# Nurturing Mental Well-being: Exploring the Impact of Job Insecurity and Perceived Organizational Support on Help-Seeking among Malaysian Academics

Ain Zuraini Zin Aris*
Universiti Malaysia Perlis

Siti Zubaidah Othman
Universiti Utara Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the impact of job insecurity and perceived organizational support on help-seeking behavior intention among Malaysian academics. A cross-sectional online questionnaire was carried out from October 2021 to January 2022 to Malaysian academics that worked in any of the top 20 universities in Malaysia according to the QS world university ranking in 2021. 17 universities from the 20 universities listed have been involved in this research. Basically, 382 Malaysian academics completed the online survey. Employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, the findings found that both job insecurity and perceived organizational support are directly linked to help-seeking behavior intention. These results emphasize the significance of highlighting job insecurity and furthering perceived organizational support to foster help-seeking behavior among Malaysian academics. Furthermore, the study proposes that future studies should evaluate additional organizational factors to improve the insight of this topic. Generally, this study contributes to the existing literature on help-seeking behavior intention, job insecurity, mental health, and perceived organizational support among employed individuals. The findings of this study have implications beyond the nation's borders, presenting an understanding that can be implemented in other higher education institutions globally. The study opens directions for future exploration into the varied nature of help-seeking behaviors and organizational factors that impact employees' well-being.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic declared a global pandemic in 2020, has significantly impacted the education system worldwide. In response, countries including Malaysia, have implemented measures to mitigate its effects on educators and students. One of the key strategies has been the adoption of remote learning, which poses challenges in areas with limited internet access and inadequate training for educators. Educators have had to quickly adapt and acquire online teaching skills to deliver effective lectures, address students' inquiries, and assess assignments (Yee, 2022). This evolving work environment demands

a proactive approach to meet students' needs (Yee, 2022). Maintaining the quality of online education has proven to be a major challenge for educators during the pandemic, potentially impacting their mental health (Sahu, 2020).

Furthermore, the enforcement of the first Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia required workers to work from home, adding additional strain, especially for individuals juggling multiple roles and responsibilities, such as caring for family members and young children. The imposed movement restrictions during the MCO have been associated with adverse emotional effects, including frustration, depression, fear, insomnia, boredom, and confusion (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). Consequently, academics face considerable challenges in managing work and family demands (Fakhrorazi et al., 2019). Moreover, the implementation of the MCO and remote learning has heightened students' expectations and demands on lecturers. The physical isolation and lack of face-to-face communication contribute to increased pressure on lectures. Lecturers may lack confidence in transitioning to online teaching and using interactive digital methods, which creates uncertainty about students' learning outcomes (Idris et al., 2021). The loss of internet connectivity during exams is another worry, resulting in periods without invigilation and uncertainty about the allotted duration for online examinations. Despite conducting mock tests, lecturers need to allocate extra time to account for potential issues. Additionally, the need to respond to numerous student inquiries via email or text messages has become a regular routine since the outbreak, causing panic, stress, and anxiety among academics (Sia & Adamu, 2021). These inconveniences can significantly impact mental health and increase the likelihood of burnout among tertiary education academic staff. To ensure the success of online learning and mitigate the challenges posed by the absence of face-to-face interactions on virtual platforms, it is imperative to create a supportive environment that fosters collaboration and includes feedback from those involved in the systems (Inada, 2023). Despite government efforts to regulate the education system during the pandemic, it is undeniable that both educators and students face mental health burdens as they adapt to the new normal of living with COVID-19.

The issue of mental health among lecturers in the higher education sector in Malaysia has been extensively discussed in the literature (Arbae et al., 2019; Dewi-Izzwi & Emenike, 2021; Isa et al., 2021; Isa & Palpanadan, 2020; Mohamed et al., 2021; Subramaniam et al., 2020; Tai et al., 2019; Yousefi & Abdullah, 2019). However, empirical studies providing concrete statistics on mental health trends among academics in higher institutions in Malaysia are lacking. Nonetheless, prior research has consistently highlighted stress and burnout as common mental health issues among educators even before the pandemic (Agyapong et al., 2022; Mohamed et al., 2020; Mosleh et al., 2022).
In addition to the direct impact on academic staff, there is growing recognition of how educator burnout can indirectly affect students' well-being and achievement. For instance, a potential factor that could shed light on the impact of educator burnout on students is the concept of reduced achievement (Madigan & Curran, 2020). This aspect also clarifies how educators may indirectly affect the well-being of their students. As a result, the possibility of contagion effects might exacerbate the direct consequences of educator burnout on students' experiences (Madigan & Kim, 2021). The potential for contagion effects between educators and students adds complexity to the consequences of educator burnout on student experiences. In a study conducted by Arbae et al. (2019), it was found that 77% of Malaysian academic staff experienced stress, with key determining factors being demand, relationship, and role.

The issue of mental health among academic staff in higher education extends beyond Malaysia and has been documented in various international studies. For example, the cases of suicide among professors from universities have shed light on the need for a better understanding of mental health issues within the academic profession (Casselman & Tankersley, 2019). Kabito et al. (2020) found that junior academic staff experiences higher levels of work-related stress compared to senior academics. Furthermore, a study of 267 academics revealed that nearly 70% of them had insufficient knowledge of available mental health support resources, and only 13% utilized these resources, primarily due to fear of professional risk and stigma (Price & Kerschbaum, 2017). Bira et al. (2019) argued that universities often prioritize limited support, high demands, and a competitive mindset, which contribute to mental health issues among faculty members. Additionally, factors such as the pressure to secure grants, achieve tenure, publish papers, and obtain promotions can further contribute to mental health problems in academia (Bira et al., 2019). Moreover, the stigma associated with seeking mental health support poses challenges for academics in managing their well-being (Price & Kerchbaum, 2017). In addition to these challenges, individuals facing mental health problems may encounter a dilemma regarding whether to disclose their issues or seek help, as doing so may have personal or professional consequences. This creates complexity in addressing the issue, as individuals must consider the potential outcomes of taking action or concealing their mental health problems (Price & Kerchbaum, 2017).

Effectively managing mental health among academic staff is crucial for maintaining productivity and functionality in their work. However, there is often an assumption that academics are knowledgeable, experienced, and resilient enough to handle the pressures of their profession (Lashuel, 2020). Consequently, many academics feel compelled to avoid acknowledging or sharing the pressures they face, fearing failure or being seen as incompetent (Lashuel, 2020). However, if these pressure are left unaddressed, they can lead to mental health problems. While there are various ways to take care of mental health, there are times when seeking help becomes necessary to overcome the challenges faced. Seeking help not only allows academics to share their problems but also helps them release negative emotions associated with their struggles. Universities are responsible for addressing the issue of overwhelmed academic staff who may lack personal resources to adequately care for their mental health. Providing sufficient mental health support is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment (Poalses & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

## 1.1 Help-Seeking Behavior in Mental Health Context

Seeking help for mental health problems is a crucial early step in highlighting and managing one's mental well-being. It includes attaining an accurate diagnosis and taking proper interventions and support from mental health professionals (Ibrahim et al., 2019). Help-seeking is regarded as a key and prompt means as it accelerates access to information and understanding. It is also seen as a social process that depends on individuals seeking and providing help to one another. Seeking psychological help is precious as it can lessen the costs and impact of mental health problems, enabling more people to thrive and make positive contributions to society (Happy, 2019). In the context of academics, managing mental health problems via help-seeking is important for attaining work-life balance. If academics disregard their own well-being, it becomes challenging for them to effectively care for their students (Lashuel, 2020). Thus, help-seeking is not only a positive behavior

that enhances health and well-being but also shows courage and strength in the face of mental health challenges (Happy, 2019).

The significance of help-seeking behavior in highlighting mental health issues is broadly acknowledged, but there is a limited understanding of this phenomenon, specifically in the context of the Malaysian workforce. Moreover, existing studies on help-seeking behavior have mainly concentrated on mental health prevalence among adolescents and youths, overlooking the broader relevance of seeking help for problem-solving. Asking for help is not a common behavior in certain communities, specifically Asian cultures, where seeking help may be labeled as a sign of weakness or decreased functionality. Naito et al. (2020) addressed that conversations and recognition of mental health and its disorders are frequently deemed shameful. Furthermore, Steel et al. (2014) claimed that many individuals with mental health problems refuse to seek help from mental health professionals. This refusal is further supported by recent research findings, which found that only 22.5% of individuals with mental health issues were willing to seek help, describing a significant treatment gap (Doll et al., 2021).

Help-seeking plays a vital role in decreasing the personal and social costs related to untreated mental health problems (Nohr et al., 2021). Delaying help-seeking behavior can lead to worse mental health effects, including increased chronicity (Brown et al., 2022). For example, Yamauchi et al. (2020) revealed that employees who did not seek mental health help were more likely to experience severe psychological distress, particularly among those aged 20 to 39 years. They concluded that help-seeking behavior is important for mental health care among workers. Hence, help-seeking is considered pivotal for ensuring the effectiveness of any mental health intervention. Achieving the objective of controlling mental health problems needs active engagement from both help recipients and help providers in a mutually supportive process.

## 2. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to explore the impact of job insecurity and perceived organizational support on help-seeking behavior intention among Malaysian academics in relation to mental health issues. The study aims to examine the intention to seek help rather than directly measure actual help-seeking behavior or professional mental health service utilization. By concentrating on help-seeking behavior intention, the study aims to predict future help-seeking behaviors and provide understanding that can inform early intervention strategies by university management.

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1 Study Design

This study applied a quantitative research design to examine the direct relationship between job insecurity, perceived organizational support, and help-seeking behavior intention. The unit of analysis for this study was the individual Malaysian academics, and data were collected through an online survey. By evaluating respondents' perceptions of job insecurity and perceived organizational support, the study aimed to understand their impact on help-seeking behavior intention. A cross-sectional design was utilized, collecting data at a single point in time. A cross-sectional design was utilized, collecting data at a single

point in time. This research design was chosen for its simplicity, cost-effectiveness, and ability to gather data relatively quickly.

## 3.2    Data Collection and Participants

Data collection for this study takes approximately four months, from October 22, 2021, to January 20, 2022. Before data collection, the survey questions underwent validation processes, including content and construct validity, and a pilot test. Because of the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the distribution of questionnaires on-site was not feasible. Alternatively, potential participants were emailed the survey through their official email addresses, with a provided link to a Google Form. Every participant received an information sheet that provided a brief overview of the study and the questionnaire. All respondents were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that their responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. They were guaranteed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences simply by not completing the questionnaire. The completion and return of the survey served as a declaration of the respondent's agreement to participate in the study.

This study successfully collected data from 382 Malaysian academics working in universities ranked among the top 20 in Malaysia according to the QS world university rankings. The respondents were selected voluntarily and agreed to participate in the study. They represented a diverse range of academic institutions, including 12 public universities, and 5 private universities, resulting in 17 universities in total.

## 4.    MEASURES

## 4.1    Help-Seeking Behavior Intention in Mental Health Context Scale

Help-seeking behavior intention was measured by 15 items adapted from Yu, Liu, Hu, Liu, Yang, Zhou, and Xiao (2015). To align with the agree-disagree response scale applied in this study, the wording of the original items was adjusted from a question format to a statement format. In addition, the words 'mental health problems' were integrated into the items to make sure their appropriateness to the study context. The reliability of the newly adapted items in this study was determined by comparing them to past studies. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency in the current study was calculated as .83, with a 95% Confidence Interval.

## 4.2    Job Insecurity Scale

Job insecurity was measured by 8 items developed by De Witte (2000).  These 8 items have demonstrated reliability and validity in measuring job insecurity. Past studies have reported satisfactory internal consistency for the scale, with Cronbach alpha values ranging from .68 to .80 (Kinnunen et al., 2000; Pienaar et al., 2013). To ensure alignment with the context of this study, the 8 items were adjusted to include the words 'mental health' in every item. The reliability of the newly adapted items was assessed by comparing them to past studies. In this study, the reliability test resulted in a Cronbach's alpha value of .90, describing high internal consistency.

### 4.3 Perceived Organizational Support Scale

Perceived organizational support was measured by 16 items developed by Eisenberger and Huntington (1986). These 16 items have been recognized as reliable and valid for measuring perceived organizational support. The original study reported strong internal consistency for the items, with a Cronbach's alpha of .97 and item-total correlations ranging from .42 to .83 (Eisenberger & Huntington, 1986). To make sure the appropriateness to the context of this study, the items were adjusted accordingly. As a result of the changes in wording, the newly adapted items in this study reported a Cronbach's alpha of .92, describing high internal consistency, when compared to the past study.

### 4.4 Demographic Information

This section included questions about the participant's gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, the employer either working in a public or private university, number of years with the organization, designation, work status, salary range, teaching load, and management position if any.

## 5. DATA ANALYSIS

The descriptive statistics reveal important information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Out of 382 participants in the online survey, 65.7% were female, while 34.3% were male. The majority of respondents (46.1%) fell within the age range of 31 to 40 years old. In terms of marital status, a significant proportion (77%) of participants reported being married. The ethnic distribution showed that the majority of respondents were Malays (86.4%), followed by Chinese (7.9%). The remaining percentage was shared by Indians and respondents from other ethnicities (11%). In terms of university affiliation, 90.6% of participants were from public universities in Malaysia, while 9.4% were from private universities. Regarding the length of service, the largest group of participants (61.8%) reported having served their organization for more than 7 years. The response rate varied among academic positions, with senior lecturers comprising the highest percentage (50.5%), followed by lecturers (22%), Associate Professors (13.9%), Assistant Professors (9.9%), and Professors (3.7%). The majority of respondents (91.9%) held permanent work status. Among the participants, 42.1% reported earning a salary between RM 7001 – RM 9000. Regarding teaching load, most respondents have an average of 5-10 hours of teaching load per semester. The distribution of respondents holding a position within the university (49.5%) versus those who did not (50.5%) was relatively balanced.

In this study, the research model was tested using PLS-SEM analysis. This analysis serves as a fundamental technique for evaluating the research model. Furthermore, the structural model was utilized to test the hypotheses formulated in this study.

## 6. RESULTS

Following the implementation of the structural model procedures, the path coefficient and t-value were evaluated to assess the hypotheses in this study. The hypotheses were tested at a significance level of .05, and the results revealed significant directions with coefficient

values ($\beta$= -.223; p<.01) and ($\beta$= .220; p< .01), thus supporting the hypotheses. The outcomes of the study are presented in Figure 1, clearly indicating support for the hypothesis. Table 1 provides a summary of the hypothesis testing conducted in this study.
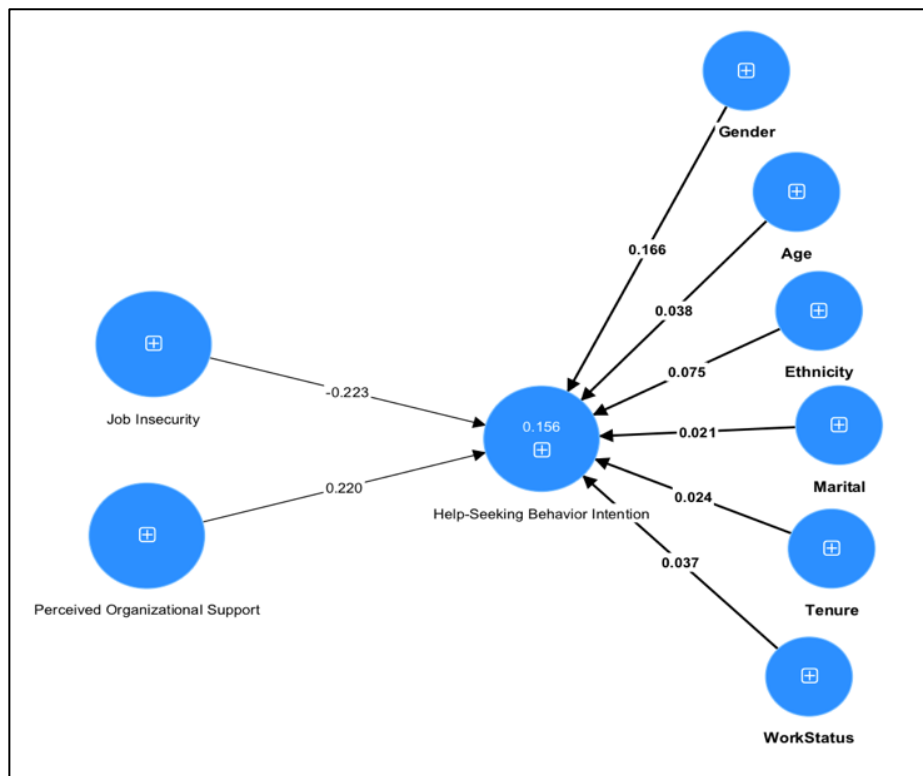


Figure 1 Research Framework and Hypotheses Results

Table 1: *Direct Effect of Demographic Factors*

| Path | Path Coefficient Value | P Values |
|---|---|---|
| Age → HSBI | .038 | .248 |
| Ethnicity → HSBI | .075 | .041* |
| Gender → HSBI | .166 | .059 |
| Marital → HSBI | .021 | .340 |
| Tenure → HSBI | .024 | .348 |
| Work Status → HSBI | .037 | .431 |

*Note: *p< .005*

Table 2: *Summary of Hypothesis Testing*

| Hypothesis Statement | Results |
|---|---|
| Job insecurity is negatively related to help-seeking behavior intention. | Supported |
| Perceived organizational support is positively related to help-seeking behavior intention. | Supported |

## 7.    DISCUSSIONS

In this study, the analysis revealed that only ethnicity emerged as statistically significant, with a p-value less than .05. This suggests that the ethnic background of Malaysian academics plays a significant role in influencing their intention to seek help, However, other demographic factors, including age, gender, marital status, working tenure, and work status did not show statistically significant relationships with help-seeking behavior intention, as their respective p-values were greater than .05. As a result these factors do not appear to have a substantial impact on the intention of Malaysian academics to seek help.

The significance of ethnicity as a control variable in this study on help-seeking behavior intention among Malaysian academics can be justified by the country's diverse population, primarily dominated by three major ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Each ethnic group possesses unique cultural norms, values, and beliefs that may influence their perceptions of help-seeking and mental health. The different cultural backgrounds may shape individuals' attitudes towards seeking support, the stigma associated with help-seeking, and the availability of culturally appropriate mental health resources. Understanding the role of ethnicity in shaping help-seeking behavior is crucial for designing targeted interventions and support systems that address the specific needs and preferences of each ethnic group, ultimately promoting meal well-being and academic success among Malaysian academics.

The findings of this study also provide strong evidence of the significant relationships between job insecurity and perceived organizational support with help-seeking behavior intention. The results support the hypotheses and demonstrate the substantial impact of both job insecurity and perceived organizational support on individuals' intention to seek help for their mental health concerns. These findings highlight the crucial role of job insecurity and perceived organizational support in influencing employees' willingness to engage in help-seeking behaviors, underscoring the importance of addressing these factors in promoting a supportive and conducive work environment for employees' mental well-being.

The findings of this study revealed that job insecurity among Malaysian academics was associated with a decreased likelihood of seeking help for mental health issues. Individuals who felt insecure in their job positions were more reluctant to access professional mental health services. The study observed that greater concern about job insecurity within the organizational context was associated with a decreased likelihood of accessing mental health professional services. A better perception of job security can increase employee retention which can also reduce the mental health burden dilemma. Yukongdi and Shrestha (2020) provided support that the most commonly mentioned factors contributing to employee retention were associated with job security and the presence of a friendly circle of colleagues within the department, fostering a family-like environment. These factors can help reduce the mental health burden of a worker by providing stability, social support, a sense of belonging, improved work-life balance, increased job satisfaction, enhance motivation, and a reduction in workplace harassment.

These results shed light on the potential barriers faced by Malaysian academics when it comes to seeking help for their mental health problems. The presence of job insecurity can create a sense of vulnerability and fear among individuals, which may deter them from reaching out for support. The findings emphasize the need to address job insecurity as a

significant stressor that impacts individuals' willingness to seek help and engage in appropriate mental health care.

To create a supportive and conducive environment for mental health support, educational institutions should acknowledge and address the concerns related to job insecurity. Implementing strategies to mitigate job insecurity, such as promoting job stability, fostering open communication, and providing resources for professional development, can contribute to creating a climate that encourages help-seeking behavior. Moreover, raising awareness about the importance of seeking help for mental health issues and reducing the stigma associated with it can help overcome the barriers faced by individuals in accessing appropriate support.

In this study, a significant proportion of respondents (79.7%) expressed feelings of job insecurity if they were to disclose their mental health problems to the management team. Among them, 38.7% strongly agreed and 41% agreed with this sentiment. Interestingly, despite the majority of participants holding permanent positions (91.9%), many acknowledged that job insecurity influenced their help-seeking behavior regarding mental health issues. It is worth noting that credibility issues may be one of the contributing factors to this phenomenon. These findings highlight the complex interplay between job insecurity and help-seeking behavior.

The findings of this study revealed a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and help-seeking behavior. These results provided support for the second hypothesis, indicating that perceived organizational support had a substantial impact on help-seeking behavior intention. The findings underscore the importance of organizational support in promoting a supportive environment that encourages individuals to seek help for their mental health concerns.

The significance of perceived organizational support in relation to help-seeking behavior intention for mental health problems can be supported by several key points. Firstly, considering the negative impact of job insecurity on help-seeking behavior, organizational support plays a crucial role in fostering a tendency among Malaysian academics to seek help when facing mental health challenges. Sigursteinsdottir and Karlsdottir (2022) emphasized that support has demonstrated its role as a safeguard against bullying and harassment. Therefore, the importance of emphasizing support in workplaces characterized by stress and insecurity, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, cannot be overstated. It is evident that individuals with moderate to strong support are more likely to improve their intention to seek help from mental health professionals compared to those with a poor support system (Yeshanew et al. 2020). The significant findings of this study align with the research by Menberu et al. (2018), which reported an increase in help-seeking intentions from mental health professionals when appropriate support is available. These findings highlight that respondents who perceive better organizational support have a higher likelihood of seeking help from mental health professionals for their mental health concerns.

Perceived organizational support serves as a catalyst for cultivating not just a sense of social identity within the organization but also for regulating emotional well-being (Zhou et al., 2023). Consequently, it provides a crucial asset for employees to endure unforeseen and challenging changes in the external environment. Moreover, the existing literature highlights that perceived organizational support enhances extra-role performance, involving supportive and helpful behaviors among colleagues (Maan et al., 2020). The valuable support individuals receive while adapting to organizational norms

and team dynamics stems from the perspectives and aid acquired through interactions within support networks, which include co-workers, organizational members, and the management team.

Perceived organizational support plays a crucial role in meeting the expectation of help when needed, thereby reducing the mental health burden, including emotional exhaustion and related conditions (Kurtessis et al., 2017). It is associated with benevolent behavioral reactions that benefit organizations, such as improved in-role work performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and decreased withdrawal behaviors (Kurtessis et al, 2017). As highlighted in the literature review, help-seeking behavior is a component of organizational citizenship behavior. It is noteworthy that a positive perception of organizational support can empower individuals to openly seek help whenever necessary, while also enabling the organization to effectively address and manage mental health issues among its employees.

The previous discussion highlights that when support systems are weak and individuals avoid disclosing information to others, distress tends to increase. Hence, personal and work factors, along with sociodemographic determinants, can intersect in ways that either promote or hinder help-seeking behavior. While the influence of personal factors on help-seeking behavior has been extensively studied in the general population, there is limited information available on the work-related predictors that underlie the mental health help-seeking behavior of Malaysian academics. Further exploration of these factors is needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in this specific context.

The findings of this study confirm the crucial role of organizational support in reducing doubts about seeking help from mental health professionals and enhancing help-seeking intentions among Malaysian academics. Help-seeking behavior can be motivated by a dual desire, which involves both overcoming distress and seeking acceptance or recognition from others. These goals can effectively inspire individuals to seek help. Arokiasamy and Krishnaswamy (2021) support the notion that employees perceived organizational support when it offers acceptance, assistance, respect, and a sense of affiliation, particularly during times of mental distress. Overall, the findings suggest that received organizational support plays a key role in the employee-organization relationship and has significant impacts on promoting employees' management of their mental health, ultimately benefiting both individuals and the organization.

In general, all the hypotheses proposed in this study were supported, providing evidence for the significant role of organizational factors in promoting help-seeking behavior intention regarding mental health concerns among employees, especially professionals in educational work settings. These findings underscore the importance of addressing organizational factors as a key strategy to encourage employees to seek help and support for their mental well-being. By recognizing and addressing these factors, organizations can create a supportive environment that facilitates open discussions about mental health and promotes a culture of seeking assistance when needed.


## 8.    LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Several limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the findings of this study. Firstly, the concentration of this study mainly revolves around perceptions and

individual opinions on the issue in general. The selection of participation involves individuals who may or may not have experienced mental health problems. While the aim was to analyze the general perception of help-seeking behavior among individuals facing mental health issues, it would have been valuable to include individuals who have sought help or have been diagnosed with mental health problems. Nevertheless, due to the complexity of reaching such specific potential participants during the phases of this study, it was not feasible to include them. Thus, a future study that particularly targets individuals with diagnosed mental health conditions is highly suggested to further validate and compare the findings of this study.

Additionally, while this study provided support for the hypotheses regarding the relationships between job insecurity and perceived organizational support on help-seeking behavior intention, it would be valuable to extend the analysis and examine the impact of other organizational factors. Exploring and testing different types of organizational factors could improve our understanding of their impact on help-seeking behavior intention in the context of mental health. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the organizational factors that shape individuals' willingness to seek help and inform targeted interventions in the workplace.

Furthermore, it is suggested that future studies exploring help-seeking behavior in other professions or similar settings, consider the social and contextual factors related to sociodemographic profiles. By extending the scope of the literature on mental health help-seeking intentions among workers, a more comprehensive understanding of the factors impacting help-seeking can be attained. Moreover, examining the potential interplay between the nature of psychological issues and contextual constraints would be a relevant research area to explore. On top of that, conducting comparative studies between professionals and other occupations can bring valuable knowledge and improve our understanding of this issue.

## 9.    CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this research makes an important contribution to the literature on mental health help-seeking behavior intention among academic staff, not only within the context of Malaysia's higher education sector but also with potential implications for universities and organizations globally. By examining the impact of job insecurity and perceived organizational support on help-seeking behavior intention, this study sheds light on the determinants that can impact mental health support-seeking among workers in demanding work settings.

In today's fast-paced and challenging workplaces, understanding the dynamics between job insecurity, organizational support, and help-seeking behavior in pivotal for organizations across numerous industries. As workers in different sectors face various stressors and uncertainties, the insights gained from this study can be adapted to tally with the interventions and support systems to cater to the unique requirements of their workforce.

Furthermore, this research highlights the significance of organizational policies and practices in encouraging mental well-being among workers. The role of perceived organizational support as a key factor of help-seeking behavior underscores the importance of encouraging supportive work environments that prioritize workers' mental health. The findings encourage employers to take a proactive intervention in developing clear and

robust policies that ensure job security and support mental health help-seeking behaviors. Organizations worldwide can benefit from acknowledging the critical role they play in fostering workers to seek help when required and encouraging a norm of openness and support.

Moreover, the study addresses the potential benefits of promoting help-seeking behavior and job security in the workplace. Workers who feel secure in their jobs and perceive strong organizational support are more likely to seek help proactively, leading to greater levels of well-being and resilience among the workforce. Understanding these connections can guide organizations in establishing effective strategies to enhance employee mental health, performance, and overall organizational productivity.

In summary, this research extends the existing literature by examining mental health help-seeking behavior intention among academic staff in the Malaysian higher education sector. The implications of the findings expand beyond Malaysia and the academic setting, providing valuable insights for organizations worldwide to highlight mental health challenges in their workforce. By prioritizing job security, encouraging organizational support, and fostering help-seeking behavior, institutions can create a positive and supportive work environment that improves the well-being and success of their employees. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader discussion on mental health support in the workplace and promotes actionable insights for organizations seeking to promote the well-being of their workers.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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