

THE INFLUENCE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, COMPENSATION, AND JOB TRAINING ON EMPLOYEE TURNOVER INTENTION IN MALAYSIA'S TOURISM SECTOR: THE MODERATING ROLE OF WORK CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Employee turnover remains a significant workforce challenge in Malaysia's tourism sector despite the industry's substantial contribution to economic growth and employment. High turnover rates increase recruitment and training costs, reduce service quality, and threaten workforce sustainability. While compensation and job training are widely recognised as important retention mechanisms, the influence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on employee turnover intention remains underexplored within Malaysia's tourism sector. Furthermore, existing studies have primarily investigated CSR, compensation, job training, and work culture independently, resulting in a limited understanding of how these factors jointly influence employee turnover intention. Therefore, this study examines the influence of CSR, compensation, and job training on employee turnover intention, while investigating the moderating role of work culture. Guided by Social Exchange Theory and Organizational Support Theory, the study adopts a quantitative cross-sectional research design. Data will be collected from employees working in Malaysia's tourism-related service sector using a structured questionnaire and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The study is expected to provide empirical evidence on how organisational practices and work culture influence employee retention within labour-intensive service environments. Furthermore, the study contributes to employee retention literature by proposing an integrated framework that links organisational practices, work culture, and employee turnover intention.

Keywords: Compensation, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Job Training, Turnover Intention, Work Culture

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is widely acknowledged as a vital engine of economic growth, job creation, and national development. In Malaysia, this sector continues to contribute significantly to economic activity and employment opportunities. Recent figures from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024) highlight its significance, reporting that tourism contributed RM154.5 billion to Malaysia's GDP and generated employment opportunities for more than 3.4 million individuals, underscoring its importance to the national economy. Despite its economic significance, the tourism sector continues to experience workforce-related challenges, particularly employee turnover and workforce instability. Hom et al. (2017) identified employee turnover as a persistent organisational challenge because of its implications for service quality, organisational performance, and workforce sustainability. As a labour-intensive sector, tourism organisations rely heavily on a stable and committed workforce to maintain customer satisfaction and competitive advantage. Maintaining a stable workforce has therefore become increasingly important for sustaining service quality and organisational competitiveness.

However, persistent turnover continues to increase recruitment, onboarding, and training costs while reducing productivity and organisational effectiveness (Milkovich et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2022). Hospitality and tourism organisations struggle to attract and retain skilled employees, which in turn complicates workforce planning, undermines service quality, and threatens long-term organisational sustainability. These challenges have been widely reported within the tourism industry and continue to hinder organisational efforts to maintain a stable and capable workforce (Mohsin et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023). As a result, employee retention has emerged as a strategic priority for organisations seeking to safeguard efficiency and competitiveness.

Previous studies have identified compensation and job training as important organisational practices influencing employee retention. Competitive compensation enhances employees' perceptions of fairness, organisational recognition, and employment value. According to Noe (2010), effective job training contributes to skill development, employee engagement, and career advancement opportunities. Similar observations have been reported in research on employee retention and reward management (Choi & Dickson, 2009; Milkovich et al., 2014). Nevertheless, employee turnover remains a persistent concern despite the implementation of these practices, suggesting that additional organisational factors may influence employees' decisions to stay or leave.

One organisational factor that has attracted increasing scholarly attention is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Traditionally associated with corporate reputation and stakeholder management, CSR is increasingly viewed as a strategic organisational practice that influences employee attitudes and behavioural outcomes. Employee-oriented CSR initiatives, including ethical labour practices, employee welfare programmes, and organisational responsibility, may strengthen employees' perceptions of organisational support and commitment (Glavas, 2016; Wong & Kim, 2023). Yet, much of the existing literature has focused on CSR's external

benefits, while its role as a mechanism for reducing employee turnover intention remains underexplored, particularly in Malaysia's tourism sector.

In addition, existing research frequently examines compensation, job training, CSR, and work culture independently, resulting in fragmented findings and limiting a comprehensive understanding of employee retention. Employees do not experience organisational practices in isolation; rather, they interpret such practices within broader workplace environments that shape their attitudes and behavioural responses. Consequently, contextual organisational factors should be considered when examining turnover intention.

Work culture serves as an important organisational context that shapes employees' workplace experiences and interactions. It encompasses the collective values, norms, and behavioural expectations shared within an organisation. When work culture is supportive, organisational practices may exert a stronger influence on employee retention, whereas less supportive cultural environments may reduce their effectiveness. Despite its recognised importance, limited research has examined work culture as a moderating variable in the relationships between CSR, compensation, job training, and employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

Drawing on Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), this study examines how CSR, compensation, and job training influence employee turnover intention, while investigating the moderating role of work culture. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether work culture strengthens or weakens the relationships between these organisational practices and turnover intention. By integrating CSR, compensation, job training, and work culture within a single framework, the study contributes to employee retention literature and addresses an important gap in understanding workforce sustainability within Malaysia's tourism sector. In doing so, it offers both theoretical contributions and practical insights into how organisations can strengthen their ability to retain talent in labour-intensive service environments.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on employee turnover intention, focusing on three central organisational drivers: corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, and job training. In addition, the moderating role of work culture is examined to provide a broader understanding of how organisational practices and workplace environments jointly influence employee retention within Malaysia's tourism sector. The discussion is anchored in Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), which together provide a robust lens for explaining employees' responses to organisational support, developmental opportunities, and workplace experiences.

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in two complementary perspectives: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST). Blau (1964) describes SET as a framework for

understanding employee attitudes and behaviours through reciprocal exchanges between individuals and their organisations. When employees perceive favourable treatment, they tend to respond with stronger commitment, positive attitudes, and a reduced turnover intention. Organisational practices such as CSR, compensation, and job training may therefore be viewed as organisational resources that encourage employees to remain with their organisations.

Organizational Support Theory (OST), first proposed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), emphasises employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and cares for their well-being. When employees perceive strong organisational support, they are more likely to develop trust, emotional attachment, and organisational commitment, thereby reducing withdrawal behaviours and turnover intention. The integration of SET and OST provides a comprehensive theoretical foundation for understanding how organisational practices influence employee retention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility and Turnover Intention

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) encompasses organisational policies and practices that demonstrate a company's accountability to its stakeholders, which include employees, customers, communities, and the wider environment (Aguinis, 2011; Carroll, 1991). Contemporary CSR literature increasingly recognises CSR as a strategic organisational practice that influences not only external stakeholder perceptions but also internal employee-related outcomes (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). In labour-intensive sectors such as tourism, employee-oriented CSR initiatives, including fair treatment, workplace safety, employee welfare, work-life balance, and career development opportunities, may strengthen employees' perceptions of organisational care and support (Glavas, 2016; Turker, 2009).

The distinction between internal and external CSR has become increasingly important in organisational research. While external CSR focuses on community engagement, environmental sustainability, and customer-related responsibilities, internal CSR emphasises organisational practices that directly affect employees' workplace experiences and well-being (Turker, 2009). Glavas (2016) argues that employee-oriented CSR activities such as fair treatment, welfare programmes, and career development opportunities play an important role in shaping employee attitudes, organisational commitment, and retention outcomes. Employees tend to respond more positively to practices that directly affect their daily work experiences.

Aligned with the principles of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), CSR initiatives may be viewed as organisational resources that encourage positive reciprocal attitudes and behaviours. When workers perceive CSR practices as genuine and robust, they are more likely to build trust, strengthen their organisational identification, and demonstrate greater commitment, thereby reducing turnover intentions (Glavas & Kelley, 2014; Rupp et al., 2006). Furthermore, CSR initiatives may strengthen employees' perceptions of organisational support by reinforcing the belief that the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Such perceptions are likely to contribute to more favourable retention outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Glavas (2016) found that CSR is associated with lower employee turnover intention. Similar findings were reported by Wong and Kim (2023). Within tourism-related service organisations, CSR initiatives may further enhance employees' sense of organisational pride, meaningfulness of work, and emotional attachment to the organisation, thereby contributing positively to employee retention (Fernando & Danthanarayana, 2022; Karatepe & Shahriari, 2014).

Nevertheless, employees' responses to CSR are influenced not only by the existence of CSR initiatives but also by how such initiatives are perceived and experienced within the workplace. Employees are generally more responsive to CSR initiatives when such practices are perceived as genuine and consistent with organisational values. In contrast, CSR initiatives viewed as symbolic or disconnected from actual workplace practices may increase scepticism and weaken employees' identification with the organisation (Glavas, 2016; Wang et al., 2024). This consideration is particularly relevant within tourism organisations, where employees directly experience organisational practices related to employee welfare, managerial support, workload management, and career development.

Within Malaysia's tourism sector, CSR has increasingly been adopted as part of broader efforts to enhance organisational sustainability, employee engagement, and workforce retention (Goh & Okumus, 2020). Despite this growing emphasis, empirical studies exploring the link between CSR and employee turnover intention remain limited. Moreover, little attention has been devoted to examining how organisational and cultural contexts influence employees' perceptions of CSR initiatives, especially within service-oriented tourism organisations. Given these gaps, CSR is expected to influence employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

H1: Corporate social responsibility has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

2.3 Compensation and Turnover Intention

Compensation refers to the financial and non-financial rewards provided by organisations in recognition of employees' contributions, efforts, and job performance. It encompasses both financial and non-financial rewards, including salaries, incentives, allowances, benefits, career opportunities, and organisational recognition (Dessler, 2020; Milkovich et al., 2014). Within organisational research, compensation is widely recognised as a fundamental human resource practice that influences employee attitudes, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and ultimately turnover intention (Trevor et al., 1997). Contemporary compensation literature recognises that employees evaluate compensation based on both financial and non-financial rewards rather than solely on direct monetary benefits. Financial compensation includes salaries, bonuses, incentives, and employment benefits, whereas non-financial compensation encompasses career development opportunities, work-life balance, supportive supervision, job security, and employee recognition (Dessler, 2020; Mondy & Martocchio, 2016). Within tourism-related service organisations, both financial and non-

financial rewards play important roles in shaping employees' perceptions of employment value, organisational support, and retention-related outcomes (Chiang & Birtch, 2010).

The relationship between compensation and turnover intention can be explained through several theoretical lenses, notably Equity Theory, Social Exchange Theory (SET), and Organizational Support Theory (OST). Adams (1965) proposed that employees evaluate compensation fairness by comparing their contributions and rewards with those of relevant others. When compensation is perceived as equitable, employees are more likely to experience satisfaction, motivation, and organisational commitment, whereas perceptions of inequity may increase dissatisfaction and turnover intention. Blau (1964) argued that fair and competitive compensation strengthens reciprocal exchange relationships between employees and organisations, encouraging organisational commitment and continued organisational membership. From the OST perspective, compensation may reinforce employees' perceptions that the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being, thereby strengthening perceived organisational support and retention outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Empirical evidence consistently highlights the role of compensation in reducing turnover. Griffeth et al. (2000) identified a strong negative association between compensation and employees' intention to leave, a finding that is also supported by Trevor et al. (1997). Fair and competitive compensation is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, stronger organisational commitment, and lower employee turnover intention (Abdul Malik & Alhassan Musah, 2024; Kurtessis et al., 2017). Within tourism-related service organisations, compensation concerns become particularly important due to demanding work conditions, irregular working schedules, emotional labour, and relatively high workforce mobility (Baum, 2015; Karatepe & Uludag, 2007). Tourism organisations that implement competitive compensation systems, transparent reward structures, and meaningful non-financial rewards tend to demonstrate stronger employee retention outcomes and lower turnover intention (Goh & Okumus, 2020).

According to Herzberg (2003), compensation primarily functions as a hygiene factor. While inadequate compensation may contribute to dissatisfaction and turnover intention, sufficient compensation alone does not necessarily sustain long-term motivation or loyalty. This perspective suggests that employees evaluate compensation within a broader organisational context that includes career development opportunities, organisational support, recognition, and overall workplace experiences (Purba & Ruslan, 2020; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Within Malaysia's tourism sector, employees frequently interpret compensation not only as a financial reward but also as an indicator of organisational fairness, recognition, and appreciation. Despite substantial evidence supporting the importance of compensation in influencing employee retention, limited research has examined compensation within an integrated framework incorporating organisational and cultural factors in Malaysia's tourism-related service sector. Therefore, compensation is expected to influence employees' turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

H2: Compensation has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

2.4 Job Training and Turnover Intention

Noe (2010) defined job training as organisational efforts aimed at enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, competencies, and capabilities essential for effective performance. Training is increasingly recognised as a strategic investment in human capital that contributes to employee development, organisational performance, and workforce sustainability. According to Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1983) investments in employee training enhance the value of human capital by improving employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies. In tourism-related service organisations, training is particularly important because of the service-oriented nature of work and the need to maintain customer satisfaction, service standards, and operational effectiveness.

The link between job training and turnover intention can be understood through several theoretical perspectives, notably Human Capital Theory, Social Exchange Theory (SET), and Organizational Support Theory (OST). Human Capital Theory suggests that training enhances employees' competencies and employability by increasing the value of their knowledge and skills (Becker, 1983). From the standpoint of SET and OST, training opportunities signal organisational investment in employee development, which fosters stronger commitment and reinforces perceptions of organisational support. When employees perceive training opportunities as genuine organisational investments in their development, they are more likely to reciprocate with stronger commitment and lower turnover intentions (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Empirical studies generally support a negative relationship between job training and turnover intention. Bartlett (2001) observed that employees who are offered meaningful developmental opportunities tend to report stronger organisational commitment, greater job satisfaction, and a higher likelihood of staying with their employer. Similar findings were subsequently reported by Ahmad et al. (2020) and Karatepe (2013). However, training may also increase employees' external employability and labour market mobility, creating what is commonly referred to as the "training paradox" (Benson et al., 2004). Consequently, the effectiveness of training in reducing turnover intention may depend on broader organisational conditions, including organisational support, career opportunities, compensation systems, and work culture.

Despite growing evidence supporting the importance of training in employee retention, limited research has examined how work culture influences employees' responses to training opportunities within Malaysia's tourism-related service sector. Accordingly, job training is expected to influence employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

H3: Job training has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector.

2.5 Work Culture as a Moderating Variable

Work culture encompasses the collective values, assumptions, norms, and expected behaviours that influence how employees perceive their work environment and interact within the organisation (Schein, 2017). As an important organisational context, work culture influences how employees interpret organisational policies, leadership behaviour, workplace relationships, and organisational support. Previous studies have consistently identified work culture as a key driver of employee attitudes, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention (Hartnell et al., 2011; Salvador et al., 2022).

Beyond its direct influence on employee outcomes, work culture may also shape employees' responses to organisational practices. From the perspectives of SET and OST, supportive workplace cultures characterised by trust, fairness, collaboration, and employee support strengthen employees' perceptions that organisational initiatives reflect genuine organisational care and commitment (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Consequently, organisational practices such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, and job training may exert stronger retention effects when implemented within supportive work cultures.

This moderating role is particularly relevant within Malaysia's tourism sector, where employees frequently operate in customer-facing environments characterised by emotional labour, teamwork, and diverse organisational cultures. Employees do not evaluate organisational practices in isolation; rather, their perceptions and behavioural responses are influenced by the broader cultural environment in which such practices are implemented (Hofstede, 2001). Therefore, supportive work cultures may strengthen the effectiveness of CSR initiatives, compensation systems, and training opportunities in reducing turnover intention, whereas unsupportive cultures may weaken these relationships (Glavas, 2016; Kurtessis et al., 2017).

While prior research has explored the direct effects of work culture on employee attitudes and retention outcomes, limited research has investigated how work culture influences the relationships among CSR, compensation, job training, and employee turnover intention, particularly within Malaysia's tourism sector. Accordingly, work culture is proposed as a moderating variable in this study.

H4: Work culture moderates the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee turnover intention.

H5: Work culture moderates the relationship between compensation and employee turnover intention.

H6: Work culture moderates the relationship between job training and employee turnover intention.

2.6 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

The conceptual framework was developed from the literature and theoretical perspectives presented in the preceding sections. Guided by Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), the framework proposes that corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, and job training influence employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector. In addition, work culture is proposed as a moderating variable that influences the relationships between these organisational practices and turnover intention.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that employees reciprocate favourable organisational treatment with positive attitudes and behaviours, including stronger organisational commitment and lower turnover intention (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Complementing this view, Organizational Support Theory (OST) suggests that when employees perceive high levels of organisational support, they are more likely to develop emotional attachment and commitment towards their organisations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Based on these theoretical perspectives, CSR, compensation, and job training are expected to reduce employee turnover intention, while work culture may strengthen or weaken these relationships depending on the organisational environment.

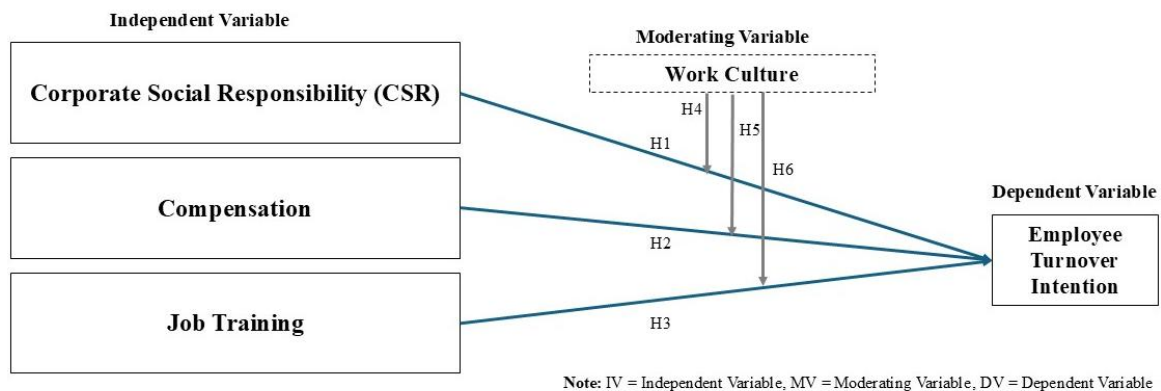


Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework.

Drawing on the reviewed literature and theoretical foundations, six hypotheses are proposed to examine the relationships among CSR, compensation, job training, work culture, and employee turnover intention.

Direct Relationship Hypotheses:

H1: Corporate social responsibility has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention.

H2: Compensation has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention.

H3: Job training has a significant relationship with employee turnover intention.

Moderating Relationship Hypotheses:

H4: Work culture moderates the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee turnover intention.

H5: Work culture moderates the relationship between compensation and employee turnover intention.

H6: Work culture moderates the relationship between job training and employee turnover intention.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative research design was adopted to examine the relationships among corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, job training, work culture, and employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism-related service sector. Quantitative research is appropriate for examining relationships among variables through empirical measurement and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014; Hair et al., 2017). A cross-sectional survey strategy was adopted, with data collected at a single point in time to capture employees' perceptions of organisational practices and employee turnover intention. Within the proposed framework, CSR, compensation, and job training serve as the independent variables, employee turnover intention as the dependent variable, and work culture as the moderating variable.

3.2 Population and Sampling

The study population comprises employees working within Malaysia's tourism-related service sector, including hotels, resorts, airlines, travel agencies, and other tourism-related organisations. Stratified purposive sampling was employed to ensure representation across different tourism-related service sectors while selecting respondents who met the study criteria. This approach enables representation across different tourism-related service organisations while ensuring respondents possess relevant industry experience. A minimum target of 300 valid responses is proposed, which exceeds the minimum sample size recommendations for PLS-SEM and is considered adequate for testing both direct and moderating relationships (Hair et al., 2017). The proposed sample size is also expected to provide sufficient statistical power for testing the proposed hypotheses.

3.3 Instrumentation

Data collection will be conducted using a structured questionnaire developed from established and validated measurement scales adopted in previous studies. The questionnaire consists of two sections. Section A collects respondents' demographic information, while Section B measures the core constructs of the study, namely corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, job training, work culture, and employee turnover intention. Measurement items are adapted from widely recognised scales in the fields of employee retention, organisational behaviour, and human resource management. All items are rated on a

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The use of validated instruments supports content validity, construct validity, and measurement reliability.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection will be conducted through a self-administered online survey distributed via platforms such as Google Forms. The survey link will be disseminated through professional networks, organisational contacts, email communication, and social media platforms to improve accessibility and response rates. Participation will be entirely voluntary, and respondents will be informed of the study's objectives before completing the questionnaire. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the data collection process to protect participants' privacy.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis will be performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a statistical technique widely used to examine relationships among latent constructs and evaluate moderating effects within a conceptual framework (Hair et al., 2017). The analytical procedure involves assessing the measurement properties of the constructs, including reliability and validity, before evaluating the structural relationships among the study variables. The final stage focuses on examining the proposed hypotheses and determining whether work culture influences the relationships between CSR, compensation, job training, and employee turnover intention.

4. EXPECTED RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the perspectives of SET and OST, CSR, compensation, and job training are expected to play important roles in shaping employee turnover intention within Malaysia's tourism sector. Employees who perceive higher levels of organisational support, fairness, and developmental investment are expected to demonstrate lower turnover intention and stronger organisational attachment.

This study also anticipates that work culture will shape the strength of the relationships linking CSR, compensation, job training, and employee turnover intention. Workplace environments that promote trust, collaboration, fairness, and employee support are likely to amplify the effectiveness of CSR initiatives, compensation systems, and job training in reducing turnover intention. Conversely, unsupportive organisational cultures may weaken the effectiveness of these organisational practices, resulting in less favourable retention outcomes.

The study contributes to the employee turnover intention literature by examining CSR, compensation, and job training within an integrated employee retention framework informed by SET and OST. The study further contributes by incorporating work culture as a moderating variable, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of how organisational practices and workplace environments jointly influence employee retention.

From a practical perspective, the findings may provide useful insights for tourism organisations, policymakers, and human resource practitioners seeking to strengthen employee retention strategies. Rather than relying solely on compensation or training initiatives, organisations may benefit from combining employee-oriented organisational practices with supportive workplace cultures to enhance workforce sustainability and organisational performance within Malaysia's tourism sector.

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

Employee turnover remains a significant workforce challenge within Malaysia's tourism sector, affecting organisational performance, service quality, and workforce sustainability. Guided by Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Organizational Support Theory (OST), this study proposes a conceptual framework that examines how corporate social responsibility (CSR), compensation, and job training influence employee turnover intention, with work culture serving as a moderating variable. The proposed framework suggests that organisations may improve employee retention by fostering supportive workplace practices, ensuring fair treatment, providing development opportunities, and creating positive work experiences. This study contributes to employee retention research by integrating CSR, compensation, and job training within a single framework while incorporating work culture as a moderating factor in explaining employee turnover intention. From a practical standpoint, the proposed framework emphasises that employee retention may be enhanced when organisations integrate employee-focused practices with a positive and supportive work environment. Such an approach may contribute to greater workforce stability and long-term organisational sustainability within Malaysia's tourism sector.

This study has several limitations, most notably its cross-sectional design and its focus on employees in Malaysia's tourism-related service sector. These factors restrict the ability to draw causal inferences and limit the generalisability of the findings beyond this context. Future research could overcome these constraints by exploring other industries, employing longitudinal approaches, and integrating additional organisational variables to enhance understanding of employee turnover intention and retention.

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