

# Organizational Justice and Flexible Work Arrangement: Equating Generation Y's Motivation Towards Precarious Work Behaviour

Ibiwani Alisa Hussain<sup>1</sup>\*, Noormala Amir Ishak<sup>2</sup>, Norashikin Hussein<sup>3</sup>, and Siti Fazilah Hamid<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Asia Pacific of Technology and Innovation, Technology Park Malaysia, 57000 Bukit Jalil, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

\*Email Address: [dr.ibiwani@apu.edu.my](mailto:dr.ibiwani@apu.edu.my)

## Abstract

It is interesting to unfold factors that motivate the new generation's work approach. To-date, among the renowned way of work is precarious work behavior and scholars have distinguished a few factors associated with it. Precarious work behavior is a type of employment that is uncertain, unpredictable and often triggers unpleasant events which may lead to enhanced debts. The study is intended to examine the influenced of organizational justice and flexible work arrangement on precarious work behaviour among Gen Y in Malaysia. This is a quantitative study and primary data were collected through online survey with a total of 179 respondents participated. In addition to descriptive and frequency analysis, correlation analysis and multiple regression were also employed to ascertain the contribution of the study. Findings revealed that in the context of Malaysian's Gen Y, both organizational justice and flexible work arrangement are significantly related with precarious work. While between the two factors, it was discovered that organizational justice described more on the intention to perform precarious work compared to flexible work arrangement.

**Keywords:** Organizational Justice, Flexible Work Arrangement, Precarious Work Arrangement, Gen Y.

## 1. Introduction

The future of work for new generation these days has changed due to the influencing factors such as work environment, perceived organization justice and characteristic of the generation as a whole<sup>1</sup>. It is observed that the new generation, i.e. Generation Y (later will be denoted as Gen Y) in particular is more inclined to perform precarious work in addition to the full time employment that they are doing<sup>1</sup>. Precarious work is defined as employment that is uncertain, unpredictable and risky and often triggers unpleasant events and may lead to enhanced debts<sup>1</sup>. This study was conducted to examine factors that are associated with precarious work performed by Gen Y. Factors undertaken in the study were identified as flexible work arrangement and organizational justice.

The evolution of precarious work has emerged in most European countries and only recently being seen developed in Malaysia. Many scholars has agreed that a clear-cut measure to precarious employment is still vague<sup>1</sup> but proposed combined dimensions to examine precarious employment has been discovered to relate to employment such as risk of losing a job and employee's control over working conditions. As such, the study undertaken the following prediction of two specific objectives:

Objective 1: To investigate the influence of flexible work arrangement towards precarious work behaviour.

Objective 2: To investigate the influence of organizational justice towards precarious work behaviour.

The new generation, especially Gen Y has demonstrated high inclination towards precarious work and it is interesting to unfold factors which motivate them. The generation Y, mostly known as

Gen Y represent individuals born in the early 1980s until early 2000s<sup>2</sup>. They are motivated when given freedom to work as they pleased<sup>3</sup>. This generation does not depend on organization to provide job security and career stability as they tend to seek outside employment to acquire employability in job market<sup>4</sup>. They also conceptualized remuneration "not" a main factor in employment due to financial stability of their parents<sup>5</sup>.

## 2. Antecedents of precarious work behaviour

### 2.1. Flexible Work Arrangement

The study on flexible work arrangement among Malaysian women discovered that demo-graphic and socio economy factors were found to significantly influence the decision to adopt flexible working arrangement among female employees in Malaysia. In addition to that, this intention was also strongly supported by the presence of children in the family. A study investigated balancing work and family life towards flexible work arrangement among Irish and found that both predictors strongly influenced flexible work arrangement<sup>6</sup>. The findings were brought to the attention of the policy maker which had later decided to change some regulations in the country. A study in Greece on flexible work arrangement discovered that flexible work arrangement is dependent of gender and sector of employment. In general women who worked at the public sector and participated in flexible work arrangement obtained more benefit and contributed towards less operating cost for the organization. A study conducted on employee job satisfaction and work life balance against flexible work arrangement and discovered that there was a significant

relationship from employee job satisfaction<sup>9</sup>. However, flexible work arrangement did not influenced by work life balance predictor.

## 2.2. Organizational Justice

Organizational justice is a method on how rules and social norms governed the distribution of outcome through the correct procedure and how well employees are treated in organizations<sup>5</sup>. The variable is conceptualized into three dimensions i.e. distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice<sup>10</sup>. It is important to study the area of organizational justice due to its relationship towards individuals and outcome from organizations<sup>11</sup>. Employee will have less tendency towards intention to leave, reduce in absenteeism, feel valued and trust the organizations if organizational justice is applied accordingly by employer<sup>12 13</sup>. Organizations that pay attention and apply justice towards employees established job commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviour from employees. This may also help to reduce the tendency of employees to conduct precarious work behaviour<sup>11 14</sup>

## 3. Hypothesis development

Studies on precarious work behaviour have been conducted at many geographical areas against different generations and specific gender which were empirically linked with many predictors. Among predictors which was used to conceptualized precarious work behaviour are perceived organizational justice, job satisfaction, work-life balance work-life conflict and work pressure. However, this study was conducted to investigate flexible work arrangement and organizational justice influence towards precarious work behaviour because the study anticipate that the findings may be able to provide significant outcome for organizations in the perspective of Gen Y in Malaysia.

Hypothesis 1: Flexible work arrangement is negatively related to precarious work behaviour.

Hypothesis 2: Organizational justice is negatively related to precarious work behaviour.

Herzberg-Motivating Hygiene Theory<sup>15</sup> stated that:

1. **Motivating factor:** if the factor exists, it helps to increase the level of satisfaction. However, if the factor is missing, it will not cause dissatisfaction as it only reduce the satisfaction level.

2. **Hygiene factor:** if the factor is absent, it increases dissatisfaction level. However, if it exists, it does not contribute significantly towards satisfaction level.

In this study, precarious work behaviour is being investigated and associated with flexible work arrangement and organization behaviour variables. Gen Y employees are known as a generation who valued flexible work arrangement and did not see remuneration as a "main" factor in employment. They could opt to conduct different method of employment to satisfy their needs. It was also discovered by scholars that Gen Y see work life balance and this has forced them to select other form of employment other than the conservative employment practice<sup>16</sup>.

From the literature review, the study hypothesized that flexible work arrangement and organizational justice will be negatively related to precarious work behaviour. The research framework is depicted in Figure 1.0 below.

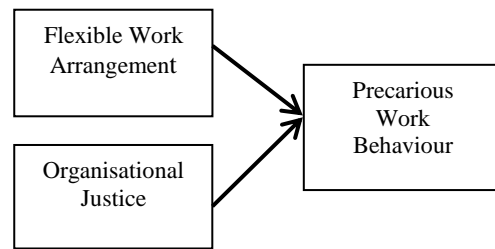


Figure 1.0: Research Framework

## 4. Methodology

The objective of the study is to investigate relationship between flexible work arrangement and organizational justice towards precarious work behaviour among Gen Y in Malaysia. Primary data were gathered through online survey which was closely monitored. It is believed that online survey will be able to attract more participation among Gen Y as they are known as the generation of gadgets and technology savvy<sup>17</sup>.

The unit of analysis comprised of permanent employed employees who were doing other precarious work beyond their job. In this study, precarious work behavior refers to specifically those doing online business. They were those who do sales on cosmetics, housewares, toys, IT accessories, etc. The study asked respondents a range of questions related to flexible work arrangement, organizational justice and precarious work behaviour. Participants who completed the questionnaires were also asked to provide names of acquaintances whom they know and involved in online business and also interested to complete the questionnaire. As such, this opted sampling technique of non-probability sampling as we do not have a specific sampling frame. Using the snowball method, the study managed to gather 179 respondents within 2 months' time. At the end of the survey form, participants were asked to provide their particulars. This is for the purpose of collecting details to send token of appreciation to them.

Questionnaire were designed in English and all items in the questionnaire were measured using 5 point Likert-Scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. For flexible work arrangement, items were adopted from<sup>18</sup>. Items for organizational justice were adopted from previous study conducted by<sup>19</sup> and items measuring precarious work behaviour were adopted from<sup>20</sup>.

## 5. Findings

Online survey was used to gather primary data which witnesses 179 respondents participated. On demography, majority of the respondents were Malay and female, denoted by 90.2% and 70.9% respectively. Most of the respondents were married as depicted by 69.5% from the demography. The study focused on Generation Y and breakdown on age was denoted by 55.2% coming from respondents within the age of 26-35, 29.3% of respondents in the age of 36 to 45 and 9.2% of respondents in the age of below 25. The study also analyze education background of 179 respondents and found that mostly acquired Bachelor's Degree at 57.8%, followed by Master's Degree at 18.5% and Diploma holders at 14.5%.

One of the items in demography section asked "Does your salary allow to cover the basic needs?". Responds from 179 participants in the study indicated that 81% agrees to the statement. Another significant item asked in the questionnaire was "Does your salary allow for unexpected expenses?". This item gained 56.1% agreement among participants.

The study adopted SPSS to perform correlation and multiple regressions on the primary data obtained. Prior to the analysis, data were inspected for any missing values and also undergone

outliers inspection and normality test to check for common method variances <sup>21</sup>. All measurement items were inspected for validity and reliability. Cronbach Alpha obtained was at 0.584 and 0.705 respectively for organizational justice and flexible work arrangement. This demonstrated acceptable level of reliability for both predictors. Correlation analysis was performed to identify the linear relationship between variable used in the study<sup>21</sup>. Upon investigation, the study found negative correlation between both predictors against precarious work behaviour. Therefore, it gives an indication that more flexible work arrangement and organizational justice employees have, the lesser the intention to pursue precarious work behaviour.

**Table 1.0:** Correlation Analysis Result

Correlations				
		FWA	OJ	PWB
FWA	Pearson Correlation	1	-.100	<b>-.101</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.183	.176
	N	179	179	179
OJ	Pearson Correlation	-.100	1	<b>-.461**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.183		.000
	N	179	179	179
PWB	Pearson Correlation	<b>-.101</b>	<b>-.461**</b>	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.176	.000	
	N	179	179	179

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above result projected to us that the predictors only able to explained small number of variance based on the sample used in this study. Detail of the full correlation analysis findings is depicted in Table 1.0.

Data obtained were further investigated using multiple regression analysis. The analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship of one continuous dependent variable (in this study, precarious work behaviour) against a few predictors (in this study, flexible work arrangement and organizational justice). Result from the multiple regression analysis is tabulated in Table 2.0 below.

**Table 2.0:** Multiple Regression Analysis Result

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.507	.331		13.623	.000
	OJ	-.357	.050	<b>-.475</b>	-7.171	<b>.000</b>
	FWB	-.151	.067	<b>-.149</b>	-2.247	<b>.026</b>

a. Dependent Variable: PWB

Multiple regression analysis can lures issue of little scientific value if the sample size used in the study is small. In order to avoid this, we adopted the calculation of sample size recommended for social science research from <sup>22</sup>. The formula used to calculate sample size is:  $N > 50 + 8m$  (where  $m$  = the number of independent variable used). In this study, the number of independent variable used is 2, hence giving the minimum required sample size of  $50 + 8(2) = 66$ . There were 179 respondents obtained for the study which is able to justify the scientific value obtained from multiple regression analysis.

The ( $\beta$ ) value indicated in table 2.0 below explained the unique contribution that each predictors help to explain precarious work behaviour. In this study, flexible work arrangement demonstrated smaller unique contribution in explaining precarious work behaviour, i.e., -.149 while organizational justice is able to provide stronger unique contribution in explaining precarious work behaviour, i.e., -.475. It can be concluded that 1 unit increase in intention to perform precarious work behaviour is due to a decrease in 1.49 unit of flexible work behaviour. While a unit increase in intention to perform precarious work behaviour is due to a decrease in 4.75 unit of organizational justice. Model summary from multiple regression analysis, i.e. Table 3.0 demonstrated the variance in dependent variable explained by both

independent variable (in this study, flexible work arrangement and organizational justice).

The R-Square value indicated .234 which denoted 23.4% of variance in precarious work behaviour is being explained by both predictors.

**Table 3.0:** Model Summary Table

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.484 <sup>a</sup>	<b>.234</b>	.225	.48533	1.993
a. Predictors: (Constant), FWA, OJ					
b. Dependent Variable: PWB					

## 6. Limitations

This study was conducted in Malaysia based on cross sectional designs and findings will not be able to generalize the overall precarious concept in other geographical area. It is limited to Malaysian perspective and within the group of respondents, i.e. Gen Y. It is also precludes the ability to conduct cross sectional contentions.

Secondly, data were gathered using online survey through snowball technique. Therefore the authenticity of information is “precarious”. However, as it is believed that online survey will be able to reach most of the Gen Y audience, method of data collection using internet platform was pursued. In order to remedy the limitations, we recommend that future study on similar area is conducted using longitudinal research design. In addition, future study also can be enhanced to include the authenticity declaration of information provided by respondents to ascertain the validity.

## 7. Discussion and conclusion

The results for all analysis conducted in this study indicated that both flexible work arrangement and organizational justice are negatively correlated with precarious work behavior, as demonstrated by the ( $\beta$ ) standardized coefficient value. It was further confirmed that both flexible work arrangement and organizational justice have less unique contribution to precarious work behaviour in the perspective of Gen Y in Malaysia.

Flexible work arrangement is a type of work arrangement which include part-time work, job sharing, working from unspecific area and therefore related to “no-fix” income. Interestingly, Gen Y who is very concern over flexibility and freedom to execute a given task in their work however demonstrated opposite intention towards precarious work if it were associated with flexible work arrangement. It could be due to the characteristic of Gen Y, being dependable and un-resourceful requires them to have guidance and monitoring.

Organizational justice is the perception of receiving fairness and build the trust in organizations. This study found reverse relationship between this predictor and precarious work behaviour. Such finding is consistent with other study conducted by scholars worldwide that the increase in intention to perform precarious work behaviour is resulting from the decrease in fairness received from organizations or employer. Employees, especially Gen Y feels that they are less valued by the employers and hence develop a sense of looking for better opportunity, while at the same time keeping the existing employment as a provision.

The development of precarious work behaviour concept is not new in most of the countries in the European region, North America region, Greece, China and Japan. This is because employees are more creative in keeping up with the demand of life style and wanting to generate more financial stability. In the European labor market for example, sign of on-going trend towards precarious work is increasing. The signal is highly associated with intention of doing

part-time work to suit the living standard of employees. Many contributing factors were discovered from empirical analysis on reason for performing precarious work. One of it is support and policy from the government. In addition to that, the economic uncertainty also contributed towards increase in intention to perform precarious work behaviour. This has been viewed as norms among Mediterranean countries.

However, the concept is yet to be explored at a larger scale in Malaysia as the evolution is yet to arrive. Nevertheless, the development has commenced in tandem with the characteristic of Gen Y and Gen Z or the post millennials, who are very entrepreneurial and independent.

Another feature which may entice the development of precarious work behaviour in Malaysia is the increase in number of international migration workers, especially in the "support-team". This can be seen happening within the agricultural industry, construction industry and food & beverages industry. This is due to the fact that migration workers are closely associated to the flexibilization of labour. The prime objective is to earn income and they are mostly willing to undertake more than one employment on precarious basis.

## Acknowledgments:

Several institutions have contributed towards the success of this study. First, we would like to thank Ministry of Higher Education for awarding the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) [research code: 600-IRMI/FRGS 5/3 (23/2016)]. Second we would also like to acknowledge the Institute of Research, Management & Innovation Institute (IRMI) of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia, for the assistance. Finally, our gratitude is also to Centre of Research for Entrepreneurship and Leadership (CREL) of Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Bukit Jalil, Malaysia.

## References

- [1] L. Kalleberg and K. Hewison. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57, 3 (2013).
- [2] J. Deeken, P. L. Webb and V. Taffurelli, *The Series Librarian*, 54, 3, 211-216 (2008).
- [3] J. Meier, F. A. Stephen and M. Crocker, *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*, 6, 1 (2010).
- [4] Kopperschmidt, *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 23, 267-286 (2009)
- [5] A. Hussain, N. Yunus, N. A. Ishak and N. Daud, *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8, 14 (2013).
- [6] G. Subramaniam, E. Ershad and J. Overton, *Business Studies Journal*, 5, 11-19 (2010).
- [7] P. C. Humphrey, S. Fleming O. O'Donell, *Journal of Public Administration*, 8, 512-519 (2001).
- [8] S. K. Giannikis and D. M. Mihail, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 34, 710-715 (2011).
- [9] S. Palmeri, Dissertation form Capella University (2013).
- [10] R. Folger and M. A. Konovsky, *Academy of Management Journal*, 32, 1, 115-130 (1989).
- [11] Y. Cohen-Charash and P. Spector, *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Process*, 86, 3 (2001).
- [12] J. A. Colquitt, D. E. Conlon, M. J. Wesson, C. O. Porter and K. Y. Ng, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 3 (2001).
- [13] M. C. Nirmala and K. B. Akhilesh, *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, 19, 2 (2006).
- [14] 14.Y. Zhang, J. A. Lepine, B. R. Buckman and F. Wei, *Academy of Management Journal*, 57, 3 (2014).
- [15] R. McBain, *The Practice of Engagement*, Henley Management College, 6, 6, 17 (2007)
- [16] S. M. Crampton and J. W. Hodge, *The Business Review*, 1, 16-23 (2007).
- [17] Bujang, A. S. Omar, Z. H. Bibi, F. Zaini and D. N. H. A. Omar, Project Paper, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sarawak (2011).
- [18] R. Ahmad, M. T. M. Idris and M. H. Hashim, *Asian Social Science*, 9, 3, 208-215 (2013).
- [19] M. L. Ambrose and M. Schminke, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75, 1 (1990).
- [20] Vives, M. Amabel, M. Ferrer, S. Moncada, C. Llorens, C. Muntaner, F. G. Benavides and J. Benach, *Occupan. Environ Med.*, 67, 8 (2010). Doi:10.1136/oem.2009.048967.
- [21] J. Pallant, *SPSS Survival Manual, A Step By Step Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS*, 4th ed., Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, Australia, (2011).
- [22] G. Tabachnick and L.S. Fidell, *Using Multivariate Statistics* (3rd Edition), New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, (1996).