

Talent Management, Organisational Commitment, and Turnover Intention: Implications for Psychological Well-being in the Construction Industry

Mardhiah Mohd Yunos¹
Nor Diana Mohd Mahudin^{2*}

¹*Human Resource Business Partner, Internal Firm Services-Human Capital
PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Malaysia*

²*Department of Psychology
International Islamic University Malaysia,*

*Corresponding e-mail: [nordianamm@iium.edu.my]

Despite extensive research on talent management, its direct effects on employee commitment and well-being are often overlooked, particularly in the construction industry. This study addresses this gap by exploring the relationships between talent management practices, organisational commitment, and turnover intention among employees in the construction industry in Malaysia. An online survey was conducted with 38 private companies, yielding 91 responses (Male = 28, Female = 63). The survey measured three talent management dimensions (acquisition, development, and retention) alongside organisational commitment and turnover intention. Results showed that talent development was the most emphasised, followed by talent acquisition and retention. Although all talent management dimensions were significantly correlated with organisational commitment, only talent acquisition was a significant predictor. Notably, none of the dimensions significantly predicted turnover intention. This study contributes to the construction literature by providing insights into the factors influencing employees' organisational commitment and turnover intention. It highlights the critical role of talent acquisition in fostering commitment while suggesting that other factors may better explain turnover intentions. Further research is recommended to explore these complexities and refine talent management strategies specific to the construction industry.

Keywords: construction industry, organisational commitment, talent management, turnover intention

Decades of talent management research have produced a substantial amount of evidence showing significant positive effects on human resource outcomes, such as job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and trust in leaders (Aljbour et al., 2022; Bethke-Langenegger et al., 2011; Kravariti et al., 2022) as well as on organisational outcomes, such as company attractiveness, business goals achievement, customer satisfaction, and organisational

performance (Aljbour et al., 2022; Theodorsson et al., 2022). This plethora of talent management research, however, tends to investigate talent management at the organisational level and focuses only on the structural aspects of its implementation. The lack of investigation at the employee level might neglect the effects talent management has on employees' performance and commitment. Understanding this aspect is particularly

important because employees' perception of talent management practices can limit or enhance their implementation within the organisation.

Another critical challenge for researchers in this area is that only a few organisations have engaged in promoting talent management practices. Factors such as the dearth of systematic organisational structures, inadequate time dedicated by managers to talent management practices, failure to acknowledge the variation in the level of performance of different employees, as well as the speed of technological change and digital transformation have been reported as among the challenges faced in implementing talent management programmes (Kwon & Jang, 2022); Montero Guerra & Danvila-Del Valle, 2024; Schuler et al., 2011; Whysall et al., 2019). Consequently, the absence of strategic implementation of talent management practices can cause interventions to be given to employees irrespective of their performance and competence. In the long run, this could pose a serious threat to organisations in terms of decreased organisational commitment, low job performance, and increased turnover intention among employees (Ismail, 2012).

Issues affecting talent management challenges are more apparent in the construction industry as fewer studies are evidenced in the literature. Serving as knowledgeable or skilled employees (Sun, 2011), professionals working in this industry, such as architects, engineers, building consultants, and quantity surveyors, also faced issues concerning commitment, career development, and talent turnover. Therefore, it is crucial to understand talent management practices as perceived by construction professionals whose talents should be adequately managed to ensure quality and innovative production (Kim et al., 2022) and a high level of productivity, creative thinking, and competitiveness (Ingram, 2016).

The construction industry in Malaysia is relatively large and typically categorised into two primary segments: (i) real estate development, such as construction of residential properties, commercial buildings, industrial facilities, and leisure amenities, and (ii) civil engineering and specialised trade works, which involve infrastructure projects, public facilities, and specialised work such as transportation, energy, and utilities (Protégé Associates, 2024). The industry is currently valued at USD 38.55 billion in market size (Mordor Intelligence, 2024) and is projected to expand by 5.3% to RM 73.68 billion in 2028 (Protégé Associates, 2024). In 2023, the industry employed over 1.4 million people in the country (Siddharta, 2024), with the manufacturing, construction, mining, and quarrying sectors seeing a rise in the number of employed persons in June 2024 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024).

Despite these positive outlooks, labour remains a primary challenge faced by the Malaysian construction industry due to labour shortage, over-reliance on foreign workers, unfair salaries, poor safety in construction sites, lack of career paths, and diminishing skilled labour training programmes (Mohd Fateh et al., 2022; Suratkon et al., 2023). As such, it is not surprising that the industry has issues recruiting skilled and semi-skilled workers and retaining talents to meet the high demand (Mohd Fateh et al., 2022). Those who stay typically face high probabilities of injuries, illness, and fatalities, as well as struggle with psychosocial factors related to high demands, low control over work tasks, and lack of support, which, in turn, can result in physical health impacts and poor psychological well-being in the workplace (Le et al., 2023; Kermanshachi & Pamidimukkala, 2024). These issues, particularly about talents or workers, represent critical problems in the construction industry that need further investigation.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the relationships among talent management practices, organisational commitment, and turnover intention among employees in the construction industry in Malaysia. Understanding how employees' behaviours are influenced by their perceived talent management practices can assist organisations in identifying managerial leverage points and how these vary according to their perceptions and attributions. This, in turn, may indirectly impact psychological well-being. Accordingly, this paper is structured as follows: First, an overview of the growing interest in and significance of talent management is presented. Next, discussions of how talent management relates to organisational commitment and turnover intention and the argument for examining these three variables are provided. The methodological approach taken in this study is then explained, followed by a discussion of the results, and ends with an elaboration of the implications of the findings and the conclusion of the study.

The Growing Interest and Significance of Talent Management

Talent management has acquired various definitions in recent times. While traditional human resource management scholars view it as a new identity for the old human resource management (Tarique & Schuler, 2010), researchers who focused on organisational needs evaluation argue that talent management is a process of assessing organisational needs for talent, recruiting new employees, and advancing current staff into organisational positions (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). On the other hand, scholars of competitive advantage schools argue that talent management is a process that matches the jobs with the top talents so that organisational demands are met, and competitive advantage is achieved

(Alma'aitah et al., 2013; Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

Jyoti and Rani (2014) distinguish talent management as a multidimensional phenomenon that captures all organisational activities and processes, starting with the systematic identification of key positions through talent review and talent evaluation, followed by a creation of talent pool for the positions, succession planning, and talent development, and ends with the retention of talents (Jyoti & Rani, 2014). Hence, from this definition, three factors or dimensions of talent management can be implied, i.e., talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention.

Talent acquisition is the process of identifying, attracting, and evaluating talents with the help of assessment and development centres (Tafti et al., 2017). Assessments such as performance appraisal, personal feedback by action planning and self-assessment, organisational feedback by profile analysis and talent group awareness, direct comparison rating, talent segmentation, and talent nomination are techniques used in this process (Hartmann et al., 2010). Talent development is where talents who have been selected in the talent acquisition process are developed using talent management tools such as career development, cross-functional training, challenging tasks, and stretched assignments, among others (Farashah et al., 2011). Coaching, mentoring, and on-the-job experience are also crucial in developing talents and increasing support for talented employees.

Finally, talent retention involves retaining talents in the workforce and preventing them from turnover (Tafti et al., 2017). Because the previous processes have resulted in a skilled and well-trained pool of talents, organisations' utmost concern would be to prevent these talents from being attracted and benefited by the competitors. Thus, this final process becomes the main component in talent

management that needs to be continuously applied. Strategies such as applying intrinsic motivations, provision of benefits before demand, performance-based pay, and challenging work have been suggested to assist in controlling turnover and maintaining the organisations' talent pool (Piansoongnern et al., 2011).

Studies have shown that employees who receive support from management are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment (Sturges et al., 2002). Described as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation (Mowday et al., 1982), organisational commitment has been suggested to comprise three dimensions, i.e., affective, continuance, and normative (Meyer et al., 1993). While affective commitment refers to employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation, continuance commitment is commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organisation (Meyer et al., 1993). Normative commitment relates to employees' feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation (Meyer et al., 1993). Nevertheless, referring to organisational commitment as one dimension is also supported by research (Cook & Wall, 1980).

When employees are committed to the organisation, they are willing to contribute to organisational goals (Ismail, 2012). This, in turn, has a significant impact on their adoption of values and their assessment of the compatibility and alignment of their beliefs and values with those of their organisation (Swales, 2013). Additionally, organisational commitment is necessary to develop an organisational climate to retain employees in organisations and maintain the quality of services of employees to customers (Ismail, 2012). Studies such as those by Okpara (2007) and Sturges et al. (2002) have shown that employees' commitment to stay with the organisation

will be higher when they are sure that they are currently learning and growing at the workplace. Hence, it can be implied that organisational commitment is an important outcome of good talent management programmes.

Another outcome that has also been associated with talent management is turnover and turnover intention. The former refers to the movement of employees in and out of an organisation, typically measured in terms of turnover rate. In contrast, the latter is a behavioural intention that indicates a conflict in the relationship between the employee and the organisation (Kumar & Govindarajo, 2014). Inadequate grievance procedures and personnel policies, lack of motivation, poor supervisory practices, and poor recruitment policies have been reported as contributing factors to employee turnover (Ongori, 2007). These factors can be attributed to promotions given not as per disclosed policies, non-scientific recruitment, and the absence of proper management practices and policies on personnel matters. In the long run, these factors can lead to job dissatisfaction, decreased organisational commitment, and a greater intention to leave (Ismail, 2012).

The ability to retain talented employees is part of the talent management process that remains a challenge in the competitive job market. Competitors seek ways to entice talents from other organisations by offering attractive benefits, usually more than what the employees are gaining in their current organisations (Jyoti & Rani, 2014). Therefore, when there is a lack of internal talent development in an organisation, talented employees can be easily lured away by other organisations, which leads to the employee's current employer facing problems in retaining their employees. Kumar and Govindarajo (2014) explained that when there is inadequate management of talent in organisations, employees may experience dissatisfaction and a low level of organisational commitment. This, in

turn, leads them to engage in mobility behaviour and actively consider furthering their career with other organisations, hence putting the organisation at risk of turnover.

Cappelli (2008) has reported similar findings, i.e., when there is a lack of talent development in an organisation, talented employees will be attracted to offers from external organisations, leading to the current employer facing staff retention issues. However, when organisations effectively implement training and talent management programmes, they are less likely to face the issue of staff turnover (Cappelli, 2008). A study by Bano et al. (2010) supports this finding, showing that employees who experienced growth and development in their organisations are more likely to continue their stay in the organisation for the long term. Yarnall (2011) concluded that talent management practices could reduce the turnover of talented, high-performing employees and promote movement across the business.

Linking Talent Management with Organisational Commitment and Turnover Intention

The relationship between talent management and its outcomes may be explained by Festing and Schafer's (2014) retention model. This model, which is based on the psychological contract perspective, posits that a highly engaged talent management programme could lead

to higher attitudinal and behavioural outcomes and positively impact talent retention. For example, when there is a positive relationship between management support from the organisation and employees, commitment to the organisation would be increased, which, in turn, leads to positive outcomes such as less intention to quit and reduced mobility-oriented behaviour (Sturges et al., 2002). These outcomes could help retain talents in organisations.

Drawing on Festing and Schafer's (2014) model, it is argued that good talent management practices would promote higher organisational commitment but lower turnover intention. Given that talent management practices are conceptualised as having three dimensions (i.e., talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention), it is hypothesised that all three dimensions of talent management will be positively related to and predictive of organisational commitment.

Additionally, it is hypothesised that the three dimensions of talent management will be negatively associated with and predictive of turnover intention. These relationships are illustrated in the conceptual model in Figure 1.

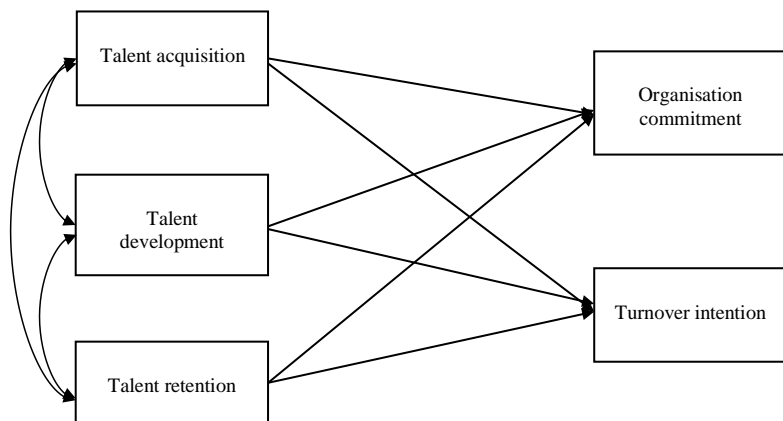


Figure 1 Conceptual framework modeling the relationships between talent management dimensions, organisation commitment, and turnover intention

Method

Participants

Data were collected through an online survey administered to 38 private companies in the construction industry in Malaysia based on a list from the Construction Industry Development Board of Malaysia (CIDB). Organisations in the construction industry were selected as they share identical job characteristics and demands.

A total of 173 responses were received; however, only 91 (Male = 28, Female = 63) were filled out - showing a 53% response rate. The sample size, though small, exceeded the minimum requirement of 74 as specified by Tabachnick and Fidell’s (2019) formula of $n > 50 + 8m$ for testing the multiple regression analysis (where n is the sample size and m is the number of predictors). All respondents fulfilled two inclusion criteria: (i) current employee of an organisation that involves construction, and (ii) able to understand and read the English language. Table 1 summarises the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the participants (n = 91)

Variables	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	28	30.8
Female	63	69.2
Highest education		
Diploma	7	7.7
Bachelor's	62	68.1
Degree		
Master's	22	24.2
Years of work at current workplace		
Less than 2 years	21	23.1
2-5 years	34	37.4
6-8 years	17	18.7
More than 8 years	19	20.9
Monthly income range		
Below RM3000	17	18.7
RM3000 - RM5000	46	50.5
RM5001 - RM7000	17	18.7
Above RM7000	11	12.1

Instruments

A questionnaire that consisted of four parts was used. The first part requested demographic information about the respondents, such as employment duration, gender, race, age, job title, and educational qualifications. The second part consisted of three sub-scales of the Human Capital Institute Assessment of Talent Practices scale (Du Plessis, 2010). These sub-scales contained items on talent acquisition (five items), talent development (five items), and talent retention (five items) - all of which measured perception towards the organisation's status and the importance of these three talent management practices. In this study, good reliability was achieved for each subscale, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .84 to .93 (see Table 2).

The third part of the questionnaire, which consisted of the Cook and Wall's (1980) nine-item British Organisational Commitment scale, is used to measure organisational commitment, i.e., what it means to be a member of the organisation. This scale demonstrated excellent reliability in this study with $\alpha = .91$. The last part of the questionnaire consisted of four items from the Intention to Leave scale by Kumar and Govindarajo (2014). These items measured respondents' intention to leave the organisation, and the scale obtained good reliability with $\alpha = .79$.

All scale items were answered on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The total score for each scale is obtained by adding the scores of the respective items together, with no reverse scoring.

Procedures

Ethical approval from the International Islamic University Malaysia Research Ethics Committee (No. IREC 2018-225) and permission to use the research instruments were obtained before data collection. A pilot study was conducted

with 15 respondents who met the inclusion criteria. This step was undertaken to ensure the appropriateness, clarity, and practicality of the questionnaire. After minor revisions to the layout, format, and wording of the items, permission to distribute questionnaires was obtained from the Human Resources personnel or Project Manager of the organisations selected.

Upon receiving approval, the link to the survey was disseminated. All participants were informed of the aims of the study and requested to complete the consent form before proceeding with the survey. E-mail reminders were sent out after 15 days to all participants to remind them to participate in the survey and thank those who responded. All data were stored online and coded for analysis.

Data analysis

Data were checked, cleaned, and analysed using IBM SPSS version 27.0. Results from assumption testing showed that the residuals are normally distributed, and the variances of the residual terms met the homoscedasticity assumption. In addition, the residuals of each predictor have similar variances after inspecting the normal probability plots and residual scatterplots. All variance inflation factor (VIF) values and Tolerance values are also within the recommended range by Field (2017), i.e., none larger than 10 and none lower than 0.1, respectively, indicating no multicollinearity among the predictors exists. The assumption of independent errors was also met, wherein the Durbin-Watson values for all predictors are close to 2, as recommended by Field (2017).

Results

Descriptive statistics (see Table 2) showed that the dimension of talent development has the highest average scores, followed by

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talent acquisition and talent retention, implying that developing employees' talents in organisations is the most regarded talent management practice in the workplace. Results from Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated that all talent management variables are significantly and positively correlated with each other and with organisational commitment. However, only talent development ($r = -.22, p = .04$) and organisation commitment ($r = -.38, p = .001$) correlate significantly with turnover intention.

Next, a multiple regression was conducted to test talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention as predictors of organisation commitment following the framework shown in Figure 1. The results showed that only talent acquisition ($B = .54, \beta = .29, p = .03$) significantly predicted organisation commitment, with variances accounted for (R -square) of 44.30%. The second multiple

regression was conducted to test whether talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention predict turnover intention. The regression model was not statistically significant, suggesting that the three predictors did not significantly predict the intention to leave. All these results are tabulated in Table 3.

To verify the adequacy of the structural model for testing the relationships between the predictors and the outcomes, structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted using the AMOS 21 software. The results for the overall goodness of fit of this structural model are as follows: $\chi^2 = 10.99, df = 1, p = .001, CFI = .95, NFI = .95, PCFI = .09, RMSEA = .33$. Similar to the regression analyses conducted, only talent acquisition ($B = .54, \beta = .29, p = .02$) significantly predicts organisation commitment, whereas all other relationships were not statistically significant.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables

Variables	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>α</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1 Talent acquisition	16.15 (3.98)	.84	-	.74**	.71**	.61**	-.16
2 Talent development	16.82 (4.92)	.93		-	.74**	.61**	-.22*
3 Talent retention	15.35 (4.58)	.87			-	.59**	-.15
4 Organisational commitment	30.05 (7.50)	.91				-	-.38**
5 Turnover intention	12.15 (3.77)	.79					-

Notes.

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3

Regression coefficients for predicting organisational commitment and turnover intention

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		<i>β</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
			Lower	Upper			
Criterion: Organisational commitment							
Predictor: Talent acquisition	.54	.24	.06	1.02	.29	2.23	.03
Talent development	.37	.20	-.04	.77	.24	1.79	.08
Talent retention	.35	.21	-.07	.76	.21	1.67	.10

$R^2 = 0.443, F(3, 87) = 23.10, p < .001$

Criterion:	Turnover intention							
Predictor:	Talent acquisition	-.02	.16	-.33	.29	-.02	-.11	.91
	Talent development	-.17	.14	-.44	.09	-.23	-1.29	.20
	Talent retention	.03	.14	-.24	.29	.04	.21	.83

$R^2 = 0.047, F(3, 87) = 1.42, p = .24$

Discussion

This study, which examined how talent management via its three dimensions (i.e., talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention) is related to organisational commitment and turnover intention among employees in the construction industry, yields three key findings.

First, out of the three dimensions, the talent development dimension showed the highest mean score compared to the other two, with talent acquisition the second and talent retention being the lowest. This result indicates that the participants see efforts and initiatives aimed at developing employees' talents as the essence of talent management practices in their organisation. These results echoed earlier work by Lee and Chan (2022), who reported the importance of talent development in increasing employee performance within the construction industry in Malaysia. Nevertheless, overall, it is reasonable to conclude that employees in organisations with talent management initiatives have more positive attitudes toward their organisations in terms of recruiting, developing, and retaining their employees, as observed by Kusni (2019).

Second, our findings showed that all talent management dimensions are positively and significantly correlated with organisational commitment. However, when regression analyses were conducted to test the determinants of organisational commitment, only talent acquisition came out to be the predictor variable. This finding is reasonable given the position that talent acquisition holds as the foundation upon

which the entire talent management programme is built. Not only effective talent acquisition can identify individuals with the necessary skills, experiences, and potential to contribute significantly to the organisation's success, but it can also ensure the recruitment of those who fit in well with the organisation's culture and values. Studies by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) and Subramanian et al. (2022) have found that employees who perceive a high degree of person-organisation fit are more likely to be committed to their organisations.

Furthermore, talent acquisition practices that signal to employees that they are valued and appreciated can foster a sense of organisational support from the outset and thus enhance commitment, as demonstrated by Winston (2022), who found talent acquisition to be the driving motivation for affective organisational commitment. In conclusion, our findings showed that the success of identifying and selecting the right people with the right skills, abilities, and other characteristics is a crucial part of talent management in shaping and ensuring high organisational commitment. By focusing on person-organisation fit and perceived organisational support, organisations can create a positive and supportive work environment that fosters long-term commitment.

Third, we found that all three dimensions of talent management correlated negatively with turnover intention, corroborating the findings of previous studies (e.g., Bui & Chang, 2018; Gupta, 2019) that show a positive view of talent management at

organisations is associated with a low turnover intention. Nevertheless, the correlation values obtained in this study are relatively weak, and only talent development was found to be significantly correlated with turnover intention.

Moreover, when we regressed turnover intention on the three dimensions of talent management, no effect emerged as significant, indicating that talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention did not significantly predict turnover intention, at least in this study. Two possible reasons may explain these findings. First, the construction industry tends to operate based on projects and frequently relies on short-term contracts and temporary employment (Morrison et al., 2013; Srour et al., 2017) - all of which can influence turnover intention. This project-based and temporary nature of work can limit the scope of talent management initiatives in that employees might view their roles as transient, leading to higher turnover intentions regardless of talent management efforts. Abdolmaleki et al. (2024) further highlight that turnover intentions in the construction industry are often driven more by external factors such as job opportunities, economic conditions, and union status rather than internal talent management practices. This implies that even robust talent management strategies might not effectively alter turnover intentions in such a fluid employment environment.

The second explanation that might account for our results is that talent management practices in the construction industry often focus on operational efficiency and compliance rather than comprehensive career development. Studies have suggested that companies typically emphasise safety training and skills development over broader talent management initiatives due to it being a key challenge for the construction industry (Gao et al., 2018; Xia et al., 2020). Consequently, the limited scope of these

practices may not address the deeper motivations and intentions influencing turnover. In addition, the implementation of talent management practices in construction firms is highly variable, with many smaller firms lacking formal strategies (Griner, 2019). This variability means that, in many cases, talent management might not be sufficiently developed to impact turnover intentions significantly.

Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research

Extending previous work in the area, the findings of this study clarify the relationships linking talent management practices with organisational commitment and turnover intention among employees working in the construction industry in Malaysia. For organisations to resolve the issue of talent turnover, organisational commitment needs to be addressed, with talent acquisition as its most important predictor. The positive relationship between talent acquisition and organisational commitment suggests that the construction industry should prioritise refining its recruitment strategies. By focusing on attracting candidates who are a good fit for the organisation's culture and values, the industry can enhance employee commitment and potentially reduce turnover in the long run. This approach emphasises the need for a strategic, targeted recruitment process that aligns with organisational goals and values.

The lack of significant predictive power of talent management practices on turnover intention highlights that these practices alone may not be sufficient to address turnover challenges. Organisations must recognise that while talent management is crucial for employee development and performance, it must be complemented by other strategies that address the unique challenges of the construction industry, such as job market fluctuations, work

environment conditions, and economic factors. Hence, the industry should adopt a holistic approach to talent retention, such as improving working conditions, enhancing job satisfaction, and addressing external economic factors that influence turnover. In other words, talent management should be integrated with these broader strategies to create a more comprehensive employee retention plan.

Due to the industry-specific focus and cross-sectional nature of our study, neither causality nor generalisability of the findings can be established. For the former, longitudinal studies are needed to establish a causal relationship between talent management practices, organisational commitment, and turnover intention. This approach would provide insights into how these variables interact over time. For the latter, the complex characteristics of the construction industry may not apply to industries with more stable employment relationships. Therefore, future research might benefit from investigating a wider range of talent acquisition and management practices in different industries to determine whether the findings are specific to construction or applicable across various sectors.

Conclusion

The findings from this study reveal a nuanced understanding of the talent management practices in the construction industry within the landscape of industrial and organisational psychology in Malaysia. While talent acquisition is crucial for fostering organisational commitment, the limitations of talent management in predicting turnover intention highlight the need for a broader, more integrated approach to retaining talent in the construction industry. Because empirical evidence on the outcomes of talent management has been lacking in past research, this study may provide some insights for organisations in formulating

their talent management practices for employees. Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study could persuade more organisational leaders to include talent management on top of their management's agenda. Enlightened top management, in turn, would prioritise building and retaining talents for the better future of the organisations and the psychological well-being of the employees.

Acknowledgements

This study was self-funded, and the authors declared no potential conflicts of interest to the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

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