

THE IMPACT OF ROLE STRESS ON TURNOVER INTENTION

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Abstract-Turnover crises have had great impacts on the hospitality industry. Regardless of the considerable amount of studies on employee turnover, it is still ambiguous and requires further investigation because of its dependency on human resource in the hospitality industry as part of a service product. Finding the cause and addressing it is very important for the business to be successful. This study seeks to find out more about the relationship between role stress and employees' turnover intention and its practical implications for the hotel industry in terms of the impact of role stress on employees' turnover intention. Therefore, this study of turnover intention among hotels employee will conducted with two main objectives: 1) to investigate the relationship between role stress and turnover intention and 2) to compare the level of role stress and turnover intention among the hotel employees of different departments. This study suggests the managers also need to monitor both the extrinsic and intrinsic sources of job satisfaction available to employees. This study highlights the turnover crises not only on an international level but also the national crises in Malaysia which may not be far away. This study will be conducted at hotels in East coast (Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang). A total of 200 employees of hotel will be the respondents and the survey of study will run at least for two months to get the data using survey questionnaire and multiple regression analysis will used to examine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable.

Keywords: Role stress and turnover intention

1. Introduction

The increasing awareness of employees' turnover in the hotel industry has become a global phenomenon across the western world. Empirical studies have consistently showed that an excessive employee turnover rate of about to percent annually is acknowledged to be one of the most problematic issues and particularly detrimental to the global hotel industry, which ranged about 60 per cent annually (Carbery, 2003) (Birdir, 2002) (Hinkin, 2000). Human resources management plays a central role in the service sector. A primary reason for this is that the services are seen as closely connected from their provider. Perceived role stress and turnover intention of employees in hotel industry have gained increasing importance. Stressful, depressed and dissatisfied employees would not be able to obtain the same quality level of work and productivity as those employees with low stress and high satisfaction. In addition, shortages workforce in all departments in hotel industry, not only to implement imaginative strategies for attracting personnel but to make more effective use of existing employees and attempt to reduce turnover. The goal of this research is to give a

ways to the managers of improving their employees' turnover intention from role stress at workplace.

Stress exists in every organisation either big or small the work places and organisations have become so much complex due to which it exists. Work place stress has significant effects over the employees' job performance and the organisations are trying to cope with this scenario (Anderson, 2003). Researches identified that job stress has cost organisations billion of dollars all over the world (Tett R. &, 1993). Job stress costs American business an estimated USD200 billion annually, the United Kingdom £63 billion and Australia 15 dollar billion. This is the cost health care, higher rate of absenteeism, turnover and lower performance. The cost are left in term of low productivity, reduced profit, high rates of employees turnover and cost of recruiting and training replacement (Tett R. a., 1993)

Recent models of turnover intention through various intermediate withdrawal cognitions such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Mikkelsen, 2000). Research on personality characteristics as direct predictors of turnover intention has generally been conclusive and perceived role stress has been found negatively effect both job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Mikkelsen, 2000) (William, 2001). Role stress can be defined as the employees' awareness or feeling of personal dysfunction as a result of perceived conditions or happening at the workplace and the employees' psychological and physiological reactions caused by these uncomfortable, undesirable or threats in the employees' immediate workplace environment (Montgomery, 1996)

The basic factors determining job satisfaction can be categorised into two which are intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Buitendach, 2005). Extrinsic factors include pay, physical working conditions such as working hours, job security, work group, work itself and supervisions and intrinsic factors include personality, values, recognition and advancement. Specifically, this study played an important role for managers and for the organisations to deal with stress and employees turnover issues.

1.1 Problem Statement

The hospitality industry is renowned for having high labour turnover rates and an element of hard to fill vacancies and attracting suitable employees remains an on-going challenge. Moreover, hotel employee turnover is a well-documented problem in the hospitality industry with reported turnover rates ranging from 31 percent (Deloitte, 2010) to 43 percent (Employee Turnover: The Challenge, 2013) to 58.8 percent (Hinken, 2012) in the U.S. Turnover in the hospitality industry is reported to be "nearly twice the average rate for all other sectors" (Deloitte, 2010). To further complicate concerns over the high rate of turnover, the economic downturn has temporarily dampened this high turnover rate but is expected to rapidly rise once the downturn improves (Deloitte, 2010) (Davis G.). Depending upon the level of the employee's job responsibilities, turnover costs can range "between 100 and 200 percent of the total remuneration of that employee" (Deloitte, 2010).

In a similar case, despite tremendous development of hotels in Malaysia, the problems of employee turnover intention is a prevailing one and remains high in the industry (Hemdi M.

, 2006) (Hemdi M. N., 2003) (Zahari, 2004). According to the Malaysia Association of Hotels (2000), the average employee turnover rate was to be high as 65.7 percent annually for the year of 2000/2001. This was further exacerbated by many hotel human resource managers that turnover generally occurs among fresh hospitality graduates, managerial, as well as the operational employees (Malaysian Association of Hotels, 1997). The traditional constraints such as long working hours, antisocial working hours, low pay, unstable, seasonal employment, low job status make employment within the hotel industry unattractive (Malaysian Association of Hotels, 2000). In other word, Malaysian hotel industry clearly has more a volatile labour movement and high labour mobility.

Increasingly, organizations are looking for more innovative ways to make recruitment practices more effective, efficient, engaging and personal. This is turn may increase the quantity and quality of the applicant base and in the longer term potentially reduces employee turnover if the person and organization fit is improved. Attracting the right employee can lead to better service and customer satisfaction as well as cost efficiency where turnover is reduced (Bharwani, 2012). In their effort, however, they are constantly reminded of a formidable challenge. Undoubtedly, owing to poor pay, long hours, irregular schedules, limited weekend time off and heavy workload that permeate in the hospitality industry (O'Neill, 2012) (Ryan C. G., 2011) many hotel employees want to leave their jobs. Indeed, the hospitality has been and continuous to be characterized by high turnover rates (Blomme, 2010) (Daskin, 2012).

Some recent developments and trends further exacerbate employees' turnover intention. First, employees in service jobs in the hospitality industry are increasingly caught in the middle between discerning customers' service excellence demands and management's productivity and performance requirements. This may increase their exhaustion which is precursor to turnover intentions (Babakus, 2009). Second, in today's recessionary economy large scales layoffs leave employees who still hold jobs with additional job demands and increase their stress. Inject additional doses of daily stress to the already stressful work environments of employees and fuel their turnover intentions (Deery, 2009).

Derived from Lazarus's theory of stress and emotion (Lazarus, 1999), work stressors can be categorized into 'hindrance stressors' (lack of resources or resource inadequacies, role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload) and 'challenge stressors' (pressure to complete tasks, time urgency, level of attention required by job demands) (Podsakoff, 2007). Such stressors show differential relationships with turnover intentions (Podsakoff, 2007). For instance, hindrance stressors heighten employees' turnover intentions. The reason why satisfaction will lead to the commitment is that a higher level of job satisfaction may lead to good work life and reduction in stress (Cote, 2003)

The employee's dissatisfaction will affect their commitment to work and lead to turnover from the organization physically or mentally (Pathak, 2012). (Tracey, 2008) stated that employee turnover rates are influenced by employee dissatisfaction within the job environment and reduce their contribution to the job (Lok, 2004). Many scholars have studied the consequences which probably have forced an employee into a quitting decision.

This is followed by evaluating other work environments which will lead to the intention of seeking other opportunities (Lee, 1988). Often, turnover cost affects the organization as well (Tracey, 2008).

1.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- 1) To investigate the relationship between role stress and turnover intention
- 2) To compare the level of role stress and turnover intention among the hotel employees of different departments

2. Literature Review

2.1 Role Stress

Stress is the inability to cope with the pressure in a job because of a poor fit between someone's abilities and his work requirements (Holmlund-Ryttonen, 2005). Stress can be defined as a stimulus that triggers psychological or physical stress reaction such as, an anxiety or cardio-vascular problems. Stress is a specific psychological and physical reaction to acute or enduring demands (Seyle, 1974).

At work, stress may be focused by role ambiguity, role conflict or role overload which arises from the working environment and individual characteristics. Two types of stress that can be identified which are eustress and distress. Eustress helps initiate goal striving and is not negative necessarily. If eustress is low from the moderate levels then it may motivate people to excel and boost performance. Eustress is combined with disruptive pleasure to support performance while demanding the true combination of challenge. Distress is a state which takes place when an individual identify a risk, challenge or loss.

According to (Rizzo JR, 1970), role conflict is incongruity between expectations which are communicated and the observed role performance. In general, an antagonistic condition of disagreement, opposition or incompatibility between two or more parties can be defined as conflict (Merriam, 2007-2007). Such conflicts are just conceptual differences among the subordinates and supervisors about the required work place tasks and activities. This creates conflict between the commitment to a number of supervisors and the individual's requirements (Kahn, 1992). Organizations which cares for its employees must be spared them from the 'cross five' of two or more superiors who have incompatible work instructions and expectations (Rizzo JR, 1970).

The other factor that has impact on role stress at workplace is role ambiguity. At the job a worker feels more role ambiguity when he has not clear information about the expectations of his or her role (Rizzo JR, 1970). Role ambiguity expressed the uncertainty that is to be estimated when there are unclear role expectations due to absence of information about the role and the work it demands. The employees do not know where to direct his or her

efforts, where to add extra efforts, whether the superior will clean the outcomes of the role performance a failure or a success (Beehr T. a., 1985). Workers will be hesitated to make conclusions and to meet the expectations of their superiors they worked by trial and error aiming when workers have not clear idea about the requirements of their roles (Rizzo JR, 1970).

Role conflict was significantly correlated to propensity to leave (Kemery, 1985). Several studies confirmed that role stress leads to high turnover rate of employees (Jimmieson, 2004) (Fogarty, 1996). A study conducted by the American Institute on Stress (2005) reveals that 40 per cent of turnover was caused by stress. In addition, stress has been associated to important organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, job performance and organizational commitment (Sullivan S. &, 1992) (Tett, 1993). Through decreased job satisfaction, role stress could be linked to turnover intentions. Many researchers believe role stress can be associated to job satisfaction and individual's decision to leave his or her job.

Role overload means having too much to do in a given amount of time (Conley, 2000). The incompatibility among the requirements, time constraints and resources related to work available to meet these requirements is known as work load (Rizzo JR, 1970). For workers, work overload is a challenge for them to perform their job effectively and efficiently (Pelletier, 1992) (Rahim, 1992) (Jamal, 1990). Classic job demands control model posits that workers whose jobs have high demands (related to work overload) but given them little control suffer most from stress relation problems (Karasek, 1979). A number of researchers have supported a positive relationship between role overload and turnover intention (Diane Brannon, 2007). (Glaser, 1999) found that significant relationship between role overload and stress and stress and turnover, this research assumes that stress will play an arbitrator role between workload and turnover intentions.

2.2 Turnover Intention

Intention to quit working for an employer is an individual's psychological response to specific organisational conditions which fall along a continuum of organisational withdrawal behaviours ranging from daydreaming to physical act of quitting (Kraut A. , 1975). The majority of researchers accept that an employees' intention to stay or leave an employer is the last cognitive step in the process of voluntary turnover (Steel, 1984). As a result, turnover intention is included in most turnover models (Lambert, 2001). Research into the relations between turnover intention and turnover intention factors reveals many relevant variables. The most influential variables include age, gender, tenure, education, available job alternatives, job content and job satisfaction (Ghiselli, 2001).

Generally, satisfied workers perform their jobs more effectively (Judge, 1999) and less likely to act counterproductively (Chen, 1991). In service industries, work-related

conditions such as time pressure, lack of autonomy, work schedule difficulties and dissatisfaction with pay predict turnover intention (Estryn-Behar, 2010).

As a service employee's length of tenure with an employer increases and the employee increasingly develops a close fit with the employer, the employee tends to display higher degrees of service orientation (Kim, Service orientation on job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention of leaving in a casual dining chain restaurant, 2003). This creates an increasingly positive relationship between the employee and the employer and a negative effect on the employee's intention to leave.

Many empirical studies confirmed the important role of organizational commitment in turnover process (Lin, 2004) (Susskind A. B., 2000) (Van Breukelen, 2004) and they generally indicated that an individual's turnover intentions is negatively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. An individual's turnover intentions can be described as psychological response to specific organizational conditions which fall along a continuum of organizational withdrawal behaviours ranging from day dreaming to the physical act of turnover (Kraut A. , 1975). Specifically, both (Davy, 1991) and (Williams, 1986) identified that the organizational commitment as a mediator between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Employees who are highly committed to their organizational are less likely to leave the organizations than the employees who are highly uncommitted (Joiner, 2004) (Near, 1989).

In some cases employees may decide to leave an occupation altogether (Parry, 2008). Characteristics of food service employees who are most likely to leave the industry are high levels of feeling stress and tension or frustration (Ryan C. G., 2010). Meanwhile, industry committed employees score highest on being happy in their job, feeling loyal and feeling that management is supportive while scoring lowest about leaving the industry.

2.3 Stress and Turnover Intention

Stress among employees and their turnover intention have always been important issues for managers. Studies have attempted to answer the question of what determines people's intention to quit by investigating possible antecedents of employees' intention to quit. (Firth, 2007) identified that the experience of job related stress: the range factors that lead to job related stress (stressors) make employees to quit the organisation. An unstable, unsecured work environment that includes job security, continuity, procedural justice deviate the employees satisfaction level, insert to stress at work and as a result increase their turnover intention. Role stressors also lead to employees' turnover. This causes uncertainty about role should be. It can be a result of misunderstanding what is expected, how to meet the expectations or the employee thinking the job should be different (Kevin, 2004). Insufficient information on how to perform the job adequately, unclear expectations of peers and supervisors, extensive job pressure and lack of consensus on job functions or duties may cause employees to feel involved and less satisfied with their jobs and careers, less committed to their organisations, undergo stress and eventually display a propensity to leave the organisations (Vance, 2006). Lack of job security and status dissimilarity among

employees and the same level also cause stress which may lead their intention to leave the organisation (Andrew, 2008). Therefore, the researcher assumes the hypothesis as follow:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between role ambiguity and turnover intention

H₂: There is a positive relationship between role conflict and turnover intention

H₃: There is a positive relationship between role overload and turnover intention

3. Conceptual Framework

3.1 Conceptualisation of Study Variables

The criterion variable of interest in this study is “turnover intention” and predictor variable is “role stress” (RA, RC and RO). The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

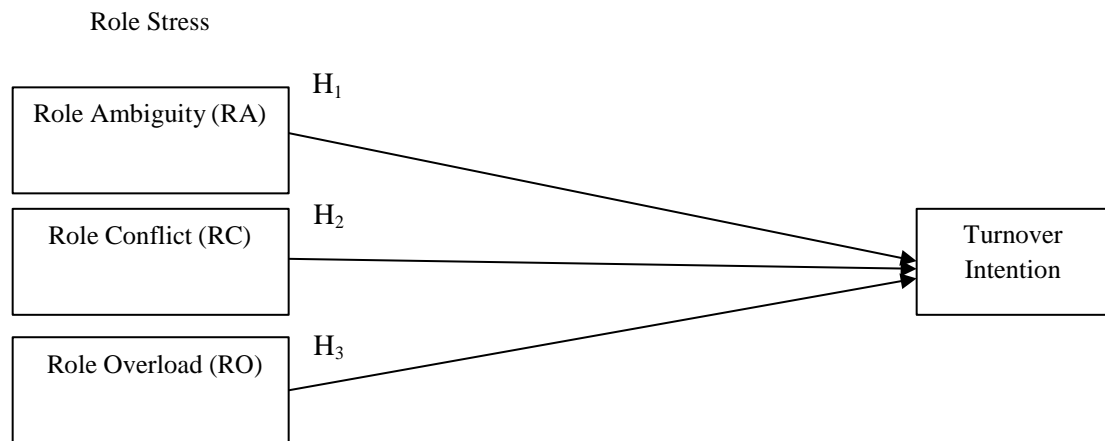


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the impact of role stress on turnover intention in hotel industry

4. Methodology

4.1 Samples

Respondents in this study consisted of hotels employees from 3 to 4 and 5 stars and chalets from East-coast in Peninsular Malaysia. A total of 200 questionnaires will mail to the respective human resource managers in the hotels. In view of the fact that the survey are

not under the researcher's supervision, cooperation with the human resource managers is vital for internal access and direct distribution of questionnaires to the managers and employees. The human resource managers are told to randomly distribute the questionnaires to the managers and employees associated with two majors operating departments: room department (front office and housekeeping) and food and beverages department (production and service) and human resources and sales and marketing department as well. Respondents are given two weeks for completion. Data entry will begin as soon as the completed questionnaires are returned directly to the researcher via mail using the self-addressed envelopes provided.

4.2 Measurements

The predictor variables of role stress are measured using a 14-items instrument (Rizzo, 1970) and (Beehr T. J., 1976). The role stress scale consisted of three dimensions measuring perceptions of role ambiguity (RA), role conflict (RC) and role overload (RO) using 6, 4 and 4-items respectively. The criterion variable, turnover intention (TI) is measured via a 4-items scale adopted from (Bluedorn, 1982). Responses to all items are made on a 5-point Likert Scale format ranging from (1) "Strongly Disagree" to (7) "Strongly Agree".

5. Conclusion

Intention to quit is largely influenced by job dissatisfaction, lack of commitment to the organisation and feelings of stress which in the current model are influenced by job stressors. However, for managers who are concerned about the impact of intention to quit and possible turnover, these variables are factors over which they may have some control. Particular, role stress (role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload) which is a factor that triggers the chain of psychological states that lead to intention to quit can be adjusted. Supervisor support is a similarly influential mediator within the model and can reduce the impact of stressors on psychological states and intentions to quit. Monitoring workloads and supervisor-subordinate relationships by management may not only reduce stress but increase job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation. Further, given their importance in quitting intentions, managers need to monitor both extrinsic and intrinsic sources of job satisfaction available to employees. This in turn may reduce intention to quit and subsequent turnover as well as saving organisations the financial costs and effort involved in the recruitment, induction and training of replacement employees.

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