

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter further elaborated the methodology of the study. The research hypotheses is first presented, followed by the measurement of the constructs, questionnaire design, research sampling techniques, data collection technique and finally by a description of the data analysis technique being used.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

Based on the research framework discussed in the previous chapter, below are the list of the hypotheses being proposed for this study :

**H1 : Used of benefits (UsedFWA) will have a direct positive relationship with the employee's Organizational Commitment (OC)**

**H2: Perceived Value of Benefits (PVOB) will positively relate to Perceived Organizational Support (POS)**

**H3: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) will positively relate to the employee's Organizational Commitment (OC)**

**H4 : Organizational Commitment (OC) will have a significant inverse relationship with employee's Turnover Intention (TI)**

**H5 : Perceived Organizational Support (POS) will fully mediates the relationship between employee's Perceived Value of Benefits (PVOB) and Organizational Commitment (OC)**

### **3.3 MEASUREMENT OF CONSTRUCTS**

Generally, the main objective of this research study is to investigate the relationships among the variables. Previous researchers recommended that the evaluation of work-life practices can be enhanced by better measurement of specific practices and practice combinations, and by focusing on the function of the practice (e.g., reducing work hours, increasing schedule flexibility, or assisting with care giving responsibilities). In this vein, we shall only focus to investigate the 2 dimension of FWA (i.e. time & location) which predict to increase the employee schedule flexibility and at the same time to enhance their ability to better manage their work-personal demands.

Three types of variables have been identified in this study, namely, independent (predictor) variable(s) : Benefits of Flexible Working Arrangement including both (i) Used of FWA Benefits and (ii) Perceived Value of FWA Benefits, dependent variable (Organizational Commitment : Affective, Continue and Normative) and Turnover Intention. Whereas, Perceived Organizational Support (POS) will act as a mediator.

In this study, multi-item scales were developed to investigate the employee's perception towards the benefits provided (benefits used and perceived value of benefits) of Flexible Working Arrangement as one of the common work-life benefits and to explore its relationship with employee' organizational commitment mediating through POS and it subsequent effect on employee's turnover intention.

The measurements of the constructs in this study were adopted from the previous studies and all the scales used were reported reliable and valid.

Respondents were firstly being presented with a checklist to measure on their current workplace setting and was asked to place a checkmark next to each options deployed by their organization. i.e. (i) flexitime, (ii) compressed work week, (iii) telecommuting / work from home, (iv) traditional working hours. Respondents are allowed to mark more than 1 options of the checkbox above if their workplace facilitate with variety options of FWA covered under our scope of study. We assigned “1” to respondent who marked on “Flexitime”, “2” for “Compressed work week”, “3” for “Flexplace” (Work from home/telecommuting), “4” for “traditional working hours” and lastly “5” for those having the “Flexitime” and “Flexplace” at the same time in their workplace. This question is served as a reference question to better access and understand the respondents’ current workplace setting.

### **3.3.1. Used of FWA as a Work-life benefits**

We adopted the commonly used dichotomous “have used” or “have not used” to measure (Lambert, 2000) the Used of FWA as one of the work life benefits by asking the respondents “If the below FWA (Flexitime / Flexplace) are facilitated at your workplace, have you used the benefits during your employment with the organization ?” This is important as respondents may not necessary used the

benefits even the options of FWA are available at their workplace and this may result a different individual experiences in concerning to Flexible Working Arrangement usage as WLB (Work life Benefits)

We summed the answers to the two questions into one categorical variable that represented the respondents used of the benefits of FWA. We assigned “1” to respondent who “have used” the benefits of FWA (Flexitime and Flexplace) and “0” for those respondents that “have not used” the benefits even the options of the FWA are facilitated at their workplace. This is consistent with other researchers (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Grover & Crooker, 1995), who has also accessed the benefits as one of the symbol that organizational concern for work and family issues.

Meanwhile, we also adopted the Muse et al. (2008) expanded measurement to account for the degree of the use of the benefits being offered by employer; by using the scale ranging from 1 = “Never” to 5 = “Many times”. With respect of this, respondents were asked “How often have you used each of the benefit listed below (Flexitime / Flexplace) during your employment with the organization ?” This question is only served as an additional reference on how frequent the respondents are intended to use the FWA options being facilitated at their workplace.

**Table 3.1**  
**Items to Measure the Benefits used of FWA**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Source</b>
1	If the below Flexible Working Arrangement are facilitated at your workplace, have you used the benefits during your employment with the organization ? (Flexitime : Flex-hours/Compressed Work Week)	Muse et al. (2008) & Lambert, (2000)
2	If the below Flexible Working Arrangement are facilitated at your workplace, have you used the benefits during your employment with the organization ? (Flexplace : Work from home / telecommuting)	Muse et al. (2008) & Lambert, (2000)
3	How often have you used each of the benefit listed below during your employment with the organization ? (Flexitime : Flex-hours/Compressed Work Week)	Muse et al. (2008)
4	How often have you used each of the benefit listed below during your employment with the organization ? (Flexplace : Work from home / telecommuting)	Muse et al. (2008)

### **3.3.2 Perceived value of Benefits (FWA)**

We replicated the measurement similar to Haar & Spell's (2004) and Muse et al (2008) to access the Perceived value of work-life benefits by asking the respondents to indicate "How valuable is the {Flexible Working Arrangement i.e. Flexitime and Flexplace}to you ?"on a 5-point scale (1 = "not valuable at all" to 5 = "very valuable"). Consistently to Muse et al (2008) concern, we also wish to take into respondents consideration on the potential future value of the benefits as well as its present value, hence, we also asked the respondents on "How valuable do you think each of the benefits below is or could be in the future to you and your family ?" followed by the 2 FWAs benefits i.e. Flexitime and Flexplace by deploying the same 5-point scale (1 = "not valuable at all" to 5 = "very valuable"). We summed the answers of the four questions into one

categorical of variable to access an overall perceived value of employees towards the FWA (flexitime & flexiplace) at their workplace. In this study, the construct is ascertained with an alpha values  $\alpha = 0.898$

**Table 3.2**  
**Items to Measure the Perceived value of Benefits FWA**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Source</b>
1	How valuable is the Flexitime (flex-hours/compressed work week) to you as a work life benefits ?	Muse et al., (2008), Haar & Spell (2004)
2	How valuable is the Flexiplace (work from home/telecommuting) to you as a work life benefits ?	Muse et al., (2008), Haar & Spell (2004)
3	How valuable do you think Flexitime (flex-hours/compressed work week) as a work life benefits is or could be in the future to you and your family	Muse et al. (2008)
4	How valuable do you think Flexiplace (work from home/telecommuting) as a work life benefits is or could be in the future to you and your family	Muse et al. (2008)

### **3.3.3. Perceived Organizational Support (POS)**

Consistent with prior research studies (Muse et al, 2008, Lambert 2000, Eisenberger et al, 1986, Bermen, 1997; Lynch, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 1999; Settoon et al., 1996) measure on this construct, POS was accessed with a ten-item shortened and modified version developed by Eisenberger et al's (1986) index. We employed a respond scale that anchored at 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree" similar to scale used by Muse at. al. (2008). In this study, the construct is ascertained with an alpha values  $\alpha = 0.892$

**Table 3.3**  
**Items to Measure the Perceived Organization Support (POS)**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Source</b>
1	The organization takes into account of my goals and values	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
2	The organization take consideration of my best interest when it makes decisions that affect me	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
3	Help is available from my organization when I have a personal problem	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
4	The organization is really cares about my well being	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
5	If I did the best job, the organization would notice	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
6	The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
7	The organization show concern for me	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
8	The organization cares about my opinions	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
9	The organization takes pride in my accomplishment at work	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
10	The organization is willing to go out of its way to help me to perform my job to the best of my ability	Eisenberger et al. (1986)

### **3.3.4 Organizational Commitment**

We deployed the Allen and Meyer (1990) three component model of organizational commitment to measure affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The original version 8 items scale of Meyer and Allen for each components (affective, continue and normative) were modified and used to measure the employees' organizational commitment, with scale ranged from 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree". In order to minimize the confusion of respondents of their replying on the questionnaire, all the negative worded questions has been pre convert to positive worded questions. In this study, the construct is ascertained with an alpha values as following : Affective Commitment

$\alpha = 0.855$ , Continue Commitment  $\alpha = 0.842$ , Normative Commitment  $\alpha = 0.863$  and Total Organizational Commitment  $\alpha = 0.741$

**Table 3.4**  
**Items to Measure the Organizational Commitment**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Source</b>
	<b>(i) Affective Commitment</b>	
1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
2	I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it	Allen & Meyer (1990)
3	I really feel as if this organization's problem are my own	Allen & Meyer (1990)
4	I don't think I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one	Allen & Meyer (1990)
5	I do feel like "part of the family" at my organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
6	I do feel "emotionally attached" to this organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
7	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	Allen & Meyer (1990)
8	I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
	<b>(ii) Continue Commitment</b>	
1	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	Allen & Meyer (1990)
2	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now even if I wanted to	Allen & Meyer (1990)
3	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now	Allen & Meyer (1990)
4	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
5	If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere	Allen & Meyer (1990)
6	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives	Allen & Meyer (1990)
7	It would be too costly for me to leave my organization now	Allen & Meyer (1990)

**(Table 3.4 continued)**

8	One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that leaving would requires considerable personal sacrifice – another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here	Allen & Meyer (1990)
	<b>(iii) Normative Commitment</b>	
1	I do feel an obligation to remain with my current employer	Allen & Meyer (1990)
2	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now	Allen & Meyer (1990)
3	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now	Allen & Meyer (1990)
4	This organization deserves my loyalty	Allen & Meyer (1990)
5	I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it	Allen & Meyer (1990)
6	I owe a great deal to my organization	Allen & Meyer (1990)
7	I think that people these days move from organization to organization too often	Allen & Meyer (1990)
8	Jumping from organization to organization seem unethical to me	Allen & Meyer (1990)

### 3.3.5 Turnover Intention

We deployed the three items scale to measure the employee turnover intention.

In this study, the construct is ascertained with an alpha values  $\alpha = 0.875$

**Table 3.5**  
**Items to Measure the Perceived Turnover Intention**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Source</b>
1	I often think about quitting the job	Lori Michelle Berman (2007)
2	I properly will look for a new job in a short couple of months	Lori Michelle Berman (2007)
3	I am actively looking for a new job	Lori Michelle Berman (2007)

### **3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN**

Self-administrative questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument for this research study. This method of instrument allowed the researchers to collect the most up to date and prompt-in responses from the studied population especially when dealing with these kind of social phenomenon (eg : perception of people towards work-life conflict and or work life balance may change over the period of time due to changes of environmental and social factors etc). Hence, questionnaire could be considered as one of the most conveniences and economically (in terms of time and cost) collection method that can easily accessible to the targeted respondents.

#### **3.4.1 Designing the Questionnaire**

A 8-page questionnaire was developed as the survey instrument (see Appendix 1 for the survey questionnaire). The questionnaire was designed to include with a covering letter to generally describe the purposes of the research background and objective as well as to obtain the consent of the respondents to voluntary participate in this survey. All the questions was designed in a closed-ended and simple manner. On top, the questions were all adopted and replicated from previous researchers.

The questionnaire was designed into two parts. The part I consisted with all the predictor and conceptual items intended to reveal the perception of respondents towards the used and value of FWA benefits provided (Flextime & Flexplace) at

their workplace and the subsequent questions to explore on the relationships among the variable outcomes (POS, Organizational commitments and employee turnover intention). Mainly, Part I was segregated into 5 sections, i.e. Section A : Used of Flexible Working Arrangement (as a work life benefits) Section B : Perceived Value of Benefits, Section C : Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Section D : Organizational Commitment (affective, continue and normative) and Section E : Turnover Intention.

In order to propel a more common and simplified understanding from the respondents during their answering of the questionnaire, we have slightly modified the wording on some of the items in the questionnaire. At the same time, the reverse (negative) coded items questionnaire has also been converted back to the normal (positive) coded due to we found that some of respondents seems confused with the wording and question structure especially on the reverse code items during the pilot test.

On the other hand, Part II with total of 10 questions was designed to capture the respondent's personal information and work profile. Out of the 10 questions, 6 of them were dealt with respondent's demographic characteristics such as gender, age, ethnic, marital status, personal income and level of education; 3 questions on work profile, i.e. type of organization, job category and tenure with the organization and the last 2 questions was designed to more understand the respondents current life-cycle (the possible degree of personal / family

commitments respondents may have to bear at their current life cycle) such as number of dependent under care and how heavily personnel commitment they have had to arrange care for their siblings/family members.

### **3.4.2 Pilot Test**

In developing the questionnaire for this study, a pilot test with 20 randomly pick respondents have been selected to answer the pilot test questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for the survey questionnaire- Questionnaire - Pilot test). The pilot test has demonstrated the below problems :

1. Non FWA respondents (FWA options were not facilitate at their current workplace and they did not have any experiences of dealing or using the FWA at their pass working experiences) are not able to demonstrate the expected norm of reciprocity effect between the employer-employee relationship.
2. Some respondents tick more than one answer for question which required them to tick only one answer.
3. Some respondents have misunderstood about the questions asked; especially for the negative worded questions.

After inspection of the returned questionnaires, further refinements on the questionnaires were incorporated and clearer instructions were given to the respondents.

### **3.5 SAMPLING DESIGN AND PROCEDURE**

This research is designed to be conducted in which data are gathered just once (cross sectional) for a period of two months in order to reach the research objectives.

Although being explained by the previous researchers (Muse et al, 2008, Haar and Spell, 2004, Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner's, 1998) that "when testing for reciprocation between employers and employees, the organization researched should ideally already offer multiple work-family practices and have been doing so for some time, thus allowing for a moral obligation to develop" (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner's, 1998)

However, due to the limitation on the specific suitable sampling site is being recognized, especially in Malaysia where the adoptability of FWAs still gaining a very limited and restricted attention from practitioners, we thus collected the multiple sources of data using a more general population by distribute the developed questionnaire through a group of FWA users respondents. These group of respondents are then required to complete the self-administrative questionnaire and voluntarily in assisting to distribute the questionnaire to others potential respondents (FWA users) by adopting a snowball sampling. With this, a total of 250 sets of questionnaire were distributed out and 200 set was collected which accounted for 80% of respondent rate.

### **3.5.1 Target Population**

The target population for this study were mainly focus on those companies and business entities which has currently facilitated and adopted with Flexible Working Arrangement options to their employees at a workplace context (ie : Flextime/Flex-hours, compressed work week, work from home & telecommuting). Generally, the industries targeted and accessible including : IT industry, Telecommunication and networking industry, servicing and minority from Academic entities.

### **3.5.2 Sample Size**

The sample size is important as it represent the stake of generalisability. Different authors tend to give different guideline concerning the number case for conducting a multiple regression analysis (Pallant J, 2007). Tabachinick and Fidell (2007, p.72) formula was applied for calculating the sample size requirements. Taking into account the number of independent variables to use :  $N > 50 + 8m$  (where  $m$  = number of independent variables). In our case, there are 2 predictor independents, namely, the “Used of Benefits” and “Perceived value of benefits”, hence the minimum requirement for the sample size is :  $50 + 8(2) = 66$ . Hence, the useable sample size of  $N = 189$  is considered adequate in this study.

## **3.6 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

The data were collected by using a self-administered questionnaire through a

group of FWA users respondents who have participated in the survey anonymously and voluntary. These group of respondents are then required to complete the self-administrative questionnaire and voluntary in assisting to distribute the questionnaire to others potential respondents (FWA users) by adopting a snowball sampling. A total of 250 set of questionnaires were distributed and 200 questionnaires were being returned with a respond rate of 80 %. Data were being collected within two month time flame. Out of 200 respondents, only 189 set of questionnaire were useable for analysis after excluded 11 set of unused questionnaire set due to invalid and incomplete responses.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES**

All the data collected through the self-administered questionnaire were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 16 program. All survey data were coded, categorized and input into SPSS. In order to achieve the objective of the study, several statistical tests were applied, namely Descriptive Statistic, Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression analysis.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has layout all the research methodology of this study. The measurement of the construct, questionnaire designed, sampling and data collection procedure has also been discussed in this chapter.