

An Empirical Study of Employee Retention Issues in Hotel Industry in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

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Abstract: The present study is on retention issues of hotels with three stars and above facilities in Odisha. It intends to find out the factors responsible for the employee turnover and examine some factors as found from literature and suggest the means to retain the employees in sample hotels. The data were collected with the help of a well-designed tested questionnaire which were administered on hundred employees who were randomly selected from various star hotels in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Bartlett’s test of sphericity and factor analysis were conducted to ascertain the veracity of the study. The 10 items identified through factor analysis were found significantly contributing to employee turnover. Based on the findings, few suggestions are made for the management to improve employee retention in the hotel industry in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

INTRODUCTION

Industrialization, globalization of business and modernization of the society have increased the importance of tourism more than the early society. In this regard, hotel industry plays an important role in strengthening the tourism business not only in Odisha but also throughout the country. Again the business performance of this industry is identified with performance of the employees. So, hotels and other supplementary accommodations need to maintain its employee size to extend best business or service to the customers.

The growing demand of tourism over the period and priority of government for growth of tourism in the Odisha State, the hotels both private and government

always in demand with skilled and talented employees. However, migration of such skilled and professionals to other states has become a matter of concern for the growth and sustainability of hotel industry. The success of any industry depends largely upon the quality of human resource and tourism is not an exception either. The accommodation sector is highly personalized. Guest attraction and retention is the pre-requisite for a smooth and successful operation in this sector, requiring professionally trained and highly skilled personnel. “Employees today are different. They have good opportunities because of the wide market. As soon as they feel dissatisfied with the current employer or the job they switch over to the next job” Taylor^[1]. Therefore, the employer should take the responsibility of retaining their best employees.

Hoteliers in Odisha are facing increased turnover and poor retention. Most of the students who pass out from various catering and hotel management institutes prefer to move out of Odisha for better exposure, career opportunity and healthy work environment. Due to shortage of professional employees, the service standards are undermined. Because of shortage of skilled manpower, hotels are forced to recruit employees with lower educational attainments and it becomes difficult to train them. Further most of the operational positions are filled as and when they need instead of a proper recruitment and selection process. As a result, they lack practical exposure and positive attitude. It is also apparent that the current young generation sees hotel as entryway to job than as a lifetime career opportunity. Keeping in view the importance of the issue of retention to hotel industry from available literature and research work, the present study is an attempt to examine the factors affecting employee retention in hotel industry in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Literature review: When an individual is employed in an organisation both the employer and the employee has to maintain relations implying mutual interdependence, respect and obligations for the betterment of both. So with experience once they are trained an employee has a tendency to leave the organization for greener pastures. The reasons could be a high salary, good working environment, convenient work timings, good ambience, better growth prospects, etc. In the context of employee retention in any business organisations, many allied jargons like employee turnover, employee attrition are also required to be discussed. Thus, employee retention is an important tool for the organizations to stop the employees from leaving their jobs.

Employee turnover: CIPD^[2] defined employee turnover as the “ratio comparison of the number of employees an organisation must replace in a given time period to the average number of total employees”. Chikwe^[3] described the turnover rate as how quickly the employers lose and recruit employees in their organizations. Mondy^[4] clearly defined turnover rate as the number of newly recruits in place of employees leaving the organization. Mrara^[5] opined because of its negative impact on the organization, employee turnover as a subject has drawn a lot of attention from both researchers and academics.

Employee retention: Maertz and Campion^[6] explained retention is a relative term and should be examined with leaving process. “Retention is a voluntary move by an organization to create an environment which engages

employees for a long term”. Frank *et al.*^[7] defined retention as the “effort by an employer to keep desirable workers in order to meet business objectives”. Walker and Miller^[8] stated retention is a term given to retain the employees and to stop them from leaving the organization.

Factors responsible for employee turnover

Career growth: Hannay and Northam^[9] debated that career growth opportunities has a direct bearing on employee’s morale by motivating them to continue in the organization. According to Kyriakidou and Ozbilgin^[10] advancement in career not only benefits the employees but also the employers as well. Harder^[11] explained that the “The opportunity to learn a new skill or take on a new challenge for career development is one of the top reasons employees leave their job”.

De Vos and Meganck^[12] suggested that for retention of employee’s, the employee’s career advancement strategy is important as it increases employee commitment. Costen and Salazar^[13] found out that employee bond well with the organisation when they feel that they have a better career prospects and succession plan for them. Morgan and Jay^[14] indicated it is through talent management that the organisations send a positive message to their employees that they are highly valued and they wish to see them prosper.

Work life balance: Hyman and Summers^[15] conducted a research in UK and found that when research demand intervenes into employee’s personal life they become stressful and emotionally exhausted. Nyoka suggested that strategies to retain employee’s by the management should be to strike the right balance between research and life by providing with flexi-time that would enable them to fulfill their personal needs. Gaan^[16] indicated that support from supervisor, peer group, family support, flexi-time, work-life balance, etc. within the organisation leads to employee retention. Anonymous^[17] stated, “Employees at organizations where work life balance programs are offered are much more likely to stay with their employer for at least the next 5 years and report higher job satisfaction”.

Salary and benefits: Gardner *et al.*^[18] viewed that, good pay not only motivates the employee’s but also act as a technique of employee retention. According to Bernadin^[19] compensation refers to “all forms of financial returns and tangible benefits that employee receives as part of the employment relationship”. Mondy^[4] opined it is quite natural for employees to demand pertinent remuneration for their hard work. They may be compensated by monetary and non-monetary rewards.

Rewards and recognition: According to Padron^[20], employees feel committed when their boss recognizes their hard work and in turn they are rewarded. Silbert^[21] and Shoaib *et al.*^[22] illustrated, rewards are very vital as it has lasting effect on workers and they feel that they are valuable to the organization. Schechtman^[23] opined that a prolific employee could be retained if suitable reward strategies are comprehended and embedded in the organisation culture.

Social security and benefits: James^[24], conducted a study on Japanese workers and found that security of job, permanent employment and seniority based system results in employee dedication, satisfaction of job as well as less turnover of employees. Research conducted by Ashford *et al.*^[25] and Davy *et al.*^[26] revealed that, insecure employee's are more dissatisfied with their job. Rosenblatt and Ruvio^[27] in their study on job insecurity found that there was a negative co-relation between job insecurity, job performance and commitment.

Payment system: Gardner *et al.*^[18] viewed that good pay not only motivates the employees but also act as a technique of employee retention. According to Bernadin^[19] compensation refers to "all forms of financial returns and tangible benefits that employee receives as part of the employment relationship". Mondy^[4] opined it is quite natural for employees to demand pertinent remuneration for their hard work.

Suitability of work timing: Galinsky *et al.*^[28] described that workplace pressure and high demands lead to the situation where employees feel they are overworked, involved in too many activities at the same time and having no time for their social life. Lee *et al.*^[29] found that reduced workload leads to physical and psychological well-being of employees. According to Presser^[30] and Almeida^[31] work shift greatly contribute towards marital discord and family issues due to erratic work schedules in hotel.

Physical working condition: Zeytinoglu and Denton^[32] elucidated that for retention of employees work environment plays a vital role. Silbert^[21] affirmed that talented and skilled employees will get jobs and workplace to their liking, hence, it is important for the management to retain such employees by creating a friendly and congenial atmosphere. According to Hytter^[33] "work environment is generally discussed as industrial perspective, focus on aspect i.e., noise, toxic substances exposure and heavy lifts etc". Anonymous^[17], numerous research were carried out to explicate the physical environment of work place with various facets such as satisfaction in job.

Training needs and appraisal: Thomlinson^[34] opined in today's competitive market organization can be in the race if they provide training to their staff on modern technologies. Babakus *et al.*^[35] reported that organizations with efficient training and development policies gives a positive impression to its employees about employer's commitment in retaining them and the customer. Petrescu *et al.*^[36] reported that organization's efficient training practices results in excellent performance which reduces employee turnover.

Performance appraisal: Swain and George^[37] carried out a study on employee perception about HRD practices in the classified hotels in Odisha. The employees perceived that there is a positive relationship between professional training and promotion which in turn could lead to organizational effectiveness. Chuang *et al.*^[38] highlighted that the hospitality employees who remain with the organisation expect to be elevated to managerial ranks. Barron *et al.*^[39] found out that people of today's generation change their jobs very regularly as they are more performance driven. These employees want to be quicker promotions a situation that is very prevalent in the ever expanding hospitality industry^[40].

Ineson *et al.*^[41] affirmed that employees remain in the company that looks after their needs and prospects and instill in them with a spirit of togetherness. Kumar and Thomas^[42] carried out a research on costing employee turnover based on employee performance level with a special reference to 5 star hotels in Bangalore. The category-wise average turnover cost analysis of the various hotels reveals that in the case of both high performing employees and medium performing employees the replacement hiring cost is the highest. The analysis also shows that the second highest category-wise average cost of employee turnover incurred by hotels are on training new hire cost. It has been observed that the training new hire cost is the maximum as far as the category wise average cost of employee turnover is concerned in the case of low performing employee in hotels followed by replacement hiring cost. The study also reveals that there is a significant relationship between the performance level of employees and elements of employee turnover cost of 5 star hotels in Bangalore.

Kumar and Singh^[43] conducted a study to identify the factors responsible for employee turnover in housekeeping department in hotels in Delhi. The study revealed the following factors poor communication channel, ineffective leadership, lack of promotion, job security, no social life and job opportunities in other properties, low growth, etc.

Objectives of the study: After going through the literature, the importance of employee retention for organizational success in general and hotel industry in particular this piece of research has been preceded with the following objectives:

- To study about employee attrition and employee retention in hotel industry
- To find out the factors affecting employee retention in hotel industry
- To find out the means to retain the employees in sample hotels

Scope of the study: The present study is limited to hotels of 3 star and above facility in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design: Exploratory research design is followed for the study.

Sample design: A total of hundred respondents from various accommodation units are selected randomly in the city of Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Sampling technique: To select the sample respondents the researcher has adopted the purposive sampling method.

Collection of data

Sources of data: Data were collected from both primary and secondary source. Secondary data were collected from websites, brochures and information bulletins of different hotels, journals, books, etc. Whereas in order to collect data from primary source a well-structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of primary data

Factor analysis: Factor analysis signifies a type of processes mainly used for reduction and summarization of data. The factor loadings are intended to explain the substantive importance of a particular indicator to one factor with which indicators are closely associated. A factor loading is a simple correlation coefficient or regression coefficient. Out of 25 indicators used in the study only 10 factors remained for final analysis and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed.

Test of KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity: In order to measure the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis, KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity is used. The hypothesis is usually rejected by the Bartlett's test of

Table 1: Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's test	Values
Kaiser-meyer-olkin measure of sampling adequacy	0.579
Bartlett's test of sphericity Approx. Chi-square	2261.641
df	1225
Sig.	0.000

sphericity when the value is (0.500). The present analysis shows the value of KMO statistics is 0.579. Therefore, factor analysis may be considered as an appropriate technique for analysing the data pertaining to the factors of employee retention issues in accommodation sector (Table 1).

Factor analysis, eigen values and variation: Table 2 represents the output related to the factor loadings, eigen values and variance percentage. Any individual indicator with factor loadings of more than 1 was accepted to make interpretation of the results easier and simple. The ten factors classified are training needs and appraisal, salary and benefits, payment systems, social security and benefits, physical working conditions, reward and recognition, performance appraisal, suitability of work timings, work-life balance and career growth. From the Table 2, 10 factors are extracted on the basis of factor loading and then the factors are named on the basis of the indicator's relationship with employee's retention which are reflected in Table 3.

It is revealed from the Table 3 that career growth is first priority in the views of respondents with comparatively high eigen value of 3.607, followed by work life balance to continue with an organization with eigen value of 2.030. Whereas the next preferred factors is monetary benefits which includes salary and benefits, reward and recognition, social security and benefits and payment system with eigen values of 1.849, 1.734, 1.640 and 1.592, respectively. The third priority factor is research environment like suitability of work timing and physical working condition with eigen values of 1.513 and 1.455, respectively. HRD factors such as training needs and appraisal and performance appraisal carry eigen values of 1.398, 1.260 and 1.332, respectively (Table 4).

Findings from the primary data: Career growth was found to be the first priority in the views of respondents with comparatively high eigen value (3.607), followed by research life balance with an eigen value (2.030). Whereas the factors such as monetary benefit which includes salary and benefits, reward and recognition, social security and benefits and payment system were the factors followed with eigen values (1.849, 1.734, 1.640 and 1.592), respectively. The third priority factor found was work environment like suitability of work timing and physical working condition with Eigen values

Table 2: Factor loading, eigen values and variance

Indicators	Initial eigen values			Extraction sums of squared loadings		
	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)
1	3.607	7.215	7.215	3.607	7.215	7.215
2	2.030	4.061	11.275	2.030	4.061	11.275
3	1.849	3.698	14.973	1.849	3.698	14.973
4	1.734	3.467	18.441	1.734	3.467	18.441
5	1.640	3.280	21.721	1.640	3.280	21.721
6	1.592	3.184	24.905	1.592	3.184	24.905
7	1.513	3.026	27.931	1.513	3.026	27.931
8	1.455	2.910	30.841	1.455	2.910	30.841
9	1.398	2.796	33.637	1.398	2.796	33.637
10	1.332	2.664	36.301	1.332	2.664	36.301
11	1.314	2.628	38.929	-	-	-
12	1.281	2.562	41.492	-	-	-
13	1.260	2.520	44.012	-	-	-
14	1.212	2.424	46.436	-	-	-
15	1.179	2.358	48.794	-	-	-
16	1.154	2.309	51.103	-	-	-
17	1.126	2.252	53.354	-	-	-
18	1.113	2.226	55.580	-	-	-
19	1.095	2.189	57.769	-	-	-
20	1.071	2.142	59.911	-	-	-
21	1.028	2.056	61.967	-	-	-
22	0.984	1.969	63.936	-	-	-
23	0.964	1.929	65.865	-	-	-
24	0.957	1.914	67.778	-	-	-
25	0.927	1.854	69.633	-	-	-

Table 3: Factors with eigen values and variance

Indicators	Initial eigen values		
	Total	Variance (%)	Cumulative (%)
Career growth	3.607	7.215	7.215
Work life balance	2.030	4.061	11.275
Salary and benefits	1.849	3.698	14.973
Reward and recognition	1.734	3.467	18.441
Social security and benefits	1.640	3.280	21.721
Payment system	1.592	3.184	24.905
Suitability of work timing	1.513	3.026	27.931
Physical working condition	1.455	2.910	30.841
Training needs and appraisal	1.398	2.796	33.637
Performance appraisal	1.332	2.664	36.301

Table 4: Component matrix

Components	CG	WLB	SB	RR	SSB	PS	SWT	PWC	TNA	PA
CG	0.776	0.207	0.236	0.203	0.013	0.030	0.114	0.256	-0.150	-0.086
LB	0.508	0.087	0.341	0.117	0.231	0.088	0.122	0.129	0.115	0.135
SB	0.807	0.505	0.424	0.170	0.288	0.035	0.253	0.140	0.048	0.096
RR	0.427	0.173	0.285	0.014	-0.015	-0.034	-0.065	0.075	0.061	0.347
SSB	0.467	0.156	0.046	-0.013	-0.064	0.080	0.185	-0.060	0.141	0.158
PS	0.492	0.253	-0.034	0.244	-0.252	0.249	0.066	0.070	-0.080	0.161
SWT	0.792	0.113	0.125	0.067	0.020	0.065	-0.077	-0.036	-0.043	-0.041
PWC	0.792	0.113	0.125	0.067	0.020	0.065	-0.077	-0.036	-0.043	-0.041
TNA	0.519	0.149	0.001	-0.029	0.016	0.155	0.277	-0.061	0.250	0.173
PA	0.657	0.254	0.110	0.090	0.264	0.074	0.250	-0.156	0.063	0.161

CG: Career Growth; WLB: Work Life Balance; SB: Salary and Benefits; RR: Reward and Recognition; SSB: Social Security and Benefits; PS: Payment System; SWT: Suitability of Work Timing; PWC: Physical Working Condition; TNA: Training Need and Appraisal; PA: Performance Appraisal

(1.513 and 1.455), respectively. HRD factors such as training needs and appraisal and performance appraisal with eigen values (1.398 and 1.332), respectively (Table 4).

CONCLUSION

The above mentioned suggestions may be incorporated in the HR policies to make the systems and

procedures more robust and employee friendly. Managers and executives in hotels can make a huge impact on employee retention by creating a climate of trust that leads employees who are more likely to share the organization's values who understand their role who are more satisfied and engaged and who perform at a higher level of quality in serving hotel guests. Ultimately the most successful and enduring organizations in business are those that have a common sense of mission a deep respect for their employees and customers and put time, energy and money into building a highly engaging environment. Staff retention strategies aim to keep the staff that the organization wants by satisfying their needs. Therefore, organization needs to assess its structure and management to develop ways in which to improve employee retention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study it is found that, employee attrition is a serious issue in hotels in Odisha State. It involves high cost to the organisation in one hand and deteriorates service quality on the other. Hence, the following suggestions may be recommended to improve the retention rate of the employees in hotels. The hotels needs to adopt a sound HR policy, prescribing a competitive pay scale, clear cut incentive programme, good reward and recognition system. The hotels should provide opportunity for career growth with proper career and succession planning and development.

A better work system should be at place to balance work and life particularly stretched working hours and shift work. Proper social security and benefits should be provided to the non-executives. The hotel should follow appropriate safety measures and training should be imparted to the employees on the use of emergency facilities. The management of hotels should conduct exit interviews to find out the root cause for the employees to leave the organisation. This would not only enable them to retain productive employees in the future but also send a very sensitive message amongst the existing ones that the management is concerned about them and is consciously trying to reduce employee dissatisfaction.

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