The relationship between perceived organizational support and employee’s turnover intention through supportive co-worker workshop in division B at Company X

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In today’s business situation, retaining employee still be a major challenge to compete in the real market. The extent to which an employee is committed to the organization is often based on exchange relationship between organization and employee. Since employees are critical components in the organization, effort be must put to increase their perception of organizational support as a key predictor of turnover intentions. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship of perceived organizational support (POS) and employee turnover intentions. Moreover, this study aims is also to determine the most effective intervention for decreasing turnover intention. This research was conducted in Division B at Company X, a pharmaceutical and chemical company in Jakarta with a home base in Germany that struggling with turnover intention. An online survey using questionnaire was done on 103 employees in Division B of Company X to determine the relationship between the two variables. The employees were selected using simple random sampling. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between POS and turnover intention. It can be interpreted that the higher score of perceived organizational support, the lower score of turnover intention and vice versa. Based on the result, an intervention that can increase perceived organizational support was designed in the form of supportive co-worker workshop.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, supportive co-worker, turnover intention, workshop

Introduction

Nowadays, the productivity of individuals in the organization is an important determinant of the success of a company (Greiner, 2014; Rizwan, 2014). In a company that has a business focus on the sales of products or services, employees’ productivity is a key to get maximum benefit in the long term (Ahearne, Rapp, Hughes, & Jindal, 2010). One of the biggest factors that affect the productivity of an organization is turnover (Tracey & Hinkin, 2008). Every employee who leaves the company would lead to a decrease in productivity level of the organization (Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi, & Shadman, 2011). Turnover itself can be defined as a condition when the employee left the company and was replaced by another employee in a certain period (Kaur, Mohindru, & Pankaj, 2013).

Before an employee decides to leave the company, there is a tendency or inclination that direct the behavior to quit the company. According to Mobley (1977), the turnover intention is a tendency to leave the organization. Kaur et al. (2013) stated that turnover intention is the strongest predictor of turnover. When employees have the intention to quit the organization, it is possible that they will change their job immediately. This behavior is called voluntary turnover (Kaur et al., 2013). Therefore, it can be concluded that turnover intention is an important issue that needs to be discussed more in if a researcher wants to understand the turnover phenomenon.

In Indonesia, data showed that employee’s resignation in 2015 was 10% and increased to 30% in 2016 (Pramita, 2016). Also, Watson Willis Tower Consultant in 2014 stated that as many as 34% of employees in Indonesia expressed a desire to resign from their work and 32% said they might do it (Silaen, 2016). 34% is a high percentage of turnover intention rate when
compared to the average turnover rate in Asian companies in 2014 that ranged from numbers 8-13% (Elkjaer & Filmer, 2015). Based on this, it can be concluded turnover intention in Indonesia is still an interesting issue to discuss and to be studied.

Problems relating to turnover intention could be found in various kinds of organizations. This research was conducted in one of the organizations struggling with turnover intention, Company X, a pharmaceutical and chemical company in Jakarta with a home base in Germany. In 2015, Company X ran a pilot project such as employee engagement survey. All employees in Division B Company X, 238 people in total, had participated in this survey.

The results of the survey indicated a turnover intention related issues in Division B. Only 46% of respondents agreed on the statement "I rarely think about leaving this organization to work somewhere else." Furthermore, the amount of turnover in Division B increased from 9% in 2015 to 14% in 2016, showing that turnover intention was a crucial issue that needs to be discussed further. In comparison, the number of turnover rate as much as 14% in 2016 Division B is higher compared to the turnover rate in Asia that range from 8% to 13% (Elkjaer & Filmer, 2015).

Studies are needed to be done to determine variables that would likely help in decreasing the turnover rate. Aksu (2004) stated that the company could reduce turnover intention by changing the strategy. One strategy that can be developed by the company is to provide a form of support to employees (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Employees who feel the support of the company will tend to feel obligated to bolster the success of the organization and did not think to look for and accept another job (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, and Allen (2007) stated that perceived organizational support is a key predictor of said obligation. This is supported by Dawley, Houghton, and Bucklew (2010) which stated that perceived organizational support is a variable that is most often associated with turnover intention.

According to Eisenberger, Malone, and Presson (2016), “perceived organizational support is the perception of employees about the extent to which organization values their contributions and cares about the employee’s well-being” (p.3). Currently, there is some research that linked perceived organizational support with the turnover intention (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Dawley et al., 2010; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Eisenberger et al. (1990) stated that employees with a higher level of perceived organizational support had fewer possibilities to find employment and receive an offer from other companies. Dawley et al., (2010) stated that perceived organizational support is one of the strongest predictors of turnover intention. There are four aspects in increasing perceived organizational support of employees. They are fairness, organizational reward and job condition, supervisor support, and co-worker support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Hayton, Carnabuci, & Eisenberger, 2012).

The confirmation of the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention in organizations could be the answer to solve problems relating to turnover intention. Interviews with the human resources division were conducted to determine whether there were issues with perceived organizational support. Based on interviews with, two antecedents of the increasing turnover rate from 2015 to 2016 were identified. First, the restructuring in 2016 as a result of changes in drug sales policy of the government that makes three employees being laid off. Second, the more competitive sales. These affected the psychological condition of employees in Division B, especially for field force employees.
Researchers then conducted interviews related to turnover intention issue to 15 employee representatives ranging from staff to manager level in Division B Company X. Based on the results of these interviews, the support of the organization was one of the employee’s main reasons to quit or stay in the company. The reasons for the support of this organization were revealed by 14 of the 15 people interviewed employees of the B Division.

There was four support types that perceived as lacking by employees in Division B. First, the lack of employee development, such as training and other activities that could support or increase the ability of employees. Second, the rougher competition regarding prescription drugs sales. This affects the psychological condition of employees in Division B, especially for medical representative staff who work as a field workers. Third, the lack of work-related appreciation felt by the subordinate. Finally, the career path that was still unclear.

These issues showed that employees might have problems regarding the perceived organizational support that could affect their turnover intention. However, there should be a confirmation study to affirm the relationship between the two variables. This confirmation study could ensure that intervention regarding turnover intention in Division B at PT. MI would be appropriate. Based on the description of the problems in Company X, then the problem in this research are: (1) Is there a relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention in Division B at Company X (2) What is the appropriate intervention to improve the perceived organizational support employees of the Division B CO Company X. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention.

Based on theory, one of aspect that can increase employee’s perceived organizational support aside of supervisor support and the award is by increasing support from co-workers (Hayton et al.,2012). A supportive co-worker refers to assistance provided by a co-worker that not only related to the work context (Susskind, Kacmar, & Borchgrevink, 2003) but also socio-emotional assistance such as showing respect, cares, empathy and compassion (Rousseau et al., 2009). Support from co-worker will have more influence on the conditions of employees in companies that focus on sales (Bateman, 2009) and teamwork (Loi, Ao, & Xu, 2014). It can be demonstrated with emotional attention, provide assistance and information needed, and give rewards (Kim, Hur, Moon, & Jun, 2017). Pleasant treatment from colleagues can improve a person's positive orientation towards the organization. Furthermore, support from colleagues can meet socioemotional needs that have a strong influence on the emergence of perceived organizational support (Kurtessis et al., 2015).

Based on the company’s data from an interview with 15 employee representatives in Division B Company X, it was found that employees met co-worker more often than a supervisor. This is because the characteristic of most employees are field workers that focus on sales. They often work with co-workers as a team and meet supervisor once a week. This makes the support of co-workers seem very helpful in solving the problem. In addition, information was obtained from HR Company X that company just made a series of leadership development plans for the leader, including how to show more support to subordinates. Meanwhile, the company had not yet design a development plan for enhancing co-worker support. Therefore, a workshop to develop peer support will be prepared and given to the respondents in the B Division Company X.
Figure 1. Theoretical models of supportive co-worker workshop, perceived organizational support, and turnover intention.

Methods

Participant
This study is conducted on permanent employees that already have one year tenure in Division B at Company X. The sampling technique used is simple random sampling in which every individual has an equal opportunity to be elected (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). From 103 participants, data showed that most respondents are male (64.1%) and worked as a staff (88.3%). Based on age range, most respondents were in the age range 31-40 years (59.2%), whereas most respondents had 6-10 years tenure (26.2%).

Research Design
The design used in this research is a correlational study. Correlational research is research that measures the relationship between two or more variables. Measurements were carried to identify the pattern of relationship between variables and measures the strength of relationship (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012).

Measures

Turnover Intention
The turnover intention was measured using instrument developed by Lee, Hung, and Chen (2012), which consists of 10 items. The turnover intention questionnaire used a Likert scale with five alternative answers with a score range of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) on the positive statement and a score of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree) on a negative statement. Based on the result of calculation of reliability known that measuring instrument turnover intention had Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient = 0.83. Based on the result of item validity through item-total correlation (rit), all turnover intention questionnaire items had rit above 0.20.

Perceived Organizational Support
Perceived organizational support was measured using an instrument developed by Neves and Eisenberger (2014). This instrument consists of 10 items. Perceived organizational support used a Likert scale with five alternative answers, with a score range of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) on the positive statement and a score of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree) on a negative statement. Reliability of measurement results generates Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.90$. Based on the result of item validity through item-total correlation (rit), all perceived organizational support questionnaire items had rit above 0.30.
Procedure
The procedure of this study is based on action research stages proposed by Cummings and Worley (2015). Here’s an explanation of each of the stages:

1. Problem identification
An initial interview with the Human Resource (HR) Team Company X was done to discuss the issues about potential problem in the organization. A secondary data analysis provided by the HR Team Company X was also conducted, such as reviewing employee engagement surveys and employee data came out in 2015 and 2016. At this stage, Division B was defined as the study population since it had the highest turnover among three division that Company X had.

2. Consultation with a behavioral science expert
Confirmation the quantitative data to the HR Team Company X was done in this stage. At this stage, consultations with the supervisor were also conducted to have better understanding about the organizational problems. Based on discussions with the supervisor and the HR team Company X, it was determined the problem to be observed is turnover intention.

3. Data gathering and preliminary diagnosis
Preliminary diagnosis was conducted using interviews toward 15 respondents from staff to manager level. Interview questions were focused on collecting data regarding factors that cause turnover intention in Division B PT. MI. The results of the interview were used to find possible predictors of turnover intention. Afterwards, the results were discussed with the HR Team in Company X and internal supervisors in Universitas Indonesia. In this stage, an online questionnaire were used to confirm the relationship between turnover intention and perceived organizational support. The questionnaires were spread using link embedded in e-mails that were sent to selected employees. The employees were selected randomly using odd and even number. In this research, questionnaire’s participants were selected from odd number. After the questionnaires were collected, the data were analyzed to be able to be the basis of the intervention routine. A training need analysis (TNA) on aspects of the organization, tasks, and individuals was also conducted to sharpen the intervention focus and avoid making interventions that overlapped with previous interventions done by PT. MI.

4. Feedback to a key client or group
The research findings were reported to the HR team in PT. MI, and they gave their feedback. At this stage, the HR Company X agreed that the company required an intervention program that could increase employee’s positive perception toward organization.

5. Joint diagnosis of the problem
In this stage, an intervention plan were designed together with the internal supervisor in Universitas Indonesia. The intervention plan were designed based on the training need analysis (TNA) and survey results.

6. Joint action planning
Interventions designs were presented to the HR Company X to get input related to the technical and implementation of intervention activities. The intervention was designed to be divided into three stages, which a total duration of four weeks.

7. Action
Before conducting the intervention, the researchers first consult the design of interventions to HR Team Company X. Socialization is done to inform the design of interventions to the company management representatives and gather suggestions for interventions, in order to be executed and accepted easily by the workshop participants. The workshop is targeted to respondents who have low perceived organizational support scores and high turnover intention score based on measurement that has been occur before. Supportive co-worker workshop could not be done due to time constraints.
8. Data gathering after action

The final stage of action research is to collect evaluation data after the intervention. The evaluation of supportive co-worker workshop could not be done due to time constraints.

Data Analysis

This study used descriptive statistics to determine the general description of each variable and demographic data. This study also used the Pearson product moment (correlation) to determine the relationship between the variables of perceived organizational support and turnover intention.

Results

Table 1. The description of research variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Score Category</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turnover intention</td>
<td>27.43</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&lt;27.43</td>
<td>&gt;27.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived organizational support</td>
<td>33.85</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>&lt;33.85</td>
<td>&gt;33.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *Significant at the p<.01 level.

Based on the calculation of descriptive statistics of 103 study participants, the respondents were divided into two categories score, which refer to empirical data as a reference. The result of category score showed 55 participants with a high level of turnover intention, while as many as 48 participants have a low level of intention. The result of category score showed that there was 41 low level of perceived organizational support has a frequency of approximately 41 people, while 62 participants have a high level of perceived organizational support.

Results of correlation between the variables of perceived organizational support and turnover intention showed a significant correlation, with r = -.51, p < .01. This shows that alternative hypothesis (Ha) accepted, that there is a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and employee turnover intention in Division B Company X. So it can be interpreted that the higher the score the perceived organizational support, the lower score of turnover intention and vice versa.

Based on the result of this study, the appropriate intervention program to increase perceived organizational support is supportive co-worker support. The characteristic participant is an employee in Division B who has the high turnover intention and low perceived organizational support. Intervention in this study is planned to last for four weeks, as follows:

Table 2. Intervention Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Intervention Phase</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Supportive co-worker workshop</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Action plan implementation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sharing and support session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first stage is the provision of supportive co-worker workshop that will be performed in the first week. The second stage is the implementation of an action plan, which lasted for four
weeks. The third stage is sharing and support session, and the measurement of post-test would be conducted at the end of week four.

**Table 3. Supportive Co-worker Workshop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains the background of the workshop according to the results of quantitative and qualitative data collection in the B Division Company X.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Be a Supportive Co-worker”</td>
<td>40'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduces the concept of supportive co-workers, especially in the form of emotional support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“How I and My Colleague Work?”</td>
<td>30'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduces the type of working style. Also, at this session participants will know the form of the right support to be given to a particular work style.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Support Other’s Strength”</td>
<td>40'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduces the concept of supportive co-workers, especially in the form of appraisal support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debriefing and action planning</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test and closing</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of the supportive co-worker workshop, participants are expected to have a plan of action of providing support to coworkers, which represent the second stages of intervention. At this stage, participants discussed the action plan with their supervisors; implement the action plan, noting progress on a weekly basis, and write down the barriers or obstacles encountered. The goal of phase two is the participants can implement the action plans that have been prepared in the context of the everyday work environment and identify the obstacles encountered and develop strategies to overcome these obstacles.

After implementing the action plan for four weeks, then the final step of intervention are conducting sharing and support session. In this session, participants and researchers held discussions on several issues, such as; participant’s experiences in implementing the action plan in their daily work environments; barriers and solution; parties which help smoothen the process of implementation of the action plan; and the perceived benefits. The duration of this session is approximately 60 minutes. At the end of this activity, the researchers provide a post-test evaluation to determine the effectiveness of supportive co-worker workshop.

**Discussion**

Based on the results, it was found that there is a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention. The results of this study prove previous studies on the relationship between these two variables. Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) stated that improving the perceived organizational support of employees is one of the strategies that can be developed by the company as a measure to decrease turnover intention. Employees with a higher level of perceived organizational support will have fewer possibilities to seek and receive offers from other companies (Eisenberger et al., 1990). This is because the perceived organizational support was built from social exchange theory which states that both employees and organizations can deliver value or benefit for a smooth relationship between the two (Dawley et al., 2010). In addition, employees who have high level of perceived organizational support will also tend to have a desire to contribute to the achieve
organizational goals (Dawley et al., 2010) and continue to participate in the organization (Allen et al., 2003).

Perceived organizational support theory stated that three antecedent states, that is, supervisory support, fairness, organizational reward and job condition would have an impact on employee perceptions about organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Based on the recent study, co-workers support also have a relationship with the employee’s perceived organizational support due to a new trend in the organization that tends to narrow the hierarchical structure and increases autonomy to employees (Hayton et al., 2012). Thus the knowledge and resources are available to all members of the organization. Supportive co-workers itself is the assistance provided by a co-worker on the employment situation (Langford, Bowsher, Maloney, & Lillis, 1997), which is not only related to the context of employment but also in socioemotional support (Kim et al., 2017). Support from colleagues will have more influence on the conditions of employees in companies that focus on sales (Bateman, 2009) and teamwork (Loi et al., 2014).

There are four ways to show support for a co-worker. Those include providing emotional support (show attention, respect, empathy, trust), appraisal support (communication affirmation or give constructive feedback), instrumental support (providing materials needed) and informational support (providing information that can help in problem solving) (Langford, Bowsher, Maloney, & Lillis, 1997; Malecki & Demaray, 2003). In this study, a supportive co-worker workshop was designed to enhance the emotional support and appraisal support. Emotional support was selected because there has been a theory which states that the provision of emotional support would increase employee’s perceived organizational support (Kurtessis et al., 2015). On the other hand, the appraisal support was further discussed in the workshop to introduce the concept of positive affirmation and feedback toward employees based on training need analysis (TNA) that has been done before.

This study has several limitations. First, the company wants the research questionnaire distributed without asking such as the name of the respondent. This regulation makes the researchers need more time to provide a list of potential respondents to the company's intervention. Second, researchers have limitations in developing interventions for Company X because organization already had a complete and structured employee development programs. Third, the design of interventions in the form of a supportive co-worker workshop could not be executed until the study ended. Researchers only presented the draft of intervention design toward the HR Company X to find the compatibility to be applied to the respondent.

There are several suggestions for future studies. First, researchers should distribute the organizational diagnostic questionnaire such as Organizational Blockage Questionnaire or Organizational Diagnosis Questionnaire to enrich and sharpen organizational problems. Second, researchers should make sure that respondents were reachable by the researcher, regarding population and research sample. Third, conduct a review of the literature theory or intervention that would be done to improve the perceived organizational support and choose the form of intervention that best fits the conditions of the organization. Lastly, the role of supervisor to monitor and support the results of lessons learned from the workshop should be highlighted.
References


