

Emotional Exhaustion and Employee Turnover Intention in Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka

A.M.Rahna and J. Siyambalapitiya
Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka

Introduction

Human resource (HR) has been a vital strategy dimension for business organizations. Emotional exhaustion and employee turnover have become main topics in the field of HR amid of this highly competitive business environment. Hence, managing of labor turnover has become a major human resource management problem faced by many organizations. Over the last three years, employment in the textiles and garment sector increased by 21 percent and the industry faces many problems in developing and maintaining the required manpower, (Rupa D, 2002). Absenteeism, high turnover, shortage of labor and inadequate training are listed as major issues of labor faced by the industry (Tilakaratne, undated) and all these labor related issues at the end leads in reduction of efficiency and productivity.

Emotional exhaustion is a specific stress related reaction that refers to state of depleted energy caused by the excessive psychological and emotional demand that occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity (Jackson et al., 1987). A crucial income component of apparel sector workers is overtime. Several empirical studies have shown that long working hours affect job satisfaction, increases the effects of stress-related problems as well as mental health problems (International Labor Organization, 2003). As the stress plays a vital role in employee turnover, this study primarily aimed at finding the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee turnover intention in apparel industry.

Methodology

Data collection was based on 220 floor level employees in Katunayke Export Processing Zone. A structured questionnaire with five point Likert Scale was used to collect the data that was needed to measure the emotional exhaustion and employee turnover intention. Emotional exhaustion was measured with the Dutch version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Schaufeli et al., 1993) and Turnover Intention was measured by three dimensions; desires to quit, seriously thinking about quitting, and the intention to quit, (Mobley et al., 1978). Sample was selected based on multi stage sampling technique. Reliability of the questionnaire was checked by Cronbach's alpha Reliability Test. Both descriptive and inferential techniques were used for analyzing data.

Results and Discussion

When considering the overall view of workers, female proportion is higher while male proportion is very lower. Most of the workers are unmarried and age level of employee's was identified as within the age group of 14 to 25 years.

According to the descriptive analysis, both dependent and independent variable averages fall under the range of $3.5 < X \leq 5$, this illustrates that almost all sample employees agree that they feel emotional exhaustion and they have intention to leave. Furthermore, the correlation and regression analysis was conducted to determine the strength of relationship and the relative contribution of each factors of emotional exhaustion on turnover intention. Emotional exhaustion (0.925) has a significant positive relationship with turnover intention at 0.05 significance level.

The results also predicted that a higher degree of variation of turnover intentions is predicted by emotional exhaustion ($R=85.62$) and the model was significant at the level of 0.05 which led for concluding that only 14.4 percent of employee turnover intention is explained by the other variables. When the relative contribution of emotional exhaustion factors is compared, employee turnover intention is most strongly influenced by fatigue, strain, frustration, hard work, stress and end of rope whereas factors such as drained, used up, strain and burned out are not. Consequently, frustration was identified as most critical factor of emotional exhaustion towards employee turnover intention.

Conclusion

The prime purpose of the research was to find the relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions. Based on the results of study, the study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee turnover intention. Further, it was concluded that emotional exhaustion is one of the main factors that leads to employee turnover in the apparel industry. Hence, the study strongly recommends the industry to make necessary corrective initiatives to reduce emotional exhaustion among employees which causes increased efficiency and productivity.

References

- Jackson EJ, Turner JA, Brief AP, 1987. "Correlations of burnout among public service lawyers" *J Organ Behav*, pp.8 : 338-349.
- Mobley, W. H., Horner, S. O., 1978. Hollingsworth, A. T, "An evaluation of precursors of hospital employee turnover", *Journal of Applied Psychology*.
- Prasanna.R.P.I.R, Gowthaman B, Sector specific living wage for Sri Lankan apparel industry workers Survey Findings and Preliminary Report for Wider Discussion, <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/80788813/sector-specific-living-wage-for-sri-lankan-apparel-industry-workers>.
- Rupa D., 2002. *Garment Industry in Sri Lanka Challenges, Prospects and Strategies*.
- Schaufeli, W. B., 1996. Leiter, M. P., Maslach, C, Jackson S. E, *The Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey, Maslach Burnout Inventory*.
- Tilakaratne W.M. Undated. Chapter 1 - Phasing Out of MFA and the Emerging Trends in the Ready Made Garment Industry in Sri Lanka.