The Moderating Role of Intrinsic Motivation on Turnover Intention of the Employees in Five Star Hotels

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Abstract

this paper aimed to examine the turnover intention of employees in the hotel industry and its relationship with HRMs, corporate image and career growth, as moderated by intrinsic motivation. The research findings have significant implications for hotel managers and contribute to literature dedicated to hospitality by providing insights into the predictors of staff turnover and how they can be managed. The findings indicated strategies for human resource employment in hotels that can be employed to attract, develop and retain employees and these include hiring qualified employees with working experience, and employee-job fit. This research and its findings is expected to guide hotels in how to mitigate high labor turnover through the adoption of systematic HRM strategies. The previous studies are also expected to facilitate effective management of human capital, employees. adoption of strategies allocation of resources and to manage and retain **Keywords:** Turnover intention, HRMs, corporate image, career growth and five star hotels.

Introduction

In practitioner circles of human resource management, labor turnover appears to be a widely used and cited term. Employee turnover refers to the rate at which an employer gains and loses its staff and based on Price (1977), it makes up the ratio of the number of organizational members who left during a certain period over the average number of people in the organization during the same period.

Higher turnover is frequently referred to as the employees' shorter tenure in an organization, compared to the turnover of its rival counterparts. Employees that leave the organization take valuable knowledge and often times, guests with them. Consequently, hiring a new employee and training him to the same performance level of the old one needs resource (time and money) investment and as such, hoteliers have been activity searching for ways to retain employees in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. However, a specific level of turnover promotes a healthy institution but considerable turnover rate can result in unnecessary excessive costs. In other words, turnover is a huge issue faced by many organizations owing to the significant costs incurred by the employer, specifically in jobs offering higher education and extensive training.

Moreover, the human resource management (HRM) practices impact on organizational performance and the attitudes among employees has been in constant focus in literature for the past two decades (e.g., Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Petrescu & Simmons, 2008; Katou & Budhwar, 2007). Human resource management has also been referred to as the formal system that encapsulates philosophy, policies and practices employed by the organization to guarantee its effective use of knowledge, skills, abilities and other employee characteristic to accomplish the goals of the organization (Pynes & Spina, 2009).

In this line of argument, the turnover intention among employees is more likely to impact the operations and processes of the organization in terms of their effectiveness. In other words, the HR management, recruitment and retention practices maximize the organization's competitiveness and this has become a must in the success of the organization, with the inclusion of the hospitality industry. In the current times, attracting and employing highly talented and skilled employees in the job market has become a challenge and a company who

is successful in doing so obtains competitive advantage over its competitors. Furthermore, this indicates that effective management of resources is an essential area of that management should take into consideration (Ferratt, Agarwal, Brown & Moore, 2005; Tekeuchi, Wakabayashi & Chen, 2003). More importantly, in the current hospitality business, turnover in labor has been deemed to be the top issue (Altarawmneh & Al-Kilani, 2010; Ghiselli, La Lopa & Bai, 2001).

Turnover Intention

According to Davidson, Timo and Wang (2010) and Mc Ginley, Hanks and Line (2017), the rate of employee turnover is more pronounced in the tourism and hotel sector compared to other sectors and this is a significant issue in management of such business services (Kim, 2014). When high performing employees who are qualified decide to leave their jobs, this could translate to high costs and disruption for the organization because losing such employees can prevent team work and incur extra costs for new employment and training. Therefore, according to Tett and Meyer (1993), turnover intention is the top aspect of turnover behavior and as such, it is crucial to determine the factors influencing turnover to eliminate them at the early phases. Such factors are considered to take the form of controllable factors like low job satisfaction, low organizational devotion, high job stress, internal labor force market and organizational justice or uncontrollable ones like negative subjective forms, job hopping and external labor force market (Pang, Kucukusta & Chan, 2015).

The Relationship between Turnover Intention and Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsically motivated people do not need external rewards (wage or praise) for them to perform well on the job (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2010). This is because they are self-motivated and they enjoy achievement of tactual tasks in an efficient manner. On the other hand, extrinsically motivated people are generally put off by odd jobs but are motivated towards carrying them out through offers of incentive, wage, promotion, praise, appreciation or the avoidance of negative outcomes. From the two types of motivation, intrinsic motivation is much stronger and stays long-term and is the best form of motivation that can influence employees as it is inherent within them and not imposed by management (Mohsan, Nawaz, Khan, Shaukat & Aslam, 2011).

In a related study, Sivabalan (2015) related that employee turnover intention seem to be more dependent on the background influences of individuals that need the perception of fulfillment and trait-like dispositions that have their basis on mastery-approach. In this regard, general turnover and turnover among employees both require high mastery-approach goals to mitigate them via motivation.

Employee motivation has been generally taken up throughout corporate sectors, regardless of their size. In the current organizations all over the globe, employees need to be motivated for survival and competitiveness in a dynamic corporate environment. Successes in this area set human resources into action, enhance employees' effectiveness, allow attainment of sustainable competitive advantage, and ultimately, accomplish the goals of the organization.

Motivation has also evolved as a concept in terms of moving and supporting goal-directed behavior as stated by Chowdhury (2007). According to Reena et al. (2009), it is the innate power that motivates an individual to achieve individual and organizational goals. Human motivation covers the entire motives for which he chooses to drive in clear approach (Manzoor, 2012). In the perspective of the theory of motivation, internal factors as inner action that are transformed to external causes that can result in successful endeavors (Locke & Latham, 2004). In a related study, Barron, Baranik and Finney (2006) indicated that considering different employees' motivational style will assist in enlightening and predicting the pattern of their affect, cognition, and their manners.

http://www.abrj.org Page 2

Organizational success is primarily brought about by employee motivation towards their interest and jobs in the workplace. In sum, motivated employees having high levels of job participation are deemed to form an important asset and keeping them in the organization will be fruitful in terms of high productivity that leads to higher returns. Highly motivated and dedicated employees can facilitate positive conditions in the business and such motivation can be evaluated via the employees' turnover volume in a specific time period.

The Relationship between Turnover Intention and HRMs

Turnover intention is invaluable in shedding light on the employees' loyalty level to their organizations as when they feel like quitting, employees begin displaying withdrawal behaviors (e.g., lateness, absenteeism and intent to retire). Hence, it is crucial for organizations to make sure that their HRM practices are excellent when it comes to employment recruitment and selection strategies (Hannah & Iverson, 2004). This premise has been evidenced in literature by several studies that highlighted turnover intention as being related to negative work factors including poor organizational climate and job insecurity perceptions as well as other counterproductive activities (Emberland & Rundmo, 2010; Kumar, Mishra & Bhatmagar, 2010; Oluwafemi, 2010).

A portion of studies in literature also provided possible turnover causes that are linked to HRM practices of the organization (e.g., Altarawmneh & Al-Kilani, 2010; Guchait & Cho, 2010; Joarder, Sharif & Ahmmed, 2011). Evidently, effective recruitment and selection strategies work towards the retention of satisfied employees, minimizing their turnover intention and mitigating actual turnover (Cameron, Miller & Frew, 2009). This is supported by Sims (20070 and Di Pietro and Condly (2007) who provided some solutions to identify and overcome factors contributing to satisfaction among employees form the onset of recruitment and throughout their tenure at the organization. This indicates that employees in the service sector, like hospitality sector, need to be an important part of the business when recruited and management should ensure continuous commitment to them and their career. Also, recruitment and selection was referred to as the first pre-training steps by Chew and Chan (2008), which reveals the importance of employing individuals that want to invest time in training and the job position in the long-term.

Moreover, according to some researchers, some of the experiences contributing to attrition and high turnover levels are clarified via the development of the employer-employee relationship (e.g., Cho & Erdem, 2006; Di Pietro & Condly, 2007; Sims, 2007). The selection of suitable employees in the tourism and hospitality industry is thus crucial as a clear weakness has been identified in light of poor connection that when ignored, could result in high rates of turnover. Different authors in literature showed that recruitment and selection relationship with turnover intention leads to actual turnover. More specifically, Almalki et al. (2012) explained that by understanding the employment relationship from the onset, this could lead to critical planning for training and for mitigating turnover intentions among recruits.

In a related study, Chiang, Back and Canter (2005) revealed that quality of training has a positive relationship with job satisfaction, and in turn in increasing employees' intention to remain in the hotel industry employ. It is thus crucial to stress employee training as it significantly impacts employees' retention and negatively impacts turnover. In this line of argument, training enhances the knowledge of skills of employees and informs management on their ability to perform day-to-day tasks. It can be stated that lack of training opportunities can result in frustration and in positive relationship with turnover intention as Choi and Dickson (2009) claimed.

However, some studies have contrasting points of view on the training-turnover relationship as they suggested that training may lead to increased turnover among employees (Haines III, Jalette & Larose, 2010). In

http://www.abrj.org Page 3

businesses, financial benefits are often described as pay and it is a potential antecedent of organizational commitment and intention to stay among employees. Nevertheless, pay has been evidenced to be insufficient on its own (Zailani, Aminudin & Wee, 2016) as there may be other inherent and extrinsic factors that could affect the decision of the employees to remain in the same organization.

In the present study, the researcher assumes that training and development, compensation practices, performance appraisal, and work environments all negatively relate to turnover as argued by majority of studies in literature.

The Relationship between Turnover Intention and Career Growth

According to the theory of met expectations, people's attitudes and behavior stem from the level to which the organization meets their expectations (Porter & Steers, 1973). Individuals seeking career growth hold greater expectations for growth opportunities within the organization (Chang, 1999). Individuals, who are convinced that they can meet their career growth to a certain level in the organization, have a greater tendency to remain within it but those, who are not, could turn to seeking employment elsewhere. In this regard, career growth opportunities can be considered as inducing factors in the psychological contract framework in that the inducement degrees offered by the organization are responded to by the employees through their contribution to fulfilling its goals.

The above two mentioned frameworks summarily indicate that opportunities for career growth in organizations should lead to employees' retention within them. This is because employees working in organizations that allow them to meet their needs, develop a higher positive attachment to them (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993). Several authors have reported a positive career growth practices-organizational commitment relationship and they include Chang (1999) and Weng, Mc Elroy, Morrow and Liu (2010). On the other hand, organizations that fall short of providing career need satisfaction opportunities drive employees away to look for employment elsewhere.

Alternatively, the relationship between organizational career growth and turnover intention can be viewed from the economics viewpoint. In this view, employees experiencing career growth opportunities in their organizations but risk giving them up would opt to change employers. This is because organizations providing career goals and professional development to their employees, reward them with promotions and compensation, offer them an emotional incentive to stay and for the employee, this could constitute large opportunity costs when he leaves the organization. Contrastingly, employees who perceive that they've progressed little to meet their career goals or few opportunities are offered for professional ability development in their organization, or perceive that the organization does not reward them (promotional opportunities/compensation) have little to no hesitation in leaving its employ.

According to Alvi and Ahmed (1987), employees that perceive their organizations to have high promotional opportunities display higher degrees of commitment to them. Literature also revealed that factors affecting employee commitment include personal development opportunities (Liu & Wang, 2001), promotion equity and training (Long, Fang & Ling, 2002) and learning opportunities (Ng, Butts, Vandenberg, De Joy & Wilson, 2006). Meanwhile, Weng and Hu (2009) related that organizational career growth encapsulates the achievement of career aims, enhancement of professional skills and obtaining promotions and compensations suitable with competencies. Along the same line of study, Weng and Mc Elroy (2012) examined career growth and its influence on occupational commitment and turnover intentions, and found the dimensions of career growth to negatively link with turnover intentions, and that affective occupational commitment partially

mediated the relationship. A direct influence of individual career concerns on employer change intention was noted by Hess, Jepsen and Dries (2012).

The purpose of this study is not to investigate which of the above mentioned premise best reflects the relationship between career growth and turnover intention, but to determine the factors of career growth that predict turnover intentions.

The Relationship between Turnover Intention and Corporate Image

Although employer brand has been increasingly gaining ground in HR practitioner literature (Frook, 2001) empirical studies focused on the subject are still scarce (Cable & Turban, 2001). These sentiments were reinforced by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) and Davies (2008) who noted that the employer brand concept introduction to the academic field and its theoretical foundation is slowly developed although its application and consideration is widespread.

In the context of the service industry, employees have a key role in developing brand image (Bitner, Booms, & Mohr, 1994; De Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003; Mc Donald, De Chernatony & Harris, 2001). This lays emphasis that the importance of recruiting suitable talent is on the level with employer brand image in the market (Ewing, Pitt, De Bussy & Berthon, 2002). More importantly, the question as to whether the image carried by applicants is sustained during their tenure in the organization (Knox & Freeman, 2006). Studies focused on the topic searching for consistent employee retention are still few and far between, with most focusing on potential applicants. In the present research, the employer brand image of the current employees and its outcomes are determined.

Despite the fact that organizational attraction studies have provided insights into the topic, the field is largely undiscovered (Barber, 1998). A branch of research in this topic looks into organizational characteristics and their impacts on organizational attraction, where structural attributes like decentralized decision making (Turban & Keon, 1993), and reward system (Bretz, Ash & Dreher, 1989) have been evidenced to impact the perceptions of attractiveness.

Moreover, in other related studies, Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993) revealed that perception of organizational image significantly predicts decisions towards pursing employment in the company. Meanwhile, using brand employment, employer brand loyalty was reported to be a useful concept – where the latter is referred to as the consumer's attachment to the brand (Aaker, 2003). Similarly, employer brand loyalty is formed by behavioral aspects that relate to organizational culture attitudinal aspects that relate to organizational identity (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). However, contrary to the case of a product, in employment brand loyalty, switching is rarely conducted, as most of the time, it incurs costs and consequences (Davies, 2008). In other words, employer brand loyalty develops higher commitment level that leads to increased talent retention. A strong employer brand attracts superior suitable applicants (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse & Mohr, 2004) and it creates expectations among employees of their employment as explained by Lievens and Highhouse (2003).

Conceptualization of the Research Framework

This paper aims to determine the relationship between HRM practices, career growth, corporate image and turnover intention, with intrinsic motivation as the moderating variable. The theory of social exchange, field theory, the resource-based theory and Maslow's theory are the underpinning theories used by the researcher in the interpretation of employees' turnover in the hotel sector. In relation to this, the social exchange theory

http://www.abrj.org Page 5

(SET) posits relationships forged by individuals (e.g., employees-firms) and this makes it appropriate to use in this study to provide insight into the turnover intention concept.

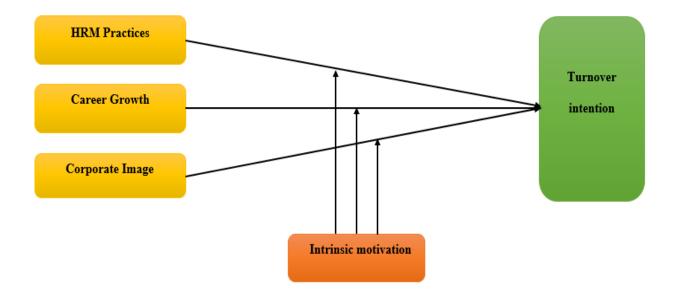


Figure 1 Research Framework

Conclusion

Based on prior studies in literature, HRM practices are predictors of employee perceptions of turnover intention. The greater these practices are implemented, the greater will be the perception of attachment, and the lower will be the turnover intention. In the context of hotels, it is important to take the administration of HRM practices into consideration and to make sure that they work towards enhancing employee job attachment, and mitigating employee turnover intention. It is notable that recruiting people having the right skills and providing them with training of the required skills, offering career development plans and establishing better remuneration and working environment in the organization can assist in solving the turnover issue.

This research conducted an assessment of the effect of labor turnover in hotels to determine the antecedent of labor turnover. Accordingly, strategies of mitigating labor turnover and increasing employee retentions in the hotels were examined. The researcher found that some five star hotels were successful in employee management and retention, with staff remaining in their positions for over five years. It is crucial for hotel management to control internal costs related to recruitment and replacement. In this regard, because five star hotel administrations set good remuneration, establish workers compensation, provide welfare loan system, lunch package and extra day offs as well as training opportunities to their employees, turnover is negligible.

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