



**JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER
INTENTION AMONG TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES IN
QUANTITY SURVEYING FIRMS**

BY

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for
the degree of Master Science (Built Environment)**

**Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
International Islamic University Malaysia**

JANUARY 2016

ABSTRACT

Human resource is the key component for organizational success. It is crucial for organizations to manage their human resources effectively in order to avoid them from leaving the organizations. Job satisfaction is identified as one of the factors that cause turnover intention of employees. The objectives of this study are to determine the level of job satisfaction among technical employees of Quantity Surveying firms, examine the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of technical employees in the Quantity Surveying firms and suggest strategies to increase job satisfaction and reduce their turnover intention. Questionnaire surveys and interviews were employed to obtain the data required. A total number of 183 respondents responded to the questionnaires and data obtained were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Window) Version 21.0. Descriptive and inferential analyses were used to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire survey while the test of Mann – Whitney U has been employed for hypothesis testing. The interviews were conducted with five (5) Quantity Surveying firms and data obtained were analyzed using the content analysis. The findings of the studies have identified that many of the technical employees in Quantity Surveying firms are satisfied on most of the items on the constructs of nature of work, working relationship with immediate superior, organizational factors, social interaction and attitude towards work. The findings also reveal that there is relationship between turnover intention and job satisfaction on the constructs of opportunities and rewards, nature of work, working relationship with immediate superior and organizational factors. Various strategies are suggested to increase the job satisfaction of the technical employees in Quantity Surveying firms and to reduce their turnover intention. The strategies are to enhance reward system to increase job satisfaction on the construct of opportunities and rewards, enrich work context to enhance job satisfaction on the construct of nature of work, strengthen superior-subordinate relationship to increase the level of job satisfaction on the construct of working relationship with immediate superior, improve working physical environment to enhance job satisfaction on the construct of organizational factors and organize incentive programs to educate employees on the importance of establishing positive relationship with colleagues to increase job satisfaction on the construct of social interaction. Therefore, enhancement of job satisfaction should be highlighted by organizations to reduce turnover intention of the employees.

خلاصة البحث

تعد الموارد البشرية العنصر الأساسي اللازم لنجاح المؤسسات، إذ من المهم لأي مؤسسة أن تدير تلك الموارد إدارة فعالة حتى تضمن الحفاظ عليها، وهو أمر يضطلع فيه الرضا الوظيفي بدور كبير. ولذلك فقد استهدفت هذه الدراسة قياس مدى الرضا الوظيفي بين الفنيين العاملين بشركات حساب الكميات، ومعرفة العلاقة بين مستوى رضاهم واحتمالية تركهم لعملهم، واقتراح الاستراتيجيات اللازمة لتقليل تلك الاحتمالية ورفع مستوى الرضا الوظيفي بينهم. وقد أجريت الدراسة عن طريق توزيع استبانة على ١٨٣ من الفنيين العاملين بشركات حساب الكميات وإجراء مقابلة مع عشرة منهم، واستخلصت نتائج الاستبانة عن طريق استعمال النسخة الحادية والعشرين من الحزمة الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية لإجراء إحصاء وصفي وآخر استدلال، كما استخدم اختبار مان وتني لاختبار فرضيات البحث، أما المقابلات فقد استخلصت نتائجها عن طريق تحليل محتواها. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن الكثير من الفنيين العاملين بشركات حساب الكميات يشعرون بالرضا الوظيفي في غالبية الجوانب التي تتعلق بطبيعة العمل، وعلاقتهم مع رؤسائهم المباشرين، والعوامل التنظيمية، والتعاملات الاجتماعية، ونظرتهم نحو عملهم، كما أظهرت النتائج أن هناك علاقة بين مستوى رضا العاملين واحتمالية تركهم عملهم من ناحية الجوانب التي تتعلق بالفرص والمكافآت، وطبيعة العمل، وعلاقتهم مع رؤسائهم المباشرين، والعوامل التنظيمية. وقد اقترحت الدراسة عدة استراتيجيات لرفع مستوى الرضا الوظيفي لدى الفنيين العاملين بشركات حساب الكميات وتقليل احتمالية تركهم عملهم، فمن ناحية الفرص والمكافآت يجب تدعيم نظام المكافآت في تلك الشركات، ومن ناحية طبيعة العمل يجب إثراء السياق العام الذي يعمل فيه الموظفون، وبالنسبة لعلاقة العاملين برؤسائهم المباشرين ينبغي تقوية العلاقة بين الرؤساء والمرؤوسين عموماً، وبالنسبة للعوامل التنظيمية يجب تحسين بيئة العمل، وأخيراً من ناحية التعاملات الاجتماعية ينبغي تنظيم برامج تحفيزية لتوعية العاملين بأهمية تكوين علاقة طيبة مع زملائهم. وأخيراً أوصت الدراسة بالاهتمام بالرضا الوظيفي في المؤسسات عموماً لتقليل احتمالية ترك الموظفين عملهم.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for degree of Master of Science (Built Environment).



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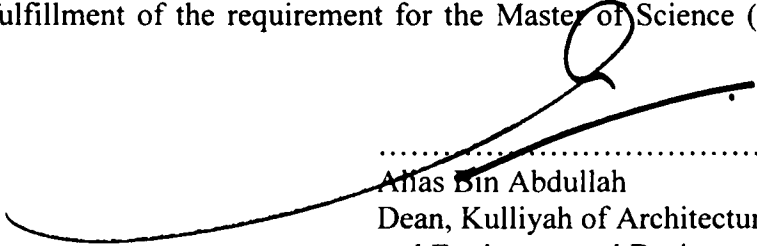
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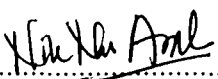
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Thanks to

My father, Mohamed Nor Bin Ali

My mother, Tuan Zainab Binti Raja Daud

My siblings:

Nik Norliza Bt Mohamed Nor

Nik Mohd Azimin B Mohamed Nor

Nik Nur Zairina Bt Mohamed Nor

Nik Mohd Fuad B Mohamed Nor

Nik Nur Masitah Bt Mohamed Nor

Nik Mohamad Anas B Mohamed Nor

Nur Faezah Bt Ismail

Mohd Huzaimi B Mohamad

My nieces and nephews:

Nur Dhuha

Daniel Raziq

Damia Raihana

Rayyan

Ummar

Raisha Azzalea

Izz Zara Saffiya

Aimy Haziqah

Alya Danisha

Sadiq

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alhamdulillah. All praise to Allah (s.w.t) the Most Gracious and Most Merciful, salawat and salam upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), his family and his companions. This study would not be completed without the blessings and help of Allah (s.w.t). This study also would not be completed without the assistance and guidance of many people. First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Tan Chin Keng for his continuous support, patience, motivation, enthusiasm and comments. His guidance helped me in all the time during my study.

My sincere thanks also go to the respondents which are technical employees and employees from human resources department of Quantity Surveying firms that give their cooperation during the interview session and answering my survey.

A lot of thanks to my dearest friends Ju, Syamimi, Nuna, Jaa, Baz, Nad, Alia, Mummy Marina and other friends for their supports, thoughts, ideas, and helps.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my family: my parents Mohamed Nor Bin Ali and Tuan Zainab Binti Raja Daud, siblings: Norliza, Azimin, Zairina, Fuad, Faezah, Masitah and Anas as well as my good friend Azizul for the inspirations, patience, moral supports, financial assistance, sacrifice, contributions, and prayers throughout the process of this study.

A million of thanks to all people who assisting me in completing this study and always being there for me whenever I am in need.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Abstract in Arabic.....	iii
Approval Page.....	iv
Declaration Page.....	v
Copyright Page.....	vi
Dedication.....	vii
Acknowledgments.....	viii
List of Tables.....	xiv
List of Figures.....	xviii
List of Abbreviations.....	xix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	3
1.3 Aim.....	6
1.4 Research Question.....	6
1.5 Objectives.....	6
1.6 Scope of Study.....	7
1.7 Significance of Research.....	7
1.8 Research Methodology.....	7
1.9 Structure of Research.....	7
1.10 Certification of MICRA & UMRAN.....	10
1.11 Summary.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER INTENTION.....	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Job Satisfaction.....	12
2.2.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction.....	12
2.2.2 Constructs of Job Satisfaction.....	12
2.3 Employee Turnover and Turnover Intention	18
2.3.1 Definition of Employee Turnover and Turnover Intention...	18
2.3.2 Types of Employee Turnover.....	19
2.3.3 Problems and Impacts of Employee Turnover and Turnover Intention.....	20
2.3.4 Factors Causing to Employee Turnover and Turnover Intention.....	23
2.3.5 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention.....	25
2.3.6 Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	29
2.4 Quantity Surveying Practice in Malaysia.....	34
2.4.1 Definition of Quantity Surveyors.....	35
2.4.2 Roles and Job Scopes of Quantity Surveyors.....	35
2.4.3 Options of Employment for Quantity Surveyors.....	37

2.4.3.1	Quantity Surveyors in Consultancy Firms.....	37
2.4.3.2	Quantity Surveyors in Construction Companies.....	38
2.5	Reviews on Research Methodology of Similar Research.....	39
2.6	Summary.....	42
CHAPTER THREE:	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	45
3.1	Introduction.....	45
3.2	Research Strategy.....	45
3.2.1	Quantitative Method.....	46
3.2.2	Qualitative Method.....	46
3.3	Preliminary Study.....	46
3.4	Data Collection for Preliminary Study.....	48
3.4.1	Questions Asked to Respondents.....	48
3.5	Data Collection.....	48
3.5.1	Questionnaire Survey.....	49
3.5.1.1	Inputs from Literature Review.....	49
3.5.1.2	Questions Asked to Respondents.....	49
3.5.1.2.1	Section A: Particulars of Organization.....	50
3.5.1.2.2	Section B: Particulars of Respondents.....	50
3.5.1.2.3	Section C: Job Satisfaction.....	50
3.5.1.2.4	Section D: Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	51
3.5.1.3	Pilot Testing.....	51
3.5.1.4	Reliability Test.....	52
3.5.1.5	Selection of Samples.....	53
3.5.1.6	Distribution of Questionnaires.....	55
3.5.2	Semi – Structured Interview.....	58
3.5.2.1	Selection of Samples	59
3.5.2.2	Questions Asked to Respondents.....	60
3.6	Data Analysis.....	62
3.6.1	Questionnaire Survey.....	62
3.6.1.1	Descriptive Analysis	63
3.6.1.2	Inferential Analysis.....	63
3.6.1.2.1	Hypothesis Tests.....	64
3.6.1.2.1.1	Overview of Parametric Tests and Nonparametric Tests.....	64
3.6.1.2.1.2	Choosing the Hypothesis Testing Approach for this Research.....	64
3.6.1.2.1.3	Nonparametric Methods of Hypothesis Test Available in SPSS 21.0 for Windows for Two Independent Sample Tests.....	65
3.6.1.2.1.4	Choosing The Nonparametric Methods for this Research.....	69
3.6.2	Semi-Structured Interview.....	70
3.7	Triangulation.....	72
3.8	Operational Research Framework.....	72
3.9	Summary.....	75

CHAPTER FOUR: PRELIMINARY STUDY.....	76
4.1 Introduction.....	76
4.2 Job Satisfaction on Working Environment	76
4.3 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention	80
4.4 Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	80
4.5 Summary.....	82
CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY.....	83
5.1 Introduction.....	83
5.2 Response.....	83
5.3 Analysis.....	84
5.3.1 Reliability Test.....	84
5.3.2 Particulars of Respondent.....	85
5.3.3 Turnover Intention.....	89
5.3.4 Level of Job Satisfaction.....	89
5.3.4.1 Construct: Opportunities and rewards.....	89
5.3.4.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	92
5.3.4.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior.....	93
5.3.4.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	95
5.3.4.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	97
5.3.4.6 Construct: Attitude towards Work.....	99
5.3.4.7 Discussion on Job Satisfaction.....	101
5.3.5 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention.....	108
5.3.5.1 Hypothesis Testing.....	108
5.3.5.1.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	109
5.3.5.1.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	110
5.3.5.1.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior.....	112
5.3.5.1.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	115
5.3.5.1.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	116
5.3.5.1.6 Construct: Attitude towards Work.....	118
5.3.5.2 Discussion on Relationship Between Turnover Intention and Job Satisfaction	120
5.3.6 Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	123
5.3.6.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	123
5.3.6.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	125
5.3.6.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior.....	127
5.3.6.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	129
5.3.6.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	131
5.3.6.6 Construct: Motivation Strategies.....	133
5.3.6.7 Construct: Quality Supervision.....	135
5.3.6.8 Discussion on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	137
5.3.7 Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Grouping Variables: Intention to Quit).....	143

5.3.7.1 Hypothesis Testing.....	143
5.3.7.1.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	143
5.3.7.1.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	145
5.3.7.1.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior.....	146
5.3.7.1.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	148
5.3.7.1.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	150
5.3.7.1.6 Construct: Motivation Strategies.....	152
5.3.7.1.7 Construct: Quality Supervision.....	154
5.3.7.2 Discussion of Hypothesis Testing on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	156
5.4 Summary.....	157
CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: SEMI - STRUCTURED INTERVIEW.....	159
6.1 Introduction.....	159
6.2 Job Satisfaction.....	159
6.2.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	159
6.2.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	163
6.2.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior..	164
6.2.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	166
6.2.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	168
6.2.6 Construct: Attitude towards Work.....	170
6.2.7 Discussion on Job Satisfaction.....	171
6.3 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention	174
6.3.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	174
6.3.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	175
6.3.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior..	177
6.3.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	178
6.3.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	179
6.3.6 Construct: Attitude towards Work.....	179
6.2.7 Discussion on the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention.....	180
6.4 Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	182
6.4.1 Construct: Opportunities and Rewards.....	182
6.4.2 Construct: Nature of Work.....	183
6.4.3 Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior..	184
6.4.4 Construct: Organizational Factors.....	185
6.4.5 Construct: Social Interaction.....	186
6.4.6 Construct: Motivation Strategies.....	187
6.4.7 Construct: Quality Supervision.....	188
6.4.8 Discussion on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention.....	188
6.5 Summary.....	195
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION...	196
7.1 Introduction.....	196
7.2 Conclusion.....	196
7.2.1 Research Objectives 1: To Determine Level of Job Satisfaction among Technical Employees in Quantity	196

Surveying Firms.....	
7.2.2 Research Objectives 2: To Examine the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention on Technical Employees Of Quantity Surveying Firms.....	197
7.2.3 Research Objectives 3: To Suggest Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention among Technical Employees of Quantity Surveying Firms.....	197
7.3 Limitations.....	199
7.4 Recommendations for Future Research.....	200
REFERENCES.....	201
APPENDIX I : Questionnaire Survey Form	
APPENDIX II: Questions For Semi – Structured Interview (Technical Employee)	
APPENDIX III: Questions For Semi – Structured Interview (Human Resources Employee)	
APPENDIX IV: Database of Registered Quantity Surveying Firms	
APPENDIX V: Analysis of SPSS	
APPENDIX VI: Certificate of MICRA	
APPENDIX VII: Certificate of UMRAN	

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Summary of Literature Review on Constructs of Job Satisfaction	14
Table 2.2	Summary on Constructs of Job Satisfaction	16
Table 2.3	Summary of Literature Review on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention	28
Table 2.4	Summary of Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention	31
Table 2.5	Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention	32
Table 2.6	Summary of Similar Research (Construction Industry)	40
Table 2.7	Summary of Similar Research (Other Industries)	41
Table 3.1	Preliminary Study: Profile of Respondents	47
Table 3.2	Details of Pilot Test	52
Table 3.3	Number of Technical Employees in Quantity Surveying Firms	54
Table 3.4	Summary of Review on Number of Interviewees	59
Table 3.5	Details of Semi- Structured Interviews	60
Table 3.6	Summary of Techniques Used for Data Collection	61
Table 3.7	Summary of Hypothesis Tests of Similar Researches	70
Table 3.8	Summary of Techniques for Data Collection and Analysis	71
Table 4.1	Summary of Actual Working Environment in Quantity Surveying Firms	79
Table 4.2	Summary of Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention	80
Table 4.3	Summary of Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention	81
Table 5.1	Summary of Sample Size over Population	84

Table 5.2	Result of Cronbach's Alpha	85
Table 5.3	Gender	86
Table 5.4	Age	86
Table 5.5	Education Level	87
Table 5.6	Years of Experience	87
Table 5.7	Position	88
Table 5.8	Registration With BQSM	88
Table 5.9	Intention to Quit	89
Table 5.10	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Opportunities and Rewards)	91
Table 5.11	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Nature of Work)	93
Table 5.12	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Working Relationship With Immediate Superior)	95
Table 5.13	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Organizational Factors)	97
Table 5.14	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Social Interaction)	99
Table 5.15	Level of Job Satisfaction (Construct: Attitude Towards Work)	101
Table 5.16	Summary of Level of Job Satisfaction: Percentage Agree or Strongly Agree Less Than 50.0%	102
Table 5.17	Summary of Level of Job Satisfaction: Percentage Agreed or Strongly Agreed Between 50.0% to 66.6%	104
Table 5.18	Summary of Level of Job Satisfaction: Percentage Agree or Strongly Agree More Than 66.6%	106
Table 5.19	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Opportunities and Rewards)	110
Table 5.20	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Nature of Work)	112

Table 5.21	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Working Relationship with Immediate Superior)	114
Table 5.22	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Organizational Factors)	116
Table 5.23	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Social Interaction)	118
Table 5.24	Hypothesis Testing on Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention (Construct: Attitude Towards Work)	120
Table 5.25	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Opportunities and Rewards)	125
Table 5.26	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Nature of Work)	127
Table 5.27	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Working Relationship With Immediate Superior)	129
Table 5.28	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Organizational Factors)	131
Table 5.29	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Social Interaction)	133
Table 5.30	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Motivation Strategies)	135
Table 5.31	Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Quality Supervision)	137
Table 5.32	Summary of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention	142
Table 5.33	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Opportunities and Rewards)	144
Table 5.34	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Nature of Work)	146
Table 5.35	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Working Relationship With Immediate Superior)	148
Table 5.36	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Organizational Factors)	150

Table 5.37	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Social Interaction)	152
Table 5.38	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Motivation Strategies)	154
Table 5.39	Hypothesis Testing of Items on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention (Construct: Quality Supervision)	156
Table 6.1	Summary of Overall of Research Findings on Job Satisfaction	172
Table 6.2	Summary of Overall of Research Findings on Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention	180
Table 6.3	Summary of Overall of Research Findings on Strategies to Reduce Turnover Intention	189

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Flowchart of Structure of Research	9
Figure 3.1	Triangulation Process	72
Figure 3.2	Operational Research Framework	74

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

QS	:Quantity Surveyors
BQSM	: Boards of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia
RICS	: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
ISM	: Institution of Surveyors Malaysia
SPSS	: Statistical Package for Social Science
et al	: and others
n.d	: not dated
BQ	: Bill of Quantities
etc	: and so forth
IT	: Information Technology
UK	: United Kingdom
Cont'd	: Continued
RM	: Ringgit Malaysia
TUDM	: Tentera Udara di Raja Malaysia
pg	: Page
i.e	: That is
ISO	: International Standards Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Leopold et al. (1999), human resources refer to efforts, skills, or skills of people who contribute to support an organization. Human resources are important to support an organization to continue its success. Mosammod Mahamuda and Nurul Kabir (2011) mentioned that human resources are the core foundation and major contributor to the development of an organization. Human resources drive the success of an organization. According to Wan Suziana et al. (2013), one of the critical factors to success is rely on employees in an organization. It is because the growth and success of an organization is from the contribution of its employees.

The issue of employee turnover is widely discussed in the literatures of the organizational behavior. According to Kuo (2011), employee turnover is a degree of individuals quitting the membership of an organization Tanvir and Shahi (2012) explained that turnover among employees occurs when they decide to leave their jobs. It comes after an employee has a turnover intention which is referred to as having a feeling to leave an organization. According to Tett and Meyer (1993), turnover intention is the willingness of an employee to leave an organization. Nazim (2008) mentioned that turnover intention occurs when an employee has intention to quit from his or her current organization. It is also known as one's behavioral intention to quit from an organization.

Turnover intention leads to actual turnover. Several factors have been identified as the factors causing turnover intention. Martin (2010) listed the

availability of promotion and career development, the prospect of higher pay, interpersonal conflicts with colleagues, the existence of poor human resources policies and personal reasons are the factors causing turnover intention. Nankervis et al. (2005) found that the reason of a turnover is because of dissatisfaction with the job itself. Most of the studies conducted found that job satisfaction is a factor for an employee to leave an organization. Sarminah (2006); Nazim (2008); Tanvir and Shahi (2012); Chatzoglou et al. (2011) have identified that job satisfaction affects the employees intention to leave an organization. According to Chatzoglou et al. (2011), job satisfaction is defined as a feeling of an employee towards his or her job. Besides, Tanvir and Shahi (2012) explained that, job satisfaction is an employee's emotion towards their job and how they evaluate their job. Puvada and Gudivada (2012) on the other hand referred job satisfaction as a set of emotional feelings of an employee about the work and organization. Habib et al. (2010) described job satisfaction as a positive feeling based on an individual's job and experiences. In other words, job satisfaction describes an individual feeling towards their jobs.

Quantity Surveyors are among the key players involved in a construction project. Rabie and Riad (2011) mentioned that a Quantity Surveyor has an important role in the construction process. Hee and Ling (2011) described that Quantity Surveyors are professionals involved in procurement, cost and contract management in construction projects. According to Nkado and Meyer (2001), a Quantity Surveyor involves in the financial and contractual matters starting from the initiation stage until to the completion of handling a construction. Thus, a Quantity Surveyor is the key player who has the responsibility in handling financial, contract management and others. This study is concerned on the issue of job satisfaction and turnover intention among Quantity Surveyors.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

An organization depends on the support from employees to attain high productivity and performances. The employees determine the achievements of an organization since they have a responsibility towards the organization. Thus, the organization should play a big role in identifying the problems and issues encountered by the employees in the organization.

Employee turnover becomes a major obstacle to an organization as it might affect the productivity and long-term plan of the organization. According to Vangel (2011), an organization has to face a loss in term of investment in human capital due to employee turnover. Velez (1993) as cited in Hussain et al. (2011) stated that a turnover of employees requires the organization to spend a high cost of recruitment for recruiting new staffs. According to Mosammod Mahamuda and Nurul Kabir (2011), replacing a new employee might be costly to an organization. Mitchell et al. (2001) argued that the estimated cost of replacing a new employee is twice of an individual's annual salary. It is because replacing the new employees requires organizations to provide training for them. Mitchell et al. (2001) further explained that an organization has incurred heavy investment in terms of time, money and other resources due to high turnover rate among the employees. It is therefore important for organizations to minimize the turnover intention.

According to Igharia and Greenhaus (1992), high employee turnover brings problems to an organization in terms of shortage of expertise and requirement of high training cost to train new employees. Nazim (2008) identified that turnover brings negative issues to an organization in the form of direct and indirect costs. According to Staw (1980) as cited in Nazim (2008), direct cost refers to the selection, recruitment, induction and training of new employees. Meanwhile, Dess and Shaw

(2001) explained that the cost of learning, reduced morale, pressure on the existing employees and the loss of social capital are known as the indirect cost of employee turnover. Sarminah (2006) mentioned that the disadvantages of an employee turnover in terms of personal cost such as loss of benefits, friendships and caused family disruption. Hurley and Estelami (2007) mentioned that employee turnover also involves non-monetary costs which are loss of expertise, experience, knowledge and relationship.

According to Yirenkyi - Fianko and Chileshe (2012), job satisfaction has been identified as a factor of turnover intention. Chatzoglou et al. (2011) mentioned that high job satisfaction level encourages employees to work with high motivation and stay longer in an organization. Brookfield (1998) agreed that higher level of job satisfaction among employees increases productivity, job performances and willingness to stay longer in an organization. Boles et al. (1997) argued the decrease of an employee turnover is the consequence of having a high level of job satisfaction. According to Onukwube (2012), job satisfaction is important because it significantly affects an organization in terms of individual performances, organizational productivity, employees' absenteeism and the rate of employees' turnover. It is believed that job satisfaction affects an employee's intention to leave an organization. Thus it is important to keep employees to attain satisfaction towards their jobs as well as the organization.

Loosemore et al. (2003) highlighted the importance of job satisfaction and motivation to the well-being of the construction industry which are reducing lateness, absenteeism and employee turnover. Leung et al. (2008) stated that if construction professionals have an emotional attachment to the tasks it will increase their professional knowledge, job performance and job satisfaction. Few studies have been

carried out on job satisfaction among Quantity Surveyors (Bowen et al. 2008; Yirenkyi - Fianko and Chileshe 2012; Onukwube 2012; Luqman Oyenkunle et al. 2012). Generally, the findings of previous studies have shown that many of Quantity Surveyors in Nigeria are dissatisfied with the salary received, lack of recognition and chances on promotion.

A preliminary study was conducted to explore the phenomenon of the job satisfaction and turnover intention among technical employees in Quantity Surveying firms. Seventeen (17) respondents were involved in the preliminary study. Out from the seventeen (17) respondents, fifteen (15) of them have the intention of leaving their current organizations whereas the other two (2) do not have any intention of leaving their current organizations. Majority of the respondents agreed that job satisfaction is the cause for them leaving their organization. According to some of the respondents, they did not get any job satisfaction because of the nature of the work of a Quantity Surveyor (e.g. taking- off, tender documents, etc.). Some of the respondents also claimed that they are not satisfied with their salary.

Several studies have been conducted on job satisfaction and turnover intention in various organizations such as educational institutions, pharmaceuticals, accounting firms and constructions (Nazim, 2008; Tanvir and Shahi, 2012; Chatzoglou et al., 2011; Kuo, 2011; Hee and Ling, 2011). It is proved that job satisfaction and turnover intention are not widely explored in construction industry focusing on professional employees. Very limited studies are found on job satisfaction and turnover intention in the context of technical employees of the Quantity Surveying firms in Malaysia. Therefore, this research is proposed to fill the gap of understanding on the matters pertaining to job satisfaction and turnover intention among technical employees in