meeting the standard criteria, $\chi^2/df = 2.648$, CFI = 0.953, NFI = 0.936, RMSEA = 0.071, and showing a strong negative relationship between WE and turnover intention ($\beta = -0.433$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.188$). Therefore, based on the results, *H1*, *H2* and *H3* are supported.

For *H4*, the bootstrapping analysis method in analysis of moment structures (AMOS) was used to examine the indirect effect (MacKinnon, 2008), an increasingly popular and straightforward technique to examine a mediating effect using the standard errors and confidence interval estimates (Shrout and Bolger, 2002; Song and Lim, 2015). The bias-corrected bootstrapping technique (1,000 bootstrap samples) was used, and bias-corrected two-tailed significance was tested to confirm the indirect effect. The bootstrapping results indicated a significant indirect effect, $\beta = -0.155$, with a two-tailed significance value of less than 0.01. An indirect effect of -0.155 , with a 95 per cent bias-corrected confidence interval (lower level = -0.244 ; upper level = -0.110), does not straddle a zero in between, thereby indicating that WE has a significant mediating effect between training satisfaction and turnover intention. Therefore, *H4* was supported. Table IV illustrates the overall results of hypotheses testing (Figure 2).

Discussion

The aim of this paper was to explore the relationship between training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention and to determine whether WE mediates the relationship between these variables. Although there is a rich body of literature on training and turnover intention, training has traditionally been operationalized in terms of training systems (Bawa and Jantan, 2005), training size (Zheng and Lamond, 2010), amount of money spent on training activities (Zheng and Wong, 2007) and hours of formal training (Gardner *et al.*, 2011). To date, little has been done on conceptualizing training with regards to employees' experiences and satisfaction with training. Specifically, the

Table IV.
Model estimation and
results of hypotheses
testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Fit indices			Model estimation			Result		
		χ^2/df	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	β	SE		Significance	R^2
H1	Training satisfaction \rightarrow turnover intention	2.365	0.986	0.977	0.058	-0.32	0.079	***	0.100	Supported
H2	Training satisfaction \rightarrow WE	2.908	0.950	0.936	0.078	0.458	0.051	***	0.210	Supported
H3	WE \rightarrow turnover intention	2.648	0.953	0.936	0.071	-0.433	0.091	***	0.188	Supported
H4	Training satisfaction \rightarrow WE \rightarrow turnover intention	2.948	0.953	0.931	0.069	-0.155	0.083	**	0.210	Supported

Notes: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$

relationship between training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention remains an understudied area in the published literature. Therefore, the present study extends the existing training satisfaction, WE and turnover intention literature and confirms training satisfaction as a potential key resource with which to respond to job demands. Additionally, this study tested the mediating role of WE. Given that the research literature on the mediating effect of WE on training satisfaction and turnover intention is scant, the present study not only fills a clear gap in the theoretical “black box” concerning the mediating effect of WE between training satisfaction and turnover intention but also constitutes a direct response to several calls for research (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015; Muduli *et al.*, 2016; Saks, 2006). Last, previous studies have been limited by their use of first-generation methods of mediation analysis using regression analysis (Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Saks, 2006; Shuck *et al.*, 2014; Sibiyaa *et al.*, 2014). In analyzing the data, this research used structural equation modelling, a second-generation analysis method, thus providing higher quality results.

The findings support *H1*, that training satisfaction has a direct and negative relationship with turnover intention among Malaysian O&G professionals. This means that investing in training and development activities highlights the importance of people to an organization, thus creating a sense of being valued and increasing the emotional tie between employee and employer. As a result, employees are less likely to leave the organization. On a practical note, O&G is a high-risk industry, and O&G organizations are typically regarded as safety critical organizations (Eid *et al.*, 2012). As such, continuous training is essential for O&G employees to not only cope with job demands but also comply with the safety procedures necessary to survive in a high-risk climate. Such training is also critical for retaining O&G professionals in the industry. This result is consistent with the findings of Owens (2006) that trained employees have less thoughts about turnover as compared to those who are less satisfied with their training opportunities.

The results of *H2* demonstrate that employees’ satisfaction with training has a strong positive effect on their level of WE. This finding suggests that training is an important resource for enhancing the WE of employees. Based on Kahn’s (1990) psychological conditions, training provides employees with resources (i.e. knowledge and skills required to perform one’s work tasks) that will give them the confidence to fully engage with their roles (Gruman and Saks, 2011, p. 131). To illustrate, adequate training opportunities help employees to cope with job demands. Consequently, when employees believe that they are capable of satisfying their job and organizational demands, their level of WE increases (Albrecht *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the finding that training enhances WE is logically acceptable.

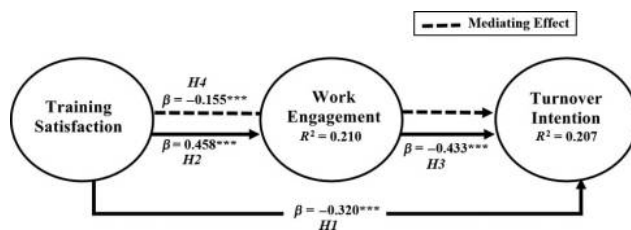


Figure 2.
Structural model

The results also support *H3* that WE predicts employee intentions to quit, thus proving the statistical significance of *H3*. This indicates that high WE lessens the likelihood of voluntary turnover. As explained by Rich *et al.* (2010), engagement is about making a complete investment of oneself in his/her role performance. Therefore, highly engaged individuals exhibit a physical, emotional and cognitive attachment with their job and organization (Kahn, 1990; Saks, 2006), thus causing them to stay longer. This result is consistent with the findings of Takawira *et al.* (2014) that facets of WE (i.e. vigour, dedication and absorption) are significantly negatively correlated with turnover intention. Additionally, the findings of the present study also support the results of previous studies that report highly engaged employees to be less inclined to leave their organizations (Juhdi *et al.*, 2013; Shuck *et al.*, 2014; Soane *et al.*, 2012).

H4 said that the relationship between training satisfaction and turnover intention operates via WE. The findings of the present study support this hypothesis and indicate the theoretical significance of the mediating role of WE between training satisfaction and employees' intentions to leave. Given that training satisfaction is significantly associated with WE and WE predicts turnover intentions, the mediating role of WE between training satisfaction and turnover intention is logically justified. This implies that employees who experience high satisfaction with the training initiatives provided by their organizations also tend to be highly engaged at work, and, as discussed, highly engaged employees demonstrate a greater sense of attachment to their work. As such, highly engaged employees are well attached to their role performance and they are often loath to leave their employers even in the face of attractive inducements by other companies. Therefore, the present study provides empirical support for the idea that WE is the actual mechanism or process that connects training satisfaction and employee turnover intentions among O&G professionals in Malaysia. This finding is consistent with the results of previous studies demonstrating the significance of WE as a mediator between several antecedent and outcome variables (Saks, 2006; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Scrima *et al.*, 2014). Specifically, this finding is consistent with that of Shuck *et al.* (2014), who observed that the turnover intentions of employees were reduced when employees believed that their participation in HRD practices enhanced their level of engagement.

Practical implications

Although the primary objective of the present study was to test the theoretically driven hypotheses, the findings of the present study also have a number of valuable implications for HRD practitioners in the O&G industry. The results of the present study show that higher levels of training satisfaction are associated with higher levels of WE, thus reducing employees' turnover intention. As such, Malaysian O&G organizations need to pay greater attention to both training satisfaction and WE to retain top talent. It is suggested that appropriate training programmes must be offered based on genuine needs. Recent studies suggest that skill development activities are important for making a job role more attractive (Suriyent *et al.*, 2013); therefore, HRD practitioners should design training plans aimed at making a job more attractive to increase employees' satisfaction with their training. According to Schmidt (2007), training participants are more satisfied when their training is provided in a manner thought to be valuable to them, thereby resulting in more positive outcomes. Therefore, HRD practitioners should investigate multiple elements (e.g. participants' satisfaction with the training session, training content, trainer and transfer of learning) when considering employees' overall satisfaction with their training and

development activities (Latif, 2012). Additionally, our research shows that a high level of WE is essential for retaining O&G professionals. As such, further studies are warranted to investigate methods of increasing employees' levels of engagement. Considering the O&G professional work in the field and in high-risk environments, on-the-job coaching may be key to satisfying employees' immediate training needs, particularly on safety-related matters, thus increasing employees' level of WE and reducing turnover intentions.

Conclusion

A company's most important and valuable asset is its human capital, and a company's success depends upon not just its conventional assets, such as finances and physical resources, but also on these human assets. Voluntary turnover, however, represents a barrier to organizations achieving their strategic objectives. Certain HRM practices, particularly training, seem to result in some organizations enjoying more positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes than others. The findings of the present study indicate that training satisfaction and WE are the most important factors for predicting an employee's intention to leave. The second major finding of this study is that WE mediates the relationship between training satisfaction and turnover intention. Therefore, to reduce voluntary turnover, training satisfaction and WE should be thought of as important factors. This present paper not only expands upon the training, WE and employee turnover literature but also serves to guide human resource managers in tackling voluntary turnover effectively. These findings are encouraging and highlight numerous avenues for further theory advancement and research.

Notwithstanding, this study has a number of limitations. First, this study conceptualized training as employees' overall satisfaction with training. However, training includes several components, each of which should be explored and tested with respect to WE. For example, as suggested by Schmidt (2007), organizational support for training and employees' opinions about training are interesting avenues to consider. Second, the findings of the current study rely upon samples drawn from the Malaysian O&G industry. Therefore, generalizing these findings to other sectors, professional groups and/or countries should only be done so under caution. Future studies should look to validate the present model in different sectors and geographical regions. Third, cross-sectional data were used to test the research model. We believe that longitudinal data would provide a better and deeper understanding of the causal relationships between constructs. Additionally, this study was conducted in a Muslim-majority country, which may result in a number of cultural and value differences with Western countries, again limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should look to validate the model in a Western environment. Another limitation of this study concerns the method of data collection. We used an e-mail survey, which might somewhat bias our results, as the survey questionnaires were only sent to those with an e-mail address. However, considering the obstacles in researching O&G professionals (e.g. geographic dispersal and high-risk workplaces), data collection by e-mail was deemed acceptable. Future studies should look to use appropriate strategies to increase the generalizability of findings. Last, the present study focuses on a mediator only and does not incorporate any moderating variables in testing the relationship between training satisfaction and turnover intention. We recommend future investigators to explore the effects of moderating variables to elucidate the relationship between constructs.

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Appendix

Training satisfaction

- Overall, the on-the-job training I receive is applicable to my job.
- Overall, the training I receive on the job meets my needs.
- Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of training I receive on the job.
- I am generally able to use what I learn on the job.

Work engagement

- When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
- At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
- At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.
- My job inspires me.
- I am enthusiastic about my job.
- I am proud of the work that I do.
- I get carried away when I am working.
- I am immersed in my work.
- I feel happy when I am working intensely.

Turnover intention

- I am seriously considering leaving my current job to work at another company.
- I sometimes feel compelled to quit my job in my current workplace.
- I will probably look for a new job in the next year.
- Within the next 6 months, I would rate the likelihood of leaving my present job as high.
- I will quit this company if the given condition gets even a little worse than now.

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