

# An Analysis of The Retention of Trained Employees of The Food and Beverage Sector in The Hotel Industry (With A Special Reference to Selected Star Graded Resorts in Sri Lanka)

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## ABSTRACT

Hospitality means the relationship process between a guest and a host, and it also refers to the act or practice of being hospitable, that is, the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill. Hospitality frequently refers to the hospitality industry jobs for hotels, restaurants, casinos, catering, resorts, clubs and any other service position that deals with tourists. The study assessed the factors that determine for higher rates of labour turnover in the food and beverage sector of the hotel industry in Sri Lanka both coastal and up-country locations across. The study is to examine the rate of turnover, identify factors accounting for it and suggest solutions to address them. Outstanding star graded hotels in the study area were selected. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 management and staff graded employees who are willing to respond to the questionnaire. The objective of the study is to find the core reasons why employees leave hotels, especially in the food and beverage department (Kitchen and Restaurant departments). What are the measures the organization can follow to retain these employees and how to turn over can be reduced?

**Keywords:** labor turnover, labor retention, push and pull factors

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Studies done regarding labor turnover in the service industry across the world indicate that, the hospitality sector leads with many employees' changing jobs from time to time. Subsequently, some causes of labor turnover are believed to be industry-specific. Both the internal and external causes of labor turnover affect the growth, profitability and customer satisfaction whenever it occurs in the workplace. Employers see the process of staff leaving and being replaced as a natural and inevitable feature of the industry. Employee turnover is a common problem face in every industry.

In Sri Lanka, very little has been documented on the causes of labor turnover. This paper is based on a study completed in 2010 to 2015. The main purpose of this study was therefore to establish the internal and external causes of labor turnover in star-rated hotels in Sri Lanka. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This study involved a total of 100 permanently employed staff working in these star-rated resort hotels. Simple random sampling method was used to pick hotels as well as the respondents for this study. Being a service oriented industry; employees are playing a major role in day to day operation. Because of this reason, employees are recognized as one of the most important asset in the tourism industry (Huang – Wei Su, 2014). There for

management is spending considerable amount of money to develop human resources.

According to the UNWTO tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The direct contribution of travel and tourism was USD 2,229.8bn in 2015 and it's a 3% of total GDP (WTTC, 2016). Being a service-oriented industry; it provides large number of direct and indirect employments. A contribution of direct employments in 2015 is, 107,833,000 and its 3.6% of total employment in the world. Travel and tourism industry provided 238,578,000 no indirect jobs and its 9.5% of total employment. Though it provides large number of job opportunities, the turnover rate also high as the same.

### 1.1 Background of The Study

Labor turnover is significant to organization, individuals and management. From the organizational perspective, labor turnover represents a significant direct cost in terms of recruiting, poor production practices and reduced standards as well as high replacement and training costs (Hoekstra, 1990). Subsequently, Fair (1992) suggests that, there are other costs associated with labor turnover which include separation costs (exit interviews and severance pay), recruitment costs (advertising and search fees), selection costs (interview and reference checking), hiring

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costs (induction and initial training), relocation expenses, uniforms and lost productivity costs associated with both the unfilled vacancy and the learning curve associated with the new employee. Indirect costs however are associated with decreased levels of employee motivation, absenteeism, tardiness leading to customer dissatisfaction and ultimately customer defection (Fair, 1992). In his research on labor turnover, Price (1977) noted that, low turnover rates present special challenges. The first is to resist over investing in prevention programs.

While this may seem like unnecessary advice, some organizations spend large amount of money developing new programs and projects as well as solving problems that do not necessarily exist. Another challenge is to consider using leading indicators to spot turnover problems before they become serious issues. As mentioned earlier by Fair (1992), intention to quit is an important leading indicator along with organizational commitment and job satisfaction data. These leading indicators can be crucial for early analysis and action before turnover develops into a serious problem. With such information, management may then be in a position to consider changes and improvements to their personnel practices in order to reduce labor turnover causes. The provision of a high-quality working environment with a range of employee-valued benefits may also increase satisfaction levels and hence discourage turnover behaviors (Mobley, 1977). A final challenge is the notion of complacency. While it is important to move to other critical issues in the organization, turnover should always be monitored. It is a leading indicator to ensure that retention is not becoming an issue. Complacency can cause serious problems in eroding the good progress that has been developed previously. Lastly, measuring and monitoring turnover is essential to bringing the appropriate attention to the issue and taking constructive action. Understanding the employment climate is fundamental to developing and understanding of retention. Having acceptable targets; based on precise definitions of turnover that are meaning to the organization, help to bring the process clearly into focus. These are aimed at bringing the proper resources and attention to this critical issue so that action is taken. The senior management team should moreover accept the responsibility for managing retention.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Employee retention is a challenge that can affect the success of an industry (Guilding et al., 2014). Employee retention and turnover crises have been emerging in the 21st century for many businesses, including hospitality (Gursoy, Rahman, & Swanger, 2012). Retention in the hospitality industry is a continuing and ever-evolving effort to retain the best available labor talent (Han & Hyun, 2015; Karatepe, 2013) as hospitality managers face the challenge of managing a constantly changing workforce (Alexakis, 2011). Researchers noted that some managers have either not addressed the problem of employee retention or have attempted to address the problem with little success (Alexakis, 2011; Kucukusta, Denizci Guillet, & Lau, 2014). Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, and Callan (2014) concluded that employees will stay with an organization if given a combination of retention strategies that can make leaving seem less than advantageous.

Employee turnover is one of the major issues facing in currently in the world wide. When we consider about the accommodation sector in resort hotels which is 45% of all employees in the hotel, having a major employee portion turnover will be a vulnerable situation to the hotel day to day operation. This will be a major problem to HRM and to training and development. What will be the main reasons to the high turnover of the employees and what will be the solutions we can take to reduce the high turnover of employees.

## 1.3 Research Questions

- i. What is the nature of high labor turnover in accommodation sector in resort hotels in Sri Lanka?
- ii. What are the factors that cause for the high labor turnover of accommodation sector in resort hotels in Sri Lanka?
- iii. What are the impacts of having such high labor turnover in accommodation sector in resort hotels in Sri Lanka?
- iv. What are the most suitable strategies that can successfully solve this high labor turnover of accommodation sector in resorts hotels in Sri Lanka?

## 1.4 Main Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to examine the reasons affecting the high labor turnover of the staff of accommodation sector of the resorts hotel in Sri Lanka and recognize most suitable strategies and ways to address this issue successfully.

## 1.5 Specific Research Objectives

- i. To examine the present situation of high labor turnover in the industry
- ii. To analysis the factors creating high labor turnover in resort hotels in Sri Lanka.
- iii. To examine the action taken by the resort hotels to prevent this high labor turnover
- iv. To explore the strategies and ways to prevent the high labor turnover of employees

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review was to present a critical synthesis of historical and current research concerning the conceptual framework, the service and hospitality sector, employee motivations, leadership styles, employee retention strategies, and leadership. The Walden University Library and Google Scholar databases produced valuable information for the literature review. The research databases utilized included ERIC, Pro Quest, Business Info Source, and SAGE Journals. The search words included *leadership, strategy, leadership skills, retention, job satisfaction, recruitment, organizational culture, turnover, leadership traits, practical results, and high-performing employee.*

## 2.2 Leadership

From the creation of the first organized business, leadership has been a vital part of the success and failure of an organization (Hargis, Watt, & Piotrowski, 2011). Graybill (2014) found that, despite the importance of the concept of leadership, there is no clear and consistent definition. Leadership, as defined by Dhawan and Zubin (2011), is the ability to lead using various strategies to accomplish organizational goals collectively. Larsson and Eid (2012) claimed that an effective leader can envision a solution for problems while leading subordinates to follow designed strategies and run the organization smoothly.

### 2.2.1 Leadership Behavior

One of the fundamental signs of quality leaders is the ability and skill to motivate followers to accomplish great things (Grant, 2012). Leaders foster motivation by engaging in inspirational behaviors such as conveying a compelling vision, emphasizing collective identities, expressing confidence and optimism, and referencing core values and ideals (Grant, 2012). Per Grant (2012), leader behaviors include accomplishing tasks and expending effort to maintain others who are completing assigned tasks. Likert (1947) claimed that a manager's effectiveness is measurable by productivity, job satisfaction, turnover, cost, and employee motivation. Measurements of the effectiveness of leaders are behaviors and the ability to retain satisfied workforce followers (Likert, 1947). Certain qualities of leadership behavior are learned and adjusted through training programs aimed at improving managers' leadership skills; investments in leadership development is considered safe (Wu, Tse, Fu, Kwan, & Liu, 2013). Managers behave as gatekeepers by increasing trust, empowering action, and respecting employees (Eversole, Venneberg, & Crowder, 2012). Managers who engage themselves frequently in two-way communication with employees can provide feedback that can motivate an employee's work performance (Eversole et al., 2012). Specifically, acknowledging an employee's life outside work displays supportive behavior and helps to ensure tools and resources are applied effectively to maintain a satisfied workforce of followers (Eversole et al., 2012).

Hon and Chan (2013) agreed that, finding that empowering behaviors are useful in facilitating an employee's self-concordance and creative efficacy when tasks are interdependent. Lower than average employee turnover rates in an organization links to an appreciation of the leadership styles that create the atmosphere of satisfied employees (Hon & Chan, 2013).

The majority of researchers who have studied employee retention focused their research efforts on employees being satisfied with their jobs with a particular focus on the assignment of responsibilities in an effective and efficient way (Nunkoo, Gursay, & Rammkisson, 2013). Workers seek employment where they receive performance praises (Nunkoo et al., 2013). Specifically, trust between an employee and a manager, and a leadership style that encourages the development of skills among employees encourages employee job satisfaction (McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvory, 2012). Certain types of leadership styles have the potential to increase employee retention (McCole et al., 2012).

A significant influence on employee retention is the direction that employees receive from their managers (Maier, 2011). Conversely, researchers know little about the specific satisfaction levels of employees and preventive measures managers use to decrease the employee turnover rate (McCole et al., 2012).

### 2.2.2 Leadership Styles

Leaders who demonstrate a particular leadership style create the corporate cultures that influence organization performance (Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013). Leaders espouse different leadership styles due to a combination of group values, competencies, skills, and personal styles. Liu, Cai, Li, Shi, and Yongqing (2013) narrated that leadership styles affect employees' self-perception within an organization. Managers continuously work toward developing programs and encouraging behaviors that can contribute to the professional abilities and advancement of employees (Sawa & Swift, 2013). Managers can develop the leadership capability daily to reinforce the mission and goals of the organization with employees (Sawa & Swift, 2013). Contract and exchange relationships between a subordinate and a manager are built through the leader-follower dyad (Liu et al., 2013). A high-quality leader-follower exchange allows for mutual expectation and influence, which can reduce an employee's intention to leave (Liu et al., 2013). In general, Sawa and Swift (2013) determined that the leaders in a company could play a substantial role in setting the tone and culture within an organization. The dominant organizational leadership styles and preferences determine the type of work, business practices, and opportunities accessible to employees (Sawa & Swift, 2013). A manager's implementation of a leadership style could affect the overall tone and attitude of the work environment and the method of executing the vision for the business (Sawa & Swift, 2013). Dinh et al. (2014) identified that various leadership styles, which include authentic, autocratic, bureaucratic, charismatic, laissez-faire, servant, transactional, and transformational. When managers integrate any of the leadership practices, employees may exhibit more satisfaction, improved efficiency, and deeper organizational commitment (Dinh et al., 2014). When a manager uses one or more of the leadership styles, it could have a positive effect on their organization (Farahani, Taghadosi, & Behboudi, 2011).

### Authentic Style

Researchers have found that the leader with an authentic leadership style has strong similarities with transformational, charismatic, and servant style leaders (Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Wong & Laschinger, 2013). The use of an authentic leadership model is increasing in legitimacy (Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Wong and Laschinger (2013) noted that managers that emphasized transparency, balanced processing, self-awareness, and high ethical standards increased employee job satisfaction and performance. Leaders with a keen sense of behavior awareness are authentic leaders (Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Authenticity includes applied ethics, strict morals, and a high degree of awareness (Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Seeking the same qualities in others, authentic managers help employees' access opportunities to learn and grow by providing necessary support and resources (Wong & Laschinger, 2013). Specifically, authentic

managers are more likely to create positive and empowering work environments (Wong & Laschinger, 2013). Authentic leaders are intensely aware of their environment, and demonstrate determination, poise, and optimism (Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Conversely, authentic leaders set their personal values and beliefs over another individual, which cause potential biases and followers have a difficult time following their leadership (Ford & Harding, 2011).

#### **Autocratic Style**

A leader that takes total control and makes all of the decisions is using an autocratic style (Stacher, 2011). Autocratic leadership styles are common in military regimes and nondemocratic countries (Stacher, 2011). The autocratic leader demonstrates a controlling attitude towards the team and makes decisions without member input or agreement (Monzani, Ripoll, & Silla, 2014). Monzani et al. (2014) argued that this type of leader provides strong task direction; however, an autocratic leader is not concerned with the feelings, thoughts, or satisfaction of subordinates (Schoel, Bluemke, Mueller, & Stahlberg, 2011). Autocratic leadership hallmarks include control of the flow of information and maintaining a tight hold on communication and authority (Schoel et al., 2011). Further, the autocratic leader will delegate very little to subordinates (Monzani et al., 2014).

#### **Bureaucratic Style**

The bureaucratic leadership style is comparable to the autocratic leadership style (Green & Roberts, 2012). Green and Roberts (2012) argued that bureaucratic leaders acquire authority through control and detail orientation. In a bureaucratic administration, there is an assembly of leaders in power (Singh, 2013). The autocratic leader, however, tends to focus on having power and influence over an individual (Stacher, 2011). Elena (2012) found that leaders at government organizations espouse a bureaucratic leadership style. A bureaucratic leader can sometimes demand stringent compliance to a set of rigid rules and regulations as determined by the governing body (Elena, 2012; Green & Roberts, 2012), making the style quickly adaptable to fit a modern organization in a fixed work environment. Bureaucratic leadership is management driven, where the current system and procedure maintenance are paramount to success (Elena, 2012). Bureaucratic leaders eliminate creativity and do not welcome diverse ideas of others (Stacher, 2011). The bureaucratic leader discourages the outside input to the point of alienating others (Stacher, 2011). The bureaucratic leader secures power in the strict enforcement of detail and accountability; leaders manage resources and delegate only particular assignment (Stacher, 2011). The bureaucratic concept can be beneficial for organizations seeking to emphasize regularity, reliability, and efficiency (Milosevic & Bass, 2014). Employees welcome organizational leaders that create fixed division of tasks, hierarchical supervision, and detailed rules and regulations with a high need for regularity and order (Milosevic & Bass, 2014). Effective bureaucratic managers encourage routine, detail, accountability, control layers, and rule through information control (Green & Roberts, 2012).

#### **Charismatic Style**

Charismatic leaders view others as valuable assets to an organization (Hayibor, Agle, Sears, Sonnefeld, & Ward, 2011). Charismatic leaders offer encouragement and demonstrate the ability to motivate followers (Dionne et al., 2012). They have high emotional intelligence and know what to say to motivate subordinates to achieve preferred results (Wilderom, Van den Berg, & Wiersma, 2012). The charismatic leader possesses vision, enthusiasm, and confidence, with the ability to infuse colleagues with these qualities (Dionne et al., 2012). Yammarino and Dansereau (2011) described that charismatic leaders as being able to use their charisma to gain power and influence, yet may take risks. A comparison of transformational, servant, and spiritual leadership styles could enable researchers to contrast relative honesty, trust, and optimism behaviors (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2011). For example, Murphy and Johnson (2011) found that charismatic leaders claim to be authentic but use the power primarily to benefit themselves instead of subordinates.

#### **Laissez-Faire Style**

A laissez-faire leader allows subordinates to have total control over their work tasks (Salman, Riaz, Saifullah, & Rashid, 2011). This style of leadership exercises a relaxed approach to leading (Salman et al., 2011). The laissez-faire leaders leave the decision-making process up to others and are absent from their leadership role (Deriu, 2012; Westerlaken & Woods, 2013). Mehmood and Arif (2011) revealed that the laissez-faire leader does not desire the role and the responsibility of being a leader. Raja (2012) concluded that his relaxed approach does not display proper leadership (Mahseredjian, Karkoulian, & Messarra, 2011).

#### **Servant Style**

The servant leader demonstrates a helping behavior and ensures that individuals accomplish professional and personal goals (Sun, 2013). A servant leader desires to meet the needs of followers rather than lead them (Gillet, Cartwright, & Van Vugt, 2011). Servant leadership differs from other styles of leading and is related to transformational leadership (Sun, 2013). Hernandez, Everly, Avolio, and Johnson (2011) noted that the servant leadership style extends beyond the transformational style because the motives of a servant leader and subordinates link (Mittal & Dorfman, 2012). Hunter et al. (2013) explained that servant leaders are capable of creating an organizational service climate through role modeling and social exchange. Servant leaders focus on the needs of followers through an interactive social exchange relationship, sharing leadership responsibilities, and mutual influence (Rai & Prakash, 2014). Servant leaders prioritize employees' development and individual growth (Poksinska, Swartling, & Drotz, 2013; Rai & Prakash, 2014). Servant leaders detach themselves from employees to explore new opportunities, resolve problems, and formulate organizational goals (Rai & Prakash, 2014). Servant leaders are known for their often separation from employees to focus on the overall vision and to provide employees necessary directives to meet a new vision (Poksinska et al., 2013). Research conducted by Shekari and Nikooparvar (2011) noted that some employees might not respond to this leadership style. Servant leaders who cater to an employee's need for extreme manners lessen

the employee's perception of them as an authoritative figure (Shekari & Nikooperavar, 2011).

### Transformational Style

The transformational leader motivates individuals to perform tasks in a manner that exceeds the status quo. This style of leadership has received a great deal of attention in the literature (Farahani et al., 2011). In 1985, the transformational style became the preferred leadership approach in the United States (Darden, 2011). A transformational leader encourages employees to exceed expectations (Chen, Hwang, & Liu, 2012) and promotes radical change (Ishikawa, 2012). Credited for producing a highly effective change in organizations, transformational leaders typically have a positive effect on employees (Raja, 2012; Yang, 2012). Specifically, this leadership style is the preferred style when exceptional employee performance the goal (Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa, & Nwankwere, 2011). Transformational leaders can increase employee satisfaction and fulfillment scores (Abeysekera & Jayakody, 2011). Researchers found that employees working for transformational leaders had increased commitment to their jobs and their employer (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Yang, 2012). Transformational leaders permeate work with meaning, stimulate followers intellectually, and inspire others to work against self-interests (Abeysekera & Jayakody, 2011). When faced with a challenging context, transformational leaders may have an impact on employee retention (Raja, 2012). The use of open communication allows transformational leaders to motivate employees through an ambitious vision, high expectations, risk taking, and setting standards of performance (Abeysekera & Jayakody, 2011). Den et al. (2012) concluded that the relationship between transformational leaders and their employees is stronger if the employees or followers are aware that they possess all skills and knowledge to accomplish a task. Transformational leaders have the ability to link job success and career satisfaction (Den et al., 2012). The transformational leader is self-confident and has a strong value system, but Hernandez et al. (2011) noted that transformational leaders might exhibit behaviors that are both untrustworthy and inauthentic. The potential limitation of transformational leaders' authenticity necessitates a distinction between transformational and charismatic leadership styles to identify negative behaviors of each leadership style (Murphy & Johnson, 2011).

### Transactional Style

The transactional leader uses an exchange process by which the follower receives a reward for performing a certain task or job (Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013). Transactional leadership includes a reciprocal exchange in a mutual trade process (Lambright & Quinn, 2011). Leaders who implemented this style utilized reward and corrective action to control a subordinate's behaviors (Groves & LaRocca, 2011). The transactional leader focuses on doing things correctly versus doing the correct thing (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2011). Researchers have determined that transactional leaders place too much emphasis on superficial processes rather than on substantial matters within the organization (Groves & LaRocca, 2011; Yammarino & Dansereau, 2011).

Transactional leaders approach leadership through monitoring and controlling methods where rationality and economic means are enticements (Zhu, Riggio, Avolio, & Sosik, 2011).

### 2.3 Employee Retention Strategies

Managers that ensure employees feel valued and supported can retain employees and serve as an organizational stabilizing influence during change (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). High turnover rates can be an indication of managers' challenges in retaining workers (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Retention strategies have become an integral part of an organization's business strategy (Ghosh, Satyawadi, Joshi, & Shadman, 2012). By having a better understanding of the reasons that employees leave or want to leave an organization, effective retention strategies could reduce turnover (Cohen, 2013).

Managers increasingly work in an unpredictable economic environment (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Employee knowledge is one of the most important sources of organizational competitive advantages (Schmitt, Borzillo, & Probst, 2011). Reitz, Stewart, and Bruce (2011) explained that job market competition and the need for employee job embeddedness have risen because of the lack of adequate salary. A perceived adequate salary does not ensure an employee will remain with an organization (Reitz, 2014). Job market competition may be a critical factor in an employee's decision to quit a current job (Reitz et al., 2011). In the hospitality industry, retention strategies are critical because many of the employees' job skills are transferable to competitive organizations (Strom et al., 2014).

Managers are not alone in their quests for efficient organizational performance. In most cases, employees have a stake in the performance of the organization (Kochanowski, 2011). When employees experience problems or observe opportunities for improvement, they engage in an improvement-oriented voice, which results in speaking up or exiting the group (McClellan, Burris, & Detert, 2013). Organizational performance depends on managers having more than a passing knowledge of the determinants of employee performance (Schmitt et al., 2011). Routine assessments of personal effectiveness through performance evaluation to determine who can receive promotions, raises, and other group rewards are favorable approaches to retaining employees (Kochanowski, 2011).

Organizational leaders must create an organizational environment that prompts employees to commit to the company by implementing effective employee retention strategies (Strom et al., 2014). In the SPSS under study, I explored what strategies hospitality managers need to improve employee retention. Following is a discussion of eight literature subthemes that pertain to employee retention strategies, including (a) creating an employee-centered environment, (b) equating job performance to job outcomes, (c) developing a positive relationship exchange, (d) making the job more satisfactory, (e) compensation, (f) coaching opportunities and (g) developing retention strategies.

## 2.4 Job Satisfaction

Employees' satisfaction with their jobs is vital to the success of any business (Pizam, A. (2005)). Walsh and Bartikowski (2013) noted that strong employee satisfaction scores correlated with a lower intention to terminate employment. Tews, Michel, and Stafford (2013) also found that an employee's job satisfaction may increase employee retention. Further, employees that received continuous management and co-worker support experienced a high level of attachment and satisfaction with their jobs (Pizam, A. (2005)). Job satisfaction is one predictive of an employee's turnover intention (Regts & Molleman, 2013).

### 2.4.1 Compensation

The amount of compensation employees receive plays a substantial role in retaining employees (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). For example, companies that surveyed employees during exit interviews reported the top reason that employees terminate current employment is to accept higher paying jobs with other organizations (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Employers choosing to under compensate their employees run the risk of trained employees quitting to seek higher wages and benefits at another organization (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

### 2.4.2 Coaching Opportunities

Beattie et al. (2014) explained that managers must look for opportunities to allow workers to challenge themselves in situations where their skills and competencies can grow. Employee coaching has an empowerment benefit for the involved workers (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Developmental opportunities presented to employees can be a combination of an individual employee development plan and management coaching (Kandampully et al., 2014). Depending on the task that managers provide to employees, it is helpful to both parties when employees develop the necessary skills (Kandampully et al., 2014). Employee retention enhances via career development opportunities and coaching (Kim, Egan, Kim, & Kim, 2013). Managers, who take a proactive interest in being knowledgeable about employee retention factors, or the positive effects of coaching employees, boost retention metrics in their organizations (Kim et al., 2013).

## 2.5 Developing Retention Strategies

Research has also shown that developing a strategy is a means to focus organizational efforts on achieving the desired goal (Pangarkar, 2011). Managers who have a set of effective retention strategies can make more efficient use of time, energy, and resources (Kandampully et al., 2014; Ryu & Lee, 2013). An employee retention strategy is a description of how a manager plans to achieve the improved employee retention results (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). The strategy process is less precise than an action plan (Milman & Dickson, 2014). A manager's action plan includes a written outline for who, what, when, and how to implement the proposed action in the organization (Pangarkar, 2011; Ryu & Lee, 2013). Management strategies can be the product of an organized and rigorous planning process (Park & Levy, 2014; Ryu & Lee, 2013). Pangarkar (2011) noted that managers with strategies that helped propel them to an industry pinnacle arrived at the winning strategy through trial, error, and unanticipated success. As organizations' leaders strive for

a deeper understanding of effective employee retention strategies, it is crucial to understanding the processes by which an effective strategy formed (Park & Levy, 2014). As noted by Milman and Dickson (2014), learning the strategies that managers use to retain employees is a more proactive approach than studying why an employee terminates employment. Business community managers can develop strategies that ensure the quality of the goods or services they produce will improve the multidisciplinary workplace (Gershengorn, Kocher, & Factor, 2014). Organizations benefit from shared sets of strategies (Milman & Dickson, 2014). Managers at different career levels can be empowered to make proactive decisions without waiting to react to shifting pressures arising from an ever-changing environment (Gershengorn et al., 2014).

For example, implementing a targeted strategy for employee retention in occupations experiencing labor shortages demonstrates a managerial sensitivity to the organizational need for stability and sustained profitability (Gershengorn et al., 2014). With this background in mind, Kandampully et al. (2014) recommended that researchers seek to understand how hospitality service managers have developed retention strategies over time to retain employees. The strategies that emerge from this study may provide managers a better understanding of techniques and strategies traditionally used in the hospitality industry to retain employees.

## 3. Methodology

This study is a descriptive research procedure to accomplish the purpose. The study attempted to quantify the subjective experience of perceived employee turnover and perceived organizational intension to test the relationship between the two constructs.

There are three choices of research methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Guillet, B. (2011)). This study involved investigating a SPSS and presenting data from multiple sources of evidence such as semi structured interviews and a review of documentation which is why I chose a qualitative research method. Exploring the different aspects of individual perspectives helps determine how individuals interact with their environment (Guillet, B, 2011) The research method for this study was qualitative to gain an understanding of retention strategies of hospitality managers with the consideration of real-life experiences (Eriksen, B. 2010) and strategies used to improve employee retention. A qualitative research method was the most valuable research method for this study to explore the in-depth experiences of the participants (Eriksen, B. 2010). Utilizing qualitative methods enabled me to explore the experiences of hospitality managers using interviews and company documents pertaining to employee retention to understand the SPSS of employee retention strategies in the hospitality industry. Qualitative methods permit researchers to ask questions of the participants who have experiences pertaining to what, where, and how the SPSS under study affects them (Eriksen, B. 2010).

**Table 1.1 Conceptual Framework**

| Independent Variable  | Dependent Variable      |
|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Personal Factors</b><br>- Health Problem<br>- Family Related Issues<br>- Social Status                                   | Retention/<br>Intention |
| <b>Push Factors</b><br>- Attitude Factors<br>- Career Advancement   |                         |
| <b>Pull Factors</b><br>- High Salary<br>- Organizational Culture<br>- Reputation of the Company<br>- Organizational Factors |                         |

Source-Eriksen, 2010).

**3.1 Hypothesis**

- i. There is a strong relationship between Personal Factors, Push Factors, Pull Factors and retention/intention of the trained employees of the food and beverage sector in the hotel industry.
- ii. There is no strong relationship between Personal Factors, Push Factors, Pull Factors and retention/intention of the trained employees of the food and beverage sector in the hotel industry.

**4. Data Analysis and Findings**

In this section the information assembled through the poll was investigated and the result was contrasted and the hypothetical foundation talked about in before parts.

To begin with the information that is utilized in view of socioeconomics were investigated and taken after with the examination of information applicable to the fundamental goals or reason for the exploration.

The survey was intended to incorporate couple of statistic inquiries initially and whatever is left of the inquiries (Likert Scale) was speaking to truths in connection to the 4 free factors specified in the Conceptual Framework.

As the sample there are 60 male which percentage of 60% and there are 40 female which percentage of 40%. As the sample there is 25 people are in 18-28 age categories which are percentage of 25%. There are 20 peoples are 29-38 age category which is 20%. There are 20 of people are 39 -48 age category which is percentage of 20%. There are 25 peoples are 49-58 age category which are percentage of 25%. 10 peoples are above 59 which percentage of 10%. As the sample of there is 5 people are educated below O/L which is percentage of 5%. 25

peoples are done O/L which percentage of 25% which percentage of 25%. There are 20 peoples are done A/L which percentage of 20%. There are 25 peoples are done diploma which percentage of 25%. There are 25 people who have done degree which percentage of 25%.

Through the above table the research accepts that there is a positive relationship between relationship with pull factors and retention as the coefficient is positive and the significance of the correlation is 99% as the correlation stands at .017\*\*, where there is a strong relationship between Personal factors, push factors, pull factors and retention/ intention of the trained employees of the food and beverage sector in the hotel industry.

**5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

**5.1 Introduction**

The focus of the study was to examine the relation between employee turnover and the factors such as personal factors, push factors and pull factors. The study therefore aimed to answer whether these factors impacts the employee turnover rate.

In the beginning theoretical exploration of the various concepts and studies on employee turnover was done to form a background on the research. This helped in identifying the research area and framing the research objectives. Then the researcher presented the hypothesis to answer the research question and objectives. After the secondary research is done, the plan of the primary data collection is put into action.

Data analysis done with the help of statistical tools provided which allows the researcher to have a detailed insight on the data collected. Data analysis confirmed that the employee's perceptions and requirements are very high at the job. This again confirmed that the factors identified from secondary data actually influence the employee turnover. The cross-tabulation data also proved that the factors like personal factors, push factors and pull factors under examination are closely related to each other. This research has pointed out to the existence of several factors that contribute to the high employee turnover rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry. The first evident reason is the personal factors. The correspondents confirmed the non-existence of work life balance. The management did not motivate their teams towards achieving the set goals and objectives. They did not value the input of the employees, nor did they reward their efforts through appropriate benefits to boost employee morale. Training programs were also absent to improve the skills of these employees. This encouraged these employees to continue seeking for better places to work. This contributed to low employee retention rates.

Another contributing factor is inadequate pay and non-existence of career advancement. The respondents were not receiving the salaries they deserved compared to their input. For this reason, they felt over-worked and under-appreciated. Finally, the working hours were also quite unfavorable. The employees did not have enough time to carry on with their social life. Most of them worked unsocial able hours making it almost impossible for them to socialize. Work-life balance was not favorable and thus

more employees felt discouraged to continue working with their respective companies.

While analyzing the qualitative data it can be seen that managers mentioned training as effective factor which could bring down the job stress. Managers opined that training could increase the expertise increase ultimately increases the performance of employees. Managers also commented on situational based training which enables the employees to understand the situations even before it happens and this helps employees when the situations actually occurs. Industry experts also commented on various entertainment packages to reduce the stress of employees.

While comparing the secondary data along with the primary data collected it becomes clear that the hotel industry in one of the sectors where employees feel high job stress. Primary as well secondary data explains various techniques to bring down job stress and it is clear that all the techniques are more or less the same. From the data acquired it can be conclude that initiating effective training programs along with the entertainment packages can bring down job stress to a big extent. Even though there are several measures it is clear that job stress affects job satisfaction very negatively and it could also lead to the employee turnover. Through the data analysis and the findings, the objectives and hypothesis of the research is achieved.

## 5.2 Discussion

Form the given opinion of the employees, the importance of the job satisfaction at the work is very evident. Majority of the employee agrees Personal Factors as a main factor of employee turnover. At the same time the data explains that personal factors such as Health Problem, Family Related Issues, and Social Status can impact job satisfaction. The research has identified many possible reasons that could impact the personal factors and data from the questionnaires identifies that perusal factors has major relationship with labor turnover. This explains the impact made by personal factors on employee turnover. Quantitative data analysis shows that the majority of the employees are exhausted with the long working hours in the hotel industry. There are various measures that are effectively put forward to bring down the influence of long working hours on the staff. Even though there are enough measures adopted; it has been identified that the fact that extended working hours can influence the employees very badly and even commented this could lead to employee turnover rate. Quantitative data too supports the manager's statements. This shows the relation between extended working hours and employee turnover. Quantitative data shows the need of good pay schemes at the hotel industry. Data clearly tells that employees are highly expected to be rewarded for the effort they put in at the time of work. Qualitative data shows that managers have initiated various incentive schemes and reward management practices to make sure that the employees get satisfied. Managers even commented on various effective entertainment packages initiated. This shows that the management is also aware of the importance of incentive schemes and reward management practices in hotel industry. This proves the impact and influence of

incentives schemes and reward management practices affects employee turnover.

### 5.2.1 Impact of Job Satisfaction on Employee Turnover Rate (Pull Factors)

While analyzing the secondary data it is very evident that job satisfaction has great influence on employee turnover especially in hotel industry. (Clegg, 1983) comment about the relation on organizational commitment and employee turnover. While analyzing the qualitative data it is clear that the managers think that job satisfaction improves organizational commitment. Thus, it can be concluded that job satisfaction directly affects the employee turnover rate. While analyzing the quantitative data it is very clear that the employees are greatly in concern of the employee turnover rate. Managers commented on various packages and plans to increase the job satisfaction and this shows that the managers are concerned about the factor job satisfaction. When comparing the data analyzed and the secondary data obtained it can be concluded that job satisfaction is one important factor that can make significant effect on employee turnover rate.

From the data collected it is also very evident that the other factors like job stress, extended working hours, incentive schemes and reward practices also have direct or indirect relation with the factor job satisfaction. From everything it is clear that by increasing the job satisfaction the employee turnover can be minimized.

### 5.2.2 Impact of Job Stress on Employee Turnover Rate (Personal Factors)

The study also intends to focus on the impact of job stress given to the organization, which has been successfully meet by the researcher. The previous studies explain that the services provided by the employees in hotels are extremely difficult as well as time consuming. It requires more time to do the job. The industry requires around the clock services based on the arrival of the foreign delegates as well as the clients and their expectations are very high. Secondary data explains under heavy working conditions job stress of employees can increase. Managers opined that when job stress increases a level of performance of an employee go down. When analyzing the quantitative data, majority of the employees think increased job stress can cause job dissatisfaction and while analyzing the data it is clear that most of the employees don't like to work in stressful condition. Secondary data shows that job stress can bring down the job satisfaction eventually which could lead to voluntary turnovers.

### 5.2.3 Effect of Extended Working Hours on the Employee Turnover Rate

The research with the help of both the qualitative as well as quantitative research analysis will submit the research data in respect to the turnover rate. Long working hours can reduce the employee performance. This will create a low self-esteem and make the staffs psychologically weak in connection to their performance ability. Long working hours will hamper the working potential of the staffs. The qualitative and quantitative data clearly explains that long working hours can influence the staff. Quantitative data shows that the employees feels long working hours can reflect on employee performance. Qualitative data also agrees to this. While analyzing the secondary data it can be

seen that extended working hours can lead an employee towards depression and this could negatively affect the employee. While analyzing the qualitative data, managers commented on various pay bonus packages can bring down the effect of long working hours. Long working hours are forced on employees mainly because of shortage of staffs.

By analyzing the data, it is clear that the long working hours can affect the employee performance. Along with this it is also clear that the long working hours can affect the work life balance of the employees. This will suffer the personal life of the staffs. The family and private life of the staffs will suffer the individuals and create a psychological influence on the staffs. As a result, this will penetrate the performance of the staffs and hamper their career growth. Therefore, this will create imbalances for both the organization as well as the staffs. Finally long working hours affect the job satisfaction and it increases the job stress (personal factors) too.

#### **5.2.4 Impact of reward management practices on employees (Push Factors)**

While analyzing the secondary data it is clear despite the industry reward management practices are very important in motivating the employees. The secondary data explains that humans generally have a nature of seeking for rewards for what they have done. The quantitative data shows that majority of the employees consider reward management practices as a main motivational factor. Manager's comments that reward management practices are very important in motivating the staff. Studies have shown that the reward management practices helps in motivation thereby improving the employee performance. While analyzing the primary data it is clear that managers used reward management practices not only to increase the performance but also it can increase the organizational commitment.

It is clear that reward management practices helps in retaining skillful staffs within the organization. According to psychological studies reward management practices can be used as best tactics to retain employees. While critically analyzing the primary and secondary data supports the human resource theories which says reward management practices can influence the employee turnover.

#### **5.2.5 Past Literature Review**

A comprehensive review of past literature on this issue reveals a very interesting aspect. HR practices within a company are entirely responsible for ensuring that the employees' interests satisfactorily are met. If the HR department fails or is ineffective in executing its core functions, then the company is likely to experience high employee turnover rates. As a result, the literature suggests that companies should work hard towards building a highly effective HR team. In doing so, they will avoid the shortcomings associated with under-appreciated and unmotivated employees. It is the only way through which high employee turnover rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry can be significantly reduced (Chen M, Lin C, Lien G (2009).

#### **5.2.6 Relevance for Employers and Organizations**

Through incorporating the recommendations given in this research project, companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry will increase their savings. A lot of their resources will be spent on other viable projects, other than the recruitment of new employees to replace the ones who have left. In addition to this, more time will be devoted towards the development of highly efficient employees that will ensure all organizational goals and objectives are achieved. However, these companies must also be aware of the costs associated with employee retention. Just like any other assets, employees are important investments for these companies. Companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry have spent a lot of resources in perfecting the skills of their employees to boost their productivity. To retain their employees, these companies must invest in training and development programs, offer them attractive salaries and benefits and present them with opportunities for career advancement. All of these activities require significant financial resources. However, properly trained and motivated employees will bring in more returns for a company, making it more profitable (Chen M, Lin C, Lien G, 2009).

#### **5.2.7 Recommendations**

This segment of the research project will provide a convincing conclusion that sums up the findings deduced throughout the entire project. Emphasis will be on determining whether the research questions set out at the beginning of this research project have been satisfactorily answered. The findings of the questionnaires used in this research project in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry indicated that the following were the main reasons behind the exceptionally high employee turnover rates; Wages, work-life balance and the lack of motivation and career advancement are the main factors to the high employee turnover rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry.

There is a direct relation between the above-mentioned factors and the behavior of employees in the Sri-Lanka hospitality sector. Employee training, empowerment, competitive wages, rewarding programs and finally career advancement are the most effective methods of promoting high employee retention rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry.

This research project produced a lot of vital data that attempts to explain the high employee turnover rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry. The questionnaire gave very useful insights as to why this alarming trend is quite prevalent in this important industry in Sri-Lanka. There are several factors responsible for this trend. However, three main factors stand out. The respondents offered very strong reactions to these three factors, i.e. wages, work-life balance, and finally the total lack of motivation within the various companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry. These three factors are the main agents of the relatively high employee turnover rates in this industry. The following discussion will critically analyze the impact of these factors, amongst others in the hospitality industry as well as the various ways through which companies can address them to boost employee retention rates.

#### **5.2.8 Work-Life Balance (Personal Factors)**

Work-life balance was a critical issue highlighted by a majority of the 39 respondents in this research project.

Human beings are social beings that require time to relax and catch up with friends and family members. When this is inhibited by work-related commitments, stress is inevitable. Employees who work long and unsocial hours tend to develop various social disorders arising from their depression and prolonged exposure to a similar set of activities. As mentioned earlier, the hospitality industry is comprised of companies whose purpose is to provide services to clients on a 24-hour basis. At times, employees bear this burden and instances of overworking arise.

Overworking employees by making them work for longer and unsocial hours, often leads to adverse results to the company, such as higher levels of absenteeism. Employees may become less efficient and the company ends up wasting a lot of resources, including losing clients in the long run (Chen M, Lin C, Lien G, 2009).

There are several ways through which companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry can deal with this issue. First and foremost, evidence from past research indicates that competitive unsocial hour's payments greatly facilitate in encouraging positive attitude among employees. Companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry should therefore adopt this approach as it will help its employee embrace working productively, even in unsocial hours. Competitive payment for employee efforts during unsocial hours is a great motivator. Some of the respondents expressed that they had a lot of issues with their payment and benefits packages. The unsocial hour payment package could be included as a benefit for all employees willing to work during these odd hours (Bryman, A. and Bell, E, 2011). Companies should also encourage fun in the work place, organize and encourage group outings as fun activities, which can relieve employees of stress specially those working in high stress positions (Bryman, A. and Bell, E, 2011).

It is also important for the companies in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry to constantly educate their employees on the importance of working through unsociable hours i.e. the benefit to guests etc. Most of these companies make a lot of their money during these odd and unsocial hours. An example is a hotel which makes money during unsocial hours, i.e., at night, on public holidays and during summer when people are either travelling or just having a good time with friends and families. These are the peak times for hotels and thus the employees must step up and provide the necessary services for the hotel to make money. If the employees do not fully comprehend this, then they may find it difficult or unfair to be working when their friends are socializing. They must be thoroughly educated on this to improve their perception and attitude when working (Boella, M. and Goss-Turner, S, 2015). Research conducted by Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011) shows that most woman needed flexibility because of childcare commitments, companies should introduce more flexible working hours, job sharing, more option for part time work for men and women, and more paternity leave all this will reduce high turnover rate in the industry (Boella, M. and Goss-Turner, S, 2015).

### 5.2.9 Wages (Pull Factors)

Finally, this research project revealed that the level of wages offered to the employees in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry played a major part in their reluctance

to work with their respective companies for longer periods of time. The respondents expressed many concerns over the salary they received and the manner in which they received it. They strongly believed that their input in the companies they worked for deserved to be rewarded better. In addition to this, there were instances of late disbursement of salaries. All of these factors negatively impact on the employee's dedication towards their work. In fact, such factors may compel employees to start looking for other rewarding employment opportunities in other companies leading to high employee turnover rates (Chen M, Lin C, Lien G, 2009). A way to rectify this is to revisit the employee remuneration packages offered to the employees in these hospitality companies. An appropriate level of pay should be awarded to employees in accordance with their input in the company.

Survey employees on fairness and consistency of the pay system and ask them what recognition programs they would consider to be good incentives (Bryman, A. and Bell, E, 2011). This way, they will feel that their input is appreciated. Moreover, additional benefits packages should be offered to employees for their hard work. Benefits are a great way of boosting employee morale while working. With these benefits and an appropriate salary, employees are bound to work for longer periods of time with their companies. This will in turn reduce the high employee turnover rates in the Sri-Lanka hospitality industry (Chen M, Lin C, Lien G, 2009).

Increase in the pay scales can be followed by the hotel industries to satisfy the needs of the employees. Employees in the hotel industries are low paid as compared to the other professions. Pay scales should be increased according to the employee performance. As per the present records the pay scales of the employees in the hotel industries are set according to the standard of the hotels. While fixing the salaries efficiencies and abilities should be considered. Attractive incentive schemes need to be introduced in the hotel to decrease the rate of employee turnover. During the peak timings it is common in hotels that the staffs should have to work more than the usual timings and this causes dissatisfaction if it not recognized properly. Double pay system could be introduced for extra hours of work. This can motivate the staff to work more if it is required. Extra staffs can be hired only for particular busy periods or seasonal timings. This can avoid forcing the employee to work longer than usual.

### 5.2.10 Improvements in The Living Standards (Push Factors)

The company has the responsibility to take care of the employees. Sri-Lanka being a developing country has seen a growth of economy in the hotel industries. But the growth in the standards of the employees working in hotel industries did not go through important developments. The rate of employee turnover can bring down by facilitating the needs of the employees. Employees are seen to be migrating from different states and also reallocating from neighboring countries. In such cases, the hotel industries in Sri-Lanka can provide those rooms and quarters. In this case, differentiation based on the position held by different employees should not intervene. The

personal self-respect of the employee cannot be hurt with the discrimination based on certain issues. Language barrier can appear for an employee reallocating from different state to the southern parts of Sri-Lanka. The management needs to take care of the professional and personal needs of the employees. The personal need also includes the enough scope of growth in a particular organization. For instance, housekeeping personal can expect career to excel in department of customer service or public relations. Medical facilities can be introduced in the company to help them regarding the health issues. Medical allowances should be should be given to employees. Employee welfare is one of the most discussed topics all over the world and it is clear that welfare measures can create a strong emotional bond between employee and employer.

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