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Family Friendly Policies - A Tool for Resource Management among Working Women

Geetha Subramaniam^{a*}, Nurul Nabilah Huda Kamarozaman^b, Tan Peck Leong^c

* Corresponding author: Geetha Subramaniam, gee395@salam.uitm.edu.my

^a Faculty of Business and Management, University Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia
gee395@salam.uitm.edu.my / geethamaniam@gmail.com

^b Master Student of Faculty of Business and Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia
nabilahuda3830@gmail.com

^c Faculty of Business and Management, University Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract

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The Malaysian female labour force participation increased from 47.2% in 2004 to 54.1% in 2015 but this is not alarming as the number of female students in tertiary institutions outweigh the male students. However, the issue is while the female labour force participation rate is highest in the 25-34 years age group (72%), it dropped 5 percentage points to 67% in the 35-44 years age group. A research by Talent Corp (2014) shows that the top three reasons women dropout from the workforce are: to raise a family, lack of work-life balance and to care for a family member. So, this perception study examined whether family friendly policies (FFP) could be a tool to retain women in the labour market and subsequently a tool to manage the nation's resource. The main aims of this study are: firstly, to examine whether there is a relationship between demographic factors and women's decision to remain in the labour market, and secondly, to examine whether FFP may encourage them to remain in the labour. Using a self-administered questionnaire, working women who were married were identified in the Klang Valley. A total of 158 usable questionnaires were collected in June 2016. Cross tabulation analysis and frequency analysis were used. The crucial findings showed that women who work in organisations with FFP have higher intentions to continue working compared to women who work in organisations without FFP. This study found that ethnicity, occupational sector and having children below 6 years old are significant factors that influence women's decision to remain in the labour market. Family friendly policies can be a pertinent tool for resource management to retain married women in the labour market. Hence, the government and private sector should collaborate together in the enforcement of family friendly policies at the workplace.

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