

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will be focusing on the methods used in conducting this research which includes the types of data used, the sampling design, the research instruments, data collection procedures and the technique used for data analysis.

3.1 TYPES OF DATA

The data explored for this study was obtained through primary data research and secondary information sources. The primary data research was done by conducting a survey.

The secondary data research was gathered mainly from journals, newspapers and magazines from University Malaya libraries via ProQuest and Emerald search engines. Other secondary data was obtained from the National Library of Malaysia and the World Wide Web.

The secondary data was acquired to give an overview on the concept of training and organizational commitment. Studies by local and international scholars pertaining to the antecedents of organizational commitment were also explored. Additionally, the secondary data provided a basis for the questionnaire developed for the survey conducted.

3.2 SAMPLING DESIGN

A stratified sampling approach is used where targeted organization will be similar in size (number of employees employed). This is done to avoid bias or error because it is a known fact that smaller organization will provide little training and

thus, affects the findings. According to Brown (1990), organization size can be used as a control variable in the analysis and previous research has shown that organizations with more than one hundred employees provide more training. Therefore, in this research, organizations with more than hundred employees and conduct training will be targeted.

The sample was confined to employees working with various organizations within the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor area. The target population for the study is white-collar workers, employed in the private and public sector, who had participated in an informal or formal training program with their current organization. 300 questionnaires were distributed and 204 were received and used for the final analysis. This represents an overall response rate of 68 percent. Some of the companies involved are Hong Leong Bank, Telekom, Petronas, OSK Holdings Berhad, YTL Company, Sunway College, Multi-Purpose Insurans Berhad, Ernst & Young, Sime Darby, EON, RHB, and Great Eastern. There were 37 companies that had participated in this study and most requested that the identity of their company to be kept confidential.

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Survey research methodology was employed in this study. The survey instrument was a six-page questionnaire prepared in English (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Section A was designed to measure the demographics information of the individual employees. Section B measures the antecedents of commitment, while Section C measures the variables in training. Section D was designed to gain more information about training from the respondents.

3.3.1 Demographic Profiles

Section A was designed to collect demographic information of the respondents to give a meaningful interpretation of the results. This section covers gender, age, race, education level, annual income, job status, industry, tenure, types of training used in organization, frequency and duration of the training session. The variables were assessed using the options scales that vary between two-options to five-options respectively. Information on the types of training, frequency and duration of training will be treated as Training Variable 1 – Availability of training.

3.3.2 Organizational Commitment

Section B contained 19 general statements regarding individual commitment towards their organization. Likert-scale was incorporated in this section. The respondents need to indicate the extent to which they agreed on the statements by circling the appropriate numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) which represents the following meaning: 1, Strongly Disagree; 2, Disagree; 3, Uncertain; 4, Agree; or 5, Strongly Agree. Scores on negative items were reversed.

Several of Allen and Meyer's (1990) 24-item scales were incorporated in the study. The 3-scales (19-items) were used to measure organizational commitment, while each of the scale was used to measure one of its three dimensions i.e. affective, continuance, and normative commitment. These items were selected because they seem most clearly to approximate the feelings of liking for, pride in, and valuation of organizational membership assumed to underlie the form of organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment (OC) will be the dependent variable. The questions have 19 item scale (Question 1 – 19) and will be divided into 3 sub-variables as follows:

- OC Variable 1 : Affective commitment (Likert-scale question 1 – 7).

Affective commitment was measured using seven-items from Meyer and Allen's (1984) affective commitment scale. Sample items are, "I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization" and "I feel like I am part of the family at eh company for which I work."

- OC Variable 2 : Normative commitment (Likert-scale question 8 -13).

Measured with the normative commitment scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1988, 1990). Examples would be, "I feel a strong obligation to stay on my job" and "My organization deserves my loyalty."

- OC Variable 3 : Continuance commitment (Likert-scale question 14 – 19).

Measured with the normative commitment scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1988, 1990). Illustrative items are, "I don't have any other choice but to stay on my present job" and "It would be too costly for me to leave my organization now."

3.3.3 Training

Section C was developed to investigate the effect of variables in training towards organizational commitment. Section C adopted the same instrument as in Section B which used the Likert-scale. Training is viewed as the independent variable and will be divided into 4 sub-variables as follows:

- Training Variable 2 : Social support for training (Question20 -26).

Few statements from the survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) were used to assess levels of support from top management. An example is, "The management takes pride in my accomplishment."

- Training Variable 3 : Motivation to learn (Question 27 -30).

The statements are specifically related to respondents' motivations to learn in training such as, "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort in training, beyond what is normally expected, in order to improve my performance and the organization as a whole."

- Training Variable 4 : Training environment (Question 31 – 35).

The statements were developed to examine whether training environment plays an important role in enhancing commitment. A sample item is, "My organization provides a good physical training environment."

- Training Variable 5: Benefits of training (Question 36 – 41).

The statements were developed to explore whether the recognized benefits of training are important in affecting organizational commitment. Example is, "Training helps me to enhance my performance and thus allows me to get a promotion sooner."

3.3.4 Types And Benefits Of Training

Section D was designed merely to obtain further information regarding the types of training being held at the respondent's organizations. Further, respondents were also asked to list additional benefits they could acquire after training.

Open-ended questions were used to identify additional factors that could help in explaining individual's commitment towards their organization.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The survey was conducted over a two-week period in the month of April 2002 using personal interviews and self-administered methods. For personal interviews, a selected number of employees were asked to participate in a 15 minutes interview. Participation was voluntary, and the respondent names were kept confidential.

Self-administered survey methods were most often used where a key person at each organization was requested to act as a distributing agent. In addition, pre-packaged survey, including return envelopes, were mailed to some corporate offices for distribution to their employees. Each of the survey questionnaires included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey. The subjects were told that filling out the questionnaire was optional and were assured that their anonymity would be protected. To ensure anonymity, they were not required to write their name on the questionnaire sheets.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The survey data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 10.0 program. The analysis consisted of several parts namely :

- Summarization of the demographic profiles of the respondents. Statistical tools such as frequency counts, means, and standard deviations.
- The reliability was measured by Cronbach's alpha.

- Factor analysis technique was used to identify important dimensions of training variables in Section C.
- Bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between variables.
- Stepwise regression analysis was used to find the most important predictor of commitment.
- One-way ANOVA with Post-Hoc Analysis was used to determine differences in group means.