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FACTORS INFLUENCING VOLUNTARY EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN PROPERTY SERVICES

– Case company X

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates factors that influence voluntary employee turnover in cleaning case company X and provides indications from the employees' perspectives. The author also looked into best human resource management practices that can be applied to enhance employee retention in Company X.

The research methodology applied in this thesis is qualitative research method and data collection featured conducting in-depth interview of frontline cleaning employees of company X. Additionally, the researcher participants' observation also allowed for further insight and deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

The findings from the case analysis identify issues around the unrewarding and challenging aspects of the cleaning job, relating to varying working hours, lack of professional developments and daily stress and pressure from the working place. Another major cause of employee turnover is the leadership feature which is considered unresponsive by most of the respondents. The latter half of the interviews also saw interviewees make useful suggestions in reducing the realm of employees' departure from company X. Employee of Company X highly agree on the improvement of the management system whose influence is evident in all factors that cause turnover of staff, so that the employees' motivation and devotion to work can be maintained and enhanced.

KEYWORDS:

Employee turnover, employee retention, professional cleaning,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

BHRMP   Best Human Resource Management Practices

HRM   Human Resource Management

KPI   Key Performance Indicator

1 INTRODUCTION

Employees are the life blood of organizations: consequently, they are both the drivers of companies' activities and determinants of success or failure in organizations. Their exit from an establishment heralds a highly undesirable and disruptive episode in the running of an enterprise. The resulting extra expenditure incurred on recruiting, selecting, and training of replacements employees in the event of staff loss is significant in terms of personal, work-unit, and organizational readjustment (Cascio, 1991).

Thus, it is important to identify ways and means of offsetting employee turnover incidences as well as having retention specific policies that enhances profitability and avoids the said associated losses. As it is, the subject of labour turnover seems elusive, business administrators, as well as organizational behaviour researchers, have had difficulties crafting a conventional framework that identifies the fundamental reasons that occasion employee turnover.

Lee and Mitchell (1994) for instance, in confirming the perspectives advanced by Hom & Griffeth (1995), point out that there exists no standard account for why people choose to leave an organization. A fact appreciated by Shaw et al. (1998: 511) when they confirm that despite a variety of studies on the subject, it is difficult to pinpoint the particular reasons that occasion departures of staff from their current companies.

Attempts at understanding the phenomenon seem enigmatic; despite the many studies, organizations have continued to inevitably bear the brunt of employee turnover. However, it can be said that each organization has its peculiar cause of staff loss. It therefore follows that conducting a company specific study that identifies organization's or company's distinct causes of employee turnover can help unearth its mysteries and unravel useful insights on why and how people leave.

To this end this thesis seeks to investigate factors that influence voluntary employee turnover in cleaning case company X and aims at providing possible indications from the employees' perspectives. Additionally, the study as well attempts to locate measures that can be applied to ensure enhanced retention of employees in the cleaning case company X.

Cleaning business organizations play a pivotal role in the community and constitute an important facet of both the national and continental economies. Evidently, studies reveal that cleaning businesses are among the major employers of labour both in Europe and elsewhere in the globe. According to Pekkarinen (2009: 40) the number of full-time and part-time cleaners in the European Union is estimated to be over three million. She further points out with a statistic that indicate that 4% of the total working population are cleaners in Finland alone with an average 70,000 professional cleaners (Pekkarinen, 2009).

Additionally, a survey of 20 countries including Finland, disclose that the cleaning sector generated over 54 billion Euros in 2006 and employed about 3.6 million workers (Roskams et al., 2009: 15). The above enumerated figures both point to an important proportion of the national and continental employment indices as well as indicates an indispensable service offering that is significant in the larger scheme of both the national and continental economies.

Considering that cleaning business is a service-oriented enterprise whose success is heavily contingent on its employees' performance, improved retention of staff can ensure success in the running of those organizations. Hence, studying the situation of company X can provide valuable clues into the subject with regards to individual or organization determinants of the employee turnover phenomenon.

1.1 Research Motivation

The idea of carrying out this case study emanated from the researcher's own experience in his working place. Having taken plenty of courses related to business administration, human resource management, and human capital crisis, the researcher enriched himself with theoretical knowledge but had no prior exposure to the real practical business situations.

Since knowing and working for company X in the operational level as a part-time employee, the researcher observed and realized that there was an influx of employees and immediate fluctuations in the number of employees in the case company.

With the prerequisite knowledge and the ability to notice, the researcher became sensitive to the happenings in the case company and developed a very strong urge on

the phenomenon that happened over a long period of time. The urge translated into the driving force behind this subject of employee turnover.

By and large, implementing this investigation affords the writer an opportunity to apply theories learned from school in a practical situation. Moreover, the accomplishment of this study is believed to equip the researcher with hands-on preparation for his professional prospects when he can identify potential problems, analyse and proffer solutions in any working environment.

1.2 Purpose, Objective and Significance of the study

This thesis seeks to investigate factors that influence voluntary employee turnover in cleaning case company X from the employees' perspectives. Additionally, the study as well attempts to locate measures that can be applied to ensure enhanced employee retention.

Obviously, the current research, besides looking into the specific situation of the case company X itself is significant for various reasons. Studying this topic can help organizations management solve employee turnover concerns by adopting human resource management strategies that effectively address human resource factor in various departments of company X. The understanding of the employees' personal determinants and possible company related causes of staff turnover can offer enhanced retention and reduced turnover of employees. Accordingly, possible findings of the study can be applied by the cleaning company X and various other organizations as a decision-making tool and help in escalating superior service delivery.

Secondly, undesirable employee turnover can be both disruptive and costly affair. No doubt the cost of voluntary employee turnover is relatively high and is usually accounted for in the extra expenditure on recruitment, selection, and training of the recruits (Holtom, Mitchell, Lee & Eberly 2008: 236). The study of the topic can help promote a deeper understanding of the problems of employee turnover and put in place measures to check on employee turnover incidences.

All in all, the study is significant in broadening the general understanding of the causes of employee turnover especially in the cleaning services sector of the property services industry in Finland.

1.3 Research Questions

Considering the above mentioned, the research calls on the following questions:

What are the factors that influence voluntary employee turnover in cleaning service company X?

What are the potential strategies that can enhance employee retention in cleaning service company X?

Furthermore, as here mentioned, the study explores the below objectives:

- Common reasons why employees would voluntarily leave cleaning Service Company X.

- Management practices that aim at retaining employees in the cleaning company X.

1.3.1 Scope of the Research

Company X provides an invaluable environment where this investigation can be carried out. The ship cleaning department of company X is earmarked for this study, and any other (possible) employee turnover incidences happening in other departments of company X (namely: hotel cleaning department, home cleaning department, and office cleaning department) are excluded.

The data collection scope specifically includes current and former front-line employees of the passenger ship cleaning department of company X. The criteria for the selection of interviewees involve only long-term employees, who used to be or have been in the company for more than six months.

Contributing to the foundation of this case study, are resources about the reasons for employee turnover from other studies .Additionally, the author also looked into the best human resource management practices exercised in the case of Innocent Drinks company and Best Human Resource Management Competencies espoused by Jones & Gareth (2013) to draw correlation and determine possible retention schedule for company X.

1.3.2   Structure of the Thesis

In the first chapter, the background information of this study has already been presented, including the main theme, personal motivation towards the topic selection, existing gaps in the investigated field, aims, research questions, and the scope.

Then Chapter 2 discusses the key concepts of the cleaning industry, the definition of the key term, 'employee turnover', its effects, possible models and theories that explain turnover patterns, employee turnover causes in cleaning organizations and case study of innocent Drinks company to identify best human resource management strategy to help in determining possible retention schedule for company X .

Chapter 3, subsequently, takes the form of two sections about the primary material and method of the inspection. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are revealed. These findings act as an essential foundation for the evaluation and interpretation in Chapter 5. Here, one can also find the process of qualification of the results so that inferences and conclusions about the incident on employees' turnover in company X could be obtained.

 Chapter 6 provides a summary of what has been studied so far as well as mentions the limitations and contribution of the current work and some recommendations for future research about turnover of employees.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Key Concepts

Cleaning business is a basic service-oriented work and an inherent part of divergent sectors, ranging from households, workplaces, outdoors and indoors, to public areas and comprises a wide variety of tasks that are important in the community (Roskams et al., 2009: 15).

Professional cleaning is multifaceted and of all the different aspects, cleaning and housekeeping services appear to be irreplaceable ancillary services in the main development of the tourism and hospitality industry world over. Within the hospitality industry organizations like the hotels, cruise liners and luxury settings have an increased demand for housekeepers and cleaners. This important segment of human resource is responsible for the cleanliness, aesthetic upkeep of cabins and maintenance of public areas (Raghubalan, 2015).

Passenger cruise ships survival is based on offering enjoyable travel experiences that exceeds customer's expectation with a view to having repeat business. After the cleanliness, quality of cabins and services, cruise ships survive on the sale of cabins, food, beverages, drinks, laundry, and other amenities and services like health clubs, gymnasiums relaxing saunas and spa that delight the passengers and provide the value proposition of the service. Also, of important to note is that a good chunk of economic turnover is generated by traffic of trucks and trailers that use water passageway as a means of transport.

Housekeeping personnel thus ensures invaluable advantage in positioning the above-mentioned services in order that the passenger experience is enhanced. Servicing nearly 13 million passengers annually in the harbour port of Helsinki alone, the demand for high-quality cleaning service is a must in order to maintain the ongoing business situation.

Company X provides housekeeping and cleaning services to cruise passenger ships during a short harbour time during the morning and evening hours. Often, ships dock for a short time before their departures and this puts a lot of strain on the housekeeping employees, who must ensure that the ships are cleaned properly prior to the arrival of

the new passengers. During the time ship docks at the harbour, the housekeepers and the cleaning staff collect the rubbish, change the laundry (sheets and towels), make beds, vacuum and mop the floor, scrub away any stains and generally ensures a pleasant environment for the embarking passengers.

It is apparent to notice that the nature of ship cleaning and its environment are, to a greater extent, like those dimensions of hotel housekeeping process. If the main target of ship cleaning is to ensure the cleanliness and maintenance of specific areas in the ships (cabins, staircase, public areas, etc.) so that passengers will have pleasant feelings, 'Hotel housekeeping' is described as 'provision of a clean, comfortable, safe, and aesthetically appealing environment' (Raghubalan, 2015: 17).

Sharing common features in their duties and responsibilities, it is the high working quality of ship cleaners or housekeepers that should be put as a priority because it can have a direct effect on the passengers/guests' experience with the ships or tourism industry. The competitive edge thus lies strongly on the cleaning employees to help in positioning the value proposition products. Moreover, housekeeping and cleaning personnel ensures invaluable advantage in positioning the above-mentioned services in order that the passenger experience is enhanced.

2.2 Employee Turnover

The flow of staff leaving and being replaced in firms denotes employee turnover. Workforce turnover is accustomed into two classifications: voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover describes instances when an employee chooses to leave an organization as a matter of free will (e.g. moving to a new place or going back to school, etc.).Conversely, involuntary turnover pertains to incidences occasioned by an organization and involves firing or layoffs which are very much under the purview of the management (Kysilka & Csaba, 2013).

For the management, involuntary turnover can be anticipated as well as managed, voluntary turnover by contrast, is often outside the management scope of influence. Consequently, voluntary employee turnover is often viewed negatively in organizations: the aftermath of such separations can complicate issues for an organization and impact heavily on its survival. According to Long, Puremal & Ajagbe (2012) high turnover of staff can cause the pool of entry-level of prospective employees to shrink, compel the

use of temporary staff, impact heavily on productivity and competitiveness as well as impede skills development.

Certainly, a vicious cycle of unending turnovers of employees and poor service delivery may ensue. If unchecked, voluntary employee turnover might drive an organization out of business as the newly hired staff are both unfamiliar in their new duties and environment as well, they lack confidence to perform. This can translate into the existing employees bearing the burden of the increased workload on them which make them frustrated, fatigued, burned out and eventually leave an organization (Merrihew & Harris (2015). Yet again, the remaining employees within teams remain demotivated as a result of the said increased workload that weighs down on their morale thus, making them ill-engaged in organization's operations (Surji, 2013: 56).

Again, staff departures cost organizations both financial loss and expenditure on time wasted. Stern & Taylor (2009: 65), note that on average, the cost of replacing an employee would be 100% to 125% of that employee's annual salary. Similarly, it takes time and effort to replace an employee: recruiting, on-boarding and training of new staff takes time and costs money. Indeed, the valuable knowledge and experience that is lost when an employee quits is both a very expensive and a considerable loss to an organization.

Furthermore, learning curve for the newly hired staff as they acclimate to new duties, procedures and operations in an organization can further jeopardize the attainment of the established Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and long-term strategies of an organization: quality being a major KPI is likely to suffer when tasks are missed or poorly executed, supplies over-used or equipment damaged during this period.

Therefore, when voluntary turnover occurs, it is valuable for the organization to recognize the effect behind employee separations and devise a framework that checks on such incidences.

2.2.1   Models and Theories of Employee Turnover

As it were labour turnover is an intricate process of disengagement that is gradual in coming. Much study has concentrated on understanding the varied reasons that occasion employees' decisions to quit organizations as well as the process by which such decisions are made. According to Mobley (1977), an employee's quit journey

begins by an evaluation of an existing job and the environment in which the work is being executed.

Work environment is believed to influence employee's job satisfaction and subsequent commitment to an organization. Mobley (1977) additionally supposes that there exists intermediate linkage between job dissatisfaction and quit decision. Mobley's model points out that low satisfaction and reduced commitment can initiate withdrawal process which includes; thought of leaving, search for alternative job prospects, evaluation and comparison of alternative opportunities, intention to quit or stay and the actual leaving of an organization.

Turnover intentions may be expressed in negative work behaviours like absenteeism, lateness, and poor performance which is an indication of eventual departure if the management fails to manage it effectively. For this, organizations should strive to keep a good track of employee engagement scores over time; as this increases the management awareness of the time engagement levels are warning and worth taking a serious notice on. The management is thus able to both act at an opportune time and on the right employee. Hence providing the intervention phase through which employers can use in order to thwart a potential turnover of a current employees.

Mobley's (1977) model concludes that, for a resignation to occur, the individual employee is basically concerned with better prospects elsewhere thus seeking to secure a new employment.

Similarly, Lee and Mitchell's (1994: 69), introduced the concept of decision paths on their unfolding model of voluntary turnover model, treating quitting as a decision-making process. They note that there exist four decision paths that follow: a simple, automatic and script driven processes. The four paths that lead to turnover are: leaving an unsatisfying job, leaving for better prospects, following a plan, and leaving without a plan.

Firstly, leaving an unsatisfying job follows a simple job satisfaction assessment and an evaluation of possible alternatives. Secondly, leaving for better prospects involves leaving for an attractive offer and may not be an initiation of an employee i.e. it may follow unsolicited job offer which does not necessarily mean the leaver is dissatisfied. Thirdly, following a plan refers to leaving a job in response to a script or plan already in place. Examples may include employees who intend to quit once they finish their degree or if they get accepted into a degree program or after they earn a certain

targeted amount of money or complete a training program, or after receiving a retention bonus. Lastly, leaving without a plan reflects actions that are not anticipated. Again, these decisions may not emanate from job dissatisfaction. Accordingly, the scholars, place emphasis on the fact that leaving an organization can follow different paths. (Lee & Mitchell, 1994.)

2.2.2   Job Embeddedness Theory

Whether an employee stays or leaves an organization is a product of commitment and level of satisfaction at the workplace. Mitchell et al. (2001) introduced a job embeddedness model that explains how employees become rooted in their job. This model sheds light on how employees develop lifelong relationships that impact on their decisions to remain or leave an organization. The central idea of job embeddedness as indicated by Mitchell et al. (2001), is hinged on intricate lifelong web of connections and interrelationships both on the job and the larger society that an employee develops in his/her daily endeavours.

The social, psychological and financial connections with friends, the community, groups, and the environment at large play a vital role in the length of stay of an employee in an organization. Leaving a job for instance would require severing or rearranging the said connections. Employees who have many connections are more embedded, and thus have numerous reasons to stay in an organization.

According to Mitchell et al. (2001), the said connections that foster embeddedness can be viewed as: "links," "fit," and "sacrifice." Each of these types may be related to the organization or the surrounding community: 'links' are connections with other people, groups, or organization; 'fit' represents the extent to which employees see themselves as compatible with their job, organization, and community, and 'sacrifice' are forms of value a person would have to give up if he or she quit a job. The more these connections are the highly embedded an employee is and therefore an increased will to stay.

Also in this issue, Branham (2005) agrees with the above perspectives, in his book, he listed seven "hidden" reasons for why employees leave their jobs: 1) the job or workplace was not as expected, 2) the mismatch between job and person, 3) too little coaching and feedback, 4) too few growth and advancement opportunities, 5) feeling

devalued and unrecognized, 6) stress from overwork and work-life imbalance, and 7) loss of trust and confidence in senior leaders.

2.2.3 Turnover in Cleaning Organization

Reporting on a study whose focus is on factors influencing employees' turnover in five cleaning companies in Finland, Ritala (2014), notes that it is common to encounter several cleaning companies failing to register permanent faces of the workforce: on her part she puts the rate of turnover among cleaners at 60% and notes that, 'half of faces are new, all of the time'. This she attributes to varied reasons ranging from unattractiveness of the sector, low remunerations and the typically large number of employees who enter the sector on a temporary basis (examples are students who move on post-graduation and seasonal workers whose employment lasts over a specified period).

In the same cleaning sector, employees' turnover is considered, by Kumar & Singh (2015: 30), in their study, which is based on cleaning employees of housekeeping department working in different types of hotels in Delhi (India), as one of the major problems in hotel industry. Their studies reveal that the top reasons for workers quitting their jobs include poor leadership, poor promotion and unhealthy social life: giving premium to working culture as a driving force behind employee decision to leave an organization.

In the views of Abbasian & Hellgren (2012: 165), the particular traits of professional cleaning as a low-paid, low-qualified, and typically female low-status working-class job contributes to the problem bedevilling the cleaning and janitorial sector.

Robert et al. (2010) in their study reported that work-life conflict contributed significantly to turnover intentions for employees within the hospitality industry. Their study cited lack of organizational support and dissatisfaction with the flexibility at the workplace as the main causes of the work-life conflict.

Ohling (2014) on her part justifies the opposing situation presented by outsourcing, she argues that the cleaning industry is affected more than ever by competition and pressure toward low prices, which leads to a non-advantageous situation for cleaners. Many Swedish municipalities she points out, choose to outsource cleaning service in order to save money and this makes the situation for the cleaners to get even worse.

Cleaning work is generally performed as contract cleaning, where the cleaners are subcontracted and work within the premises of one or more "host companies". They thus find themselves caught between the complexities presented by the two opposing forces; the contracting company and the employer. (Ohling, 2014.)

2.3 Best Human Resource Management Practices

More than ever before, the contemporary businesses, should strive to retain their key employees to enhance their competitive advantage. Best Human resource management can enhance retention if followed religiously. The case study here presented is an effective model found in one of the best organizations to work. The study is used as a guide in identifying human resource management strategies and correlating them with the strategies used in company X.

Contemporary definition of Human Resource Management (HRM) encompasses all management decisions and practices that directly influence people, who work for the organization (Mullins 2007: 481). Additionally, Wilkinson (2005:91) supposes that 'best practice HRM is capable of being used in any organization, irrespective of product, market situation, industry, or workforce'.

The case analysis report presented below delves into the said decisions and practices in human resource management and the factors that make a company the best workplace to be. The analysis attempt to identify Best human resource practices that could be replicated for company X. It is anchored on an in-depth analysis of HRM at Innocent Drinks Company and the Best Human Resource Management Principles espoused in the Harvard Business Review article, 'Creating the best workplace on earth' ;a product of a closer study by Jones (2013).

2.4 A Case of Innocent Drinks Company

Innocent Drinks Company is a manufacturer and a distributor of smoothies in Europe. It was founded in August 1998 by Richard Reed, Adam Balon and Jon Wright. The company is headquartered in London and it is accredited for winning among other awards, the guardian employer of the year award in 2005 (Innocent, 2007). According to Mullins (2007), Innocent Drinks approach to managing its employees is the main

reason for its success. Mullins (2007), admits that, the company had managed to retain the culture and enthusiasm of a small enterprise even though it had not yet reached its tenth birthday despite its forward growth.

In critically assessing the management principles at Innocent Drinks very close correlation can be drawn to the principles advocated for in the Harvard Business Review Article, 'Creating the best workplace on earth'.

Firstly, Innocent Drinks Company tends to *inculcate shared company value* through an induction program. This introduces new employees to the established culture and founder's ethos that drives the company. Through this program, new employees embrace established conventions, thus becoming part and parcel of the company's vision. The sense of belonging inculcated during the induction program acts as individual driving force at ensuring company's objectives.

Similarly, Jones (2013) advocates for the principle of showing how the daily work makes sense to the employees. He argues that where work is meaningful, it typically becomes a cause. He explains further that, shared meaning is about more than fulfilling company's mission statement, rather it's about forging powerful connections between personal and organizational values. Consequently, it can be said that if company X's human resource manager upheld this principle should it will enhance employee's involvement. And this will act as a spur to both individual and company's growth.

Secondly, *magnifying employee's strengths* is yet another of the human resource management principles. According to Jones (2013), the ideal company makes its best employee's even better- and the least of them even better than they ever thought they could be. This same principle seems to be a norm at Innocent Drinks Company.

Through a learning and development program, fellow employee at the drinks company facilitate learning of their colleagues. The aim of the training program is to develop and make employees the best version of themselves. They are encouraged to bring the best out of themselves and even switch teams if they want to gain experience in other functions (Innocent, 2017).

Thirdly, unleashing the flow of information, eliminates the problems associated with bureaucracy such as misinterpretation of the communication by the junior employees. Jones (2013) stresses on the values information implants in the employees rather than what it extracts from them. He argues that organizations must work very hard to

communicate what's going on if they are to be heard to be believed. Similarly, at innocent drinks, information sharing is an integral component of induction program.

During the first two weeks at the drinks company, a new employee has a scheduled pair as a lunch mate who shows him/her a round during the breaks. Through this, employees, both old and new share information about the company. Furthermore, a sense of teamwork is implanted in the employees during the process is the very essence of information flow. This goes a long way in meeting organizations objective.

Last but not least, letting the employees be themselves. This principle encourages innovation and growth. Jones (2013) lauds companies' efforts at trying to accommodate the traditional diversity categories such as race and gender, he also supports further accommodation of differences in perspectives, habits of minds and core assumptions. He says that the ideal organization makes explicit efforts to transcend the dominant currents in its culture. Likewise, at innocent drinks company employees are allowed the leeway to be themselves. A former employee at the drinks company exclaims 'we all together created a fantastic place to work where we would wake up in the morning and think 'wow, I'm going to work today' she explains that what really made her happy at the drinks company was the freedom and the trust to make changes that she believed. (Innocent, 2007.). Letting the employees be themselves should however be within the confines of the company guiding principles as this helps channel the required growth and development of both the employees and the institution.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

Employees' turnover is an established challenge at the case company. The case analysis study approach has thus been identified to help explore a practical circumstance in company X. This is in line with the objective of this thesis that aims at investigating the reasons for employee turnover and identifying retention factors. The methodology applied in data collection thus is qualitative data that featured conducting in-depth interview of employees. Additionally, the researcher participants' observation also allowed for further insight and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009: 138-141.).

3.1.1   Data collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was two phased:

Participants' observation coupled with informal chats with frontline housekeepers as well as cleaners;

Formal interviews with the identified respondents.

The participant's observation involved direct experience interaction with the employees and was meant to enhance the researcher's observation as a participant. Being an employee of company X provided a conducive ground for acquisition of the relevant information and necessary preparation for the formal interviews; developing the much-needed rapport with the-would be respondents as well as observing cleaning and housekeeping work first-hand.

The participants' observation and informal interaction with the frontline housekeepers and cleaners was done in a period spanning 6 months mainly during work shifts and involved asking questions pertinent to the research objectives. The discussions bordered on asking question related to retention policies and reasons for employee turnover. The data collected during this phase was recorded in a diary portfolio.

The formal interviews phase involved the use of semi-structured face-to-face interview with participants and a telephone interview conversation with some respondents. The interviews were designed to gather as much information as possible from the

interviewees in terms of their experiences and perspectives on employee turnover. The questions of the interviews (in Appendix 1) were fashioned to address the main research question:

What are the factors Influencing voluntary employee turnover in cleaning service company x?

In addition, a single interview question was meant to address the question on possible retention strategies for company X. Thus, the interviewees were allowed the leeway to divulge as in much details as they deemed fit, listening to their accounts and opinions on the subject matter. The interviews were guided by pre-determined questions and some additional elaborating questions were asked throughout the interviews.

Interviews date and place were set up prior to the interviews with all the participants, and this allowed interviewees adequate time to prepare well in advance. The size, merits and number of staffs were among the most important criteria used for choosing this department as the source of data. The participants in the interview were chosen based on them being long term employee of company X with the average working duration among the participants being a minimum of six months.

One hour was set aside for every interviewee in a separate set up with the interviewer however the average duration of the interviews was 50 minutes being the longest and 25 minutes being the shortest interview.

The interviews began by asking some background information about the interviewees. Direct and indirect questions were asked in order to reveal answers and enhance a clear view of the employees' perspectives on the topic of voluntary turnover. Frontline housekeepers, both current and former employees of company X were conveniently targeted, and their opinions sought.

Out of the ten interview participants earmarked for this study eight participants responded and were asked questions based on their position and roles to help figure out what the employee's perspectives were about employee turnover in the situation of company X.

Participants' observation

In-terms of the current study company X offers cleaning and housekeeping services to passenger ships in Finland. The ship department employees respond to duty during the

short docking time of the ship at the harbour. Often, ships dock for a short time during the morning and evening hours: about one hour before their departures and this puts a lot of strain on the housekeeping employees, who must ensure that the ships are cleaned properly prior to the arrival of the new passengers. During the time, the housekeepers and cleaners collect the rubbish, change the laundry (sheets and towels), make beds, vacuum and mop the floor, scrub away any stains and fetch new disposable cups and generally ensures a pleasant environment for the embarking passengers.

The ship cleaning department of company X has a service supervisor responsible for all the cleaning and housekeeping employees of the ship housekeeping department of company X. Below the service supervisors are team leaders who are directly answerable to the service supervisor. They complement the service supervisors in managing work during the cleaning shifts and the short ship docking time. Team leaders are responsible for the implementation of the supervisors' work distribution schedule and actual supervision during work. They work in very close proximity to the frontline housekeepers and cleaners who are responsible for the actual cleaning and housekeeping work.

3.1.2 Data Analysis Methods

The objective of qualitative data analysis is to identify, examine, compare, and interpret patterns and themes (Joseph F. Hair Jr et al., 2001). Analysis of primary data process entailed interpreting interviews and observations into specific units of meaning. This was achieved by considering a pool of diverse responses and reducing them into key units in a reliable manner.

By transcribing each interviewee's response, the collected data from the eight interviewees were categorized into three broad phases namely: initial category, generated themes and Final Dimension as possible reasons for employee turnover.

Since only one interview question was meant to address the research question on retention strategy, the responses generated from the respondents are considered together with data from the case analysis of innocent Drinks Company.

The initial category

The interviewees' answers resulted in a vast number of general reasons as the initial category. The initial category was easily detectable and emerged without any difficulties. This included reasons given by the respondents verbatim.

Generated themes

Further interpretation of the initial general reason/category was reduced to a more manageable number described using the phrases such as: Insufficient and varying pay, lack of appreciation and opportunity to develop, Stress from work pressure, unresponsive leadership and in-existent work team spirit. These reasons originated from the initial category of the reasons provided by the respondents.

Final Dimension

Final dimensions denote the possible reasons for employee turnover from the primary data. The reasons are a result of further interpretation of the generated themes from the ample number of condensed initial category. Here one could easily detect emerging reasons explaining the turnover of employees in the situation of company X (i.e. Unrewarding Job, Challenging Job and Unresponsive Leadership).The phrasal descriptors used are based on the general reasons for employee turnover in cleaning organizations as described in the literature review chapter.

Also to note here is that because the interviewees are both existing employees and those who have exited the organization, the results of the voluntary turnover topic are likely to have bias and might demonstrate factors that influence the employees' intent to leave since the cohort involved existing employees.

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4 RESULTS

4.1 General Information

There was a total of eight participants joining the interviews for the present research. In the first group of current workers, one cleaner has worked in the ship department in the last one year, two have worked for the company for more than two years while one has stayed for more than three years. On the other side of employees who have left, one worked for more than four years, two of them were there for around two years and one had some intermittent on -off working periods which made it two years in total. In terms of working assignments and responsibilities, half of the interviewees are former/current group leaders, whereas the rest are regular cleaners and housekeepers. Their main tasks include:

Group leaders:

- Distribute and manage cleaning work in cabin side and public areas;

- Be responsible for the quality of the cleaning work;

- Handle problems in their working areas;

- Lead various number of workers and improve teamwork;

- Train new workers;

- Interact with other group leaders and supervisors.

Regular cleaners and housekeepers:

- Carry out basic cleaning work in the cabins and public areas;

- Follow instructions and guides from the managing team;

- Obey rules and disciplines from the managing team;

- Always report to the managing team when there are problems/issues;

- Cooperate and respect co-workers, especially in pair work and group work.

4.2 Factors Leading to Employees Turnover

Company X is a cleaning service organization offering housekeeping and cleaning services to passenger ships in Finland. Generally, the interviewees revealed that many of the factors that affects employee's willingness to remain, would affect their leaving if those factors were not functioning well.

Evidently, there were some repetition found in the answers of the eight interviewees: some answers were identical to one another while in others' context was the same despite the different wording. Hence, some answers were combined as one category and other answers that appeared to have the same meaning but revealed slightly different focuses were separated as two different categories.

The data structure presented in Figure 1 below, demonstrates analysis indicating the possible factors that influence voluntary employee turnover in cleaning service Company X.

Initial reasons	Generated theme	Final dimension as possible reasons

-Not getting enough working hours;
-Work is time-consuming
(Long travels – short working time);
-Insecure working hours
(Cancellation of employees' shifts)

→ Insufficient and varying pay

→ Unrewarding job

-Work effort is not appreciated;
- Monotonous tasks with unchanged assignments;
- Lack of professional training

→ Lack of appreciation and opportunity to develop

-Job is generally physically tasking; it involves a lot of movements;
-Regardless of the situations, work always has to be finished in a short docking time;
-Inexperienced/disqualified workers add more pressure to partners;
-Pressure on group leaders: finishing work and checking quality;
-Inflexible working shifts

→ Stress from work pressure

→ Challenging job

- Lack of support and encouragement;
- Unfair and unequal treatment;
- Poor feedback mechanism: mistakes and complaints are regarded as 'sin';
-Group leaders present poor performance
-Supervisors are overbearing

→ Dissatisfying managing team

→ Unresponsive Leadership

-Lack of teamwork as each person is assigned a specific task;
-Not being able to get to know colleagues;
-Employees tend to associate with co-workers from the same country.
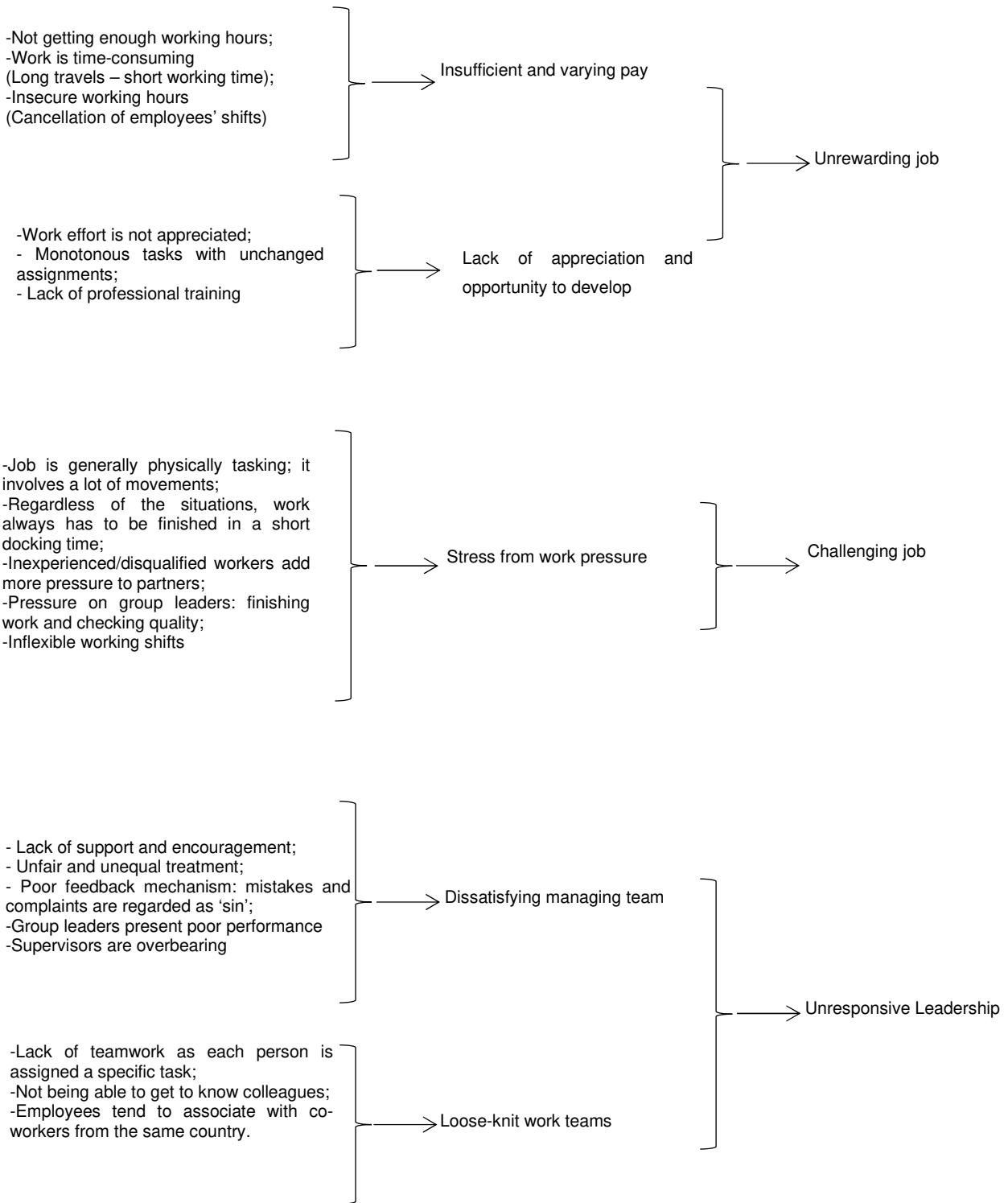
→ Loose-knit work teams

Figure 1. Voluntary employee turnover data structure

Unrewarding Job

The first dimension of the findings relates to the perspectives of employees about the nature of the work, featured in two specific themes (i) Insufficient and varying pay, and (ii) Lack of appreciation and opportunity to develop. It can be seen from the interview that employees are viewing their job as unrewarding, which is considered as one of the decisive factors driving their intention of leaving/quitting the job. These themes and their explanations are presented and paraphrased in the following section.

Insufficient working hours and varying pay

Most interviewees indicate that working hours are not enough for their daily life expenses, which leads them to plan searching for extra work or other work; and at the same time, the commitment and devotion towards their on-going cleaning work is decreased.

"If you only work around 13.5 hours a week and you have to go to the terminal two times, it is not regularly enough… You do not get enough working hours."

In addition, some cleaners registered their disgust at the arbitrary cancelation of their hours by the supervisors. In fact, the reasons for shift removals are varied, most of which are derived from external factors (for example, technical problems from the ship, accidents of passengers, annual maintenance and renovation, etc.). Regardless of the real causes of cancellation, the fact that employees are asked to stay at home places negative effects on workers' willingness to remain with the company.

"I feel like disappointed when they send me that stupid message of cancelling the shift […] You see, at the end of the day, the real hours on my salary are totally different, far away from the hours on my schedule."

Another factor highlighted by many respondents concerns the time-consuming aspect of the ship cleaning job at company X. In terms of coming to and leaving the harbour just to have a single hour of work (two sessions per day: morning and evening shifts), the travelling time of the job is seen unpleasant and inconveniencing, since the employees do not get paid for the time they have spent in going to work and waiting for the ship at the terminal.

Lack of appreciation and opportunity to develop

When it comes to the basic features and professional prospects of the work, several interviewees give an indication that their efforts are not really appreciated and that they engaged in the same sober tasks every single day. Even though workers do realize that unchanging tasks and repetition are unavoidable for the cleaning process, it cannot be denied that the same working routine day by day leads cleaners to boredom and monotonous situation. This, combined with the devaluation of their work effort and lack of compliments, does not augur well in improving working motivation from the employees.

"Every shift, I try to wash 25 cabins. It's funny sometimes when you work with your friends or somebody works well but of course, it's kinda boring doing the same thing. I want to try new things, like working in the suites or making beds someday."

"You try do good, they always say, 'thank you' and point out some bad thing and ask you 'fix it' Me, no need try more …"

Interestingly, with the discussion on the significance of cleaning job development, the responses appear to be different among workers. Previous workers feel like professional trainings or practices are irregular and unpopular at company X, whereas current employees believe that they tend to get more trainings, workshops and even travelling experience with the company. The contradictory results may come from the change in the organization's strategy as current cleaners also confirm on the part that the practical/training sessions have taken place more frequently in the last one or two year(s).

"Oh, I really like that workshop we had at the end of last year. We learned how to manage work ourselves and how to deal with passengers. After that, we were even offered free trips on the ships we are working. Nice travel, good food, and being the passenger made me understand more about the expectation passengers need from the ship or our service"

It is obvious that the work-related training sessions or new aspects can affect workers in a positive way when they can acknowledge the nature and the importance of the cleaning job. Encountering new things also helps reduce the risk of employees falling into the monotony of tasks and in return, they can be more motivated and productive.

In short, the insufficient pay and the shortage of opportunity for workers to develop would be considered as the disadvantages of the cleaning activity of the company X. Both thus contribute to the common feeling from the employees that this job is not rewarding and satisfying.

Challenging job

Turning to the second question of the interview, some interviewees mentioned 'stress and pressure' as another work-related reason, out of the other four choices the interviewer had raised. And the single theme is classified into a separate dimension: – Challenging job as the difficulty or challenge emerged from work can be a driving force for the employees' turnover intentions. Indeed, this theme relates to the employees' perception in general and their feelings or attitudes derived from work in particular.

Stress from work pressure

It results from the respondents that their job is physically tasking as it involves multiple movements and too much pressure from the supervisor to deliver within allocated time. In addition, no matter how busy it is, employees have to accomplish their tasks in a fixed period of time when the ships are docking and staying at the terminal. What is more, working with inexperienced or disqualified partners adds more stress to the employees for the reason that this cooperation can really affect the smooth flow of their job and bring on more issues; in other words, more negative feelings and unpleasant experiences are identified among respondents, which directly affect their motivation towards the job. Besides, four of the interviewees are former/current group leaders, who are taking charge of a group of workers on specific areas. They seem to have different exposure to this leading position, however, all of them agree on the 'visible' pressure from the higher-level managing system, that is: the need to finish work in time and the assurance on work quality.

"Oh man, it's really difficult to me. Normally, I'm in good talking term with them but when I'm their leader, our relationship is different. They don't know where 700 corridor is, they are slow all the time, they skip cleaning steps, they even fight sometimes, […] But the supervisors will make a lot of noise if you can't finish your work or there are complaints on your deck. You feel like you are in the middle of two sandwiches (laughing) … I mean, you will be stressed…"

"I didn't work much as the group leader. Most of the time, they put me in bed-making. It's not that bad as most of my workers knew what to do. But what discouraged me was the pressure to send my workers for help in cabin sides. There was a time the supervisor talked in a bad way to me because I didn't send help but how can I help others while I didn't finish my work yet? It's really stupid. I felt so bad and decided not to work as the group leader anymore."

It is apparent that stress and pressure from different factors of a simple cleaning job can impact on regular and managing workers' willingness to work. Naturally, if employees suffer from the reduction of work's interest, their devotion and commitment to work will also be affected. They are easily discouraged and start looking for a new opportunity.

Furthermore, none of the respondents like the inflexibility aspect of their work shifts, which makes it very difficult to engage in some other activities but work. When employees have urgent personal matters or emergency situations, it is impossible to ask for a self-cancellation shift from the supervisors. Even though this problem might come from the nature of the part-time work and the policy of the company, it is worth noticing that because of this, workers may consider the inflexible feature of the job and prefer to do something that allows them to 'live' and work at the same time.

"One of my Somali friends had a wedding to attend in the evening. He asked for an off but the supervisor said "no". The guy just missed his shift. The next day, he was fired. And he left the company like that."

"I highly understand that it is the ship's routine when it comes and leaves every day. But sometimes I just wish to have free evenings at the weekends to hang out with my friends or just to chat with my family in my home country when they are still awake…. But you have to accept it if you still want to work."

All in all, evidently stress and pressure caused by work and the perceived imbalance between work and free time both indicated that the job was, in general, challenging.

Unresponsive leadership

Finally, the 'leadership' dimension is well-portrayed by two themes, concerning the managing team and their efforts in creating an effective working environment. Obviously, responsive leadership is a crucial tool that enhances tasks completion by organizational employees as leaders who responds to employees needs and desires

inspire confidence in people to continue serving. Responsive leadership could be achieved through developing strong work teams and effective communication. During the interview employees were asked about leadership qualities aspects. From the responses it is apparent that leadership seem to influence employees' job and subsequent decision to stay or quit from an organization. Some respondents highlight the importance of teamwork, conflict resolution competencies, work distribution and supervisor's role in instilling a culture that encourages interaction among employees. Generally, employees register their dissatisfaction with the managing teams and general feeling that their work community is loose knit.

Dissatisfying managing team

The employees feel that there is lack of support and encouragement from the supervisors, they also believe that the management applied double standards in-terms of dealing with complaints and that the service supervisors are being overbearing.

"More positive feedback is nice, especially support. At the present I feel like we're not having enough encouragement."

"Come on, […] (the supervisor's name) is too much. It's common to make mistakes but they are seen as 'sin' to supervisors."

"I don't know what they are afraid of but they are just rude to workers and even me, as a group leader."

As evident in the interview, the managing team somehow exposes their problems in communication, relationship and feedback delivery to their workers. It is the supervisors' behaviour and managing technique that have instant and significant influence on the employees' motivation to work. Needless to say, if workers find their supervisors unsatisfied, a foreseen consequence of their departure is highly likely. Similarly, when the contact/communication between the workers and supervisors are limited, their relationship is rather distant and thus malfunctioning.

"No, I don't trust my supervisor …. I feel that he favours people from his country…"

"I left because they had that preferential treatment to the workers. Here, they just like workers coming from their same country. However hard you try, you are just nothing at the end of the day."

'Trust' and 'Fairness' are the terms which get most similar responses as seven out of eight interviewees focus on the unfair part in the leading work of their supervisors. Indeed, the lack of belief from the workers to their boss can be a 'push factor' forcing the less productive work quality but higher possibility of leaving among employees.

Another element of the managing team that attracts much attention is the group leaders. From the interview, while a minor of respondents realizes the multitasking ability of their leaders, others paint a rather gloomy picture of a leader who is not enjoying the trust and support of the subordinates. The findings of the on-going study also point to the fact that some team leaders mislead people as they appear not to have a full grasp on their tasks.

"If she just came a few months ago and she now is team leader…she doesn't understand what to do, doesn't know where to take the trolleys. I can even teach her to do that…."

Actually, this issue brings us back to the factors of trust and influence of managing team on the workers. Group leaders and even supervisors are always judged by their working performances and should dissatisfaction be detected and considered repeated, employees' motivation and feelings are not assured and therefore, leading to leaving.

Loose-knit work teams

"A good interaction among employees is really important… it makes the place lively and people will always want to be here …."

"We have two big groups, Somalis and Arabs. Workers tend to talk and associate with people coming from the same group. Even if I want, it's not easy to get to know them better."

In general, employees are also disturbed by the fact that management team is not inculcating or considering the culture of teamwork. The fact that work distribution is highly personalized tasks and based on cronyism makes employees feel discontented. Moreover, there is also minimal interaction among the frontline workers when they have a tendency to interact with employees sharing the same nationality or cultural features. This means that the mutual understanding among workers is regarded as low, which can really affect the smooth flow, the supportive aspect, and teamwork efficiency of the work, especially when the cleaning process has to be done in a limited time. It is

the management team's duty to enhance and improve workers' relationships and cooperation so that 'the bigger picture' of working community can become close-knit; otherwise, frustration, intimidation and uncertainty may occur and this could lead to the increased feelings of isolation, disgruntlement, disagreement or hatred and end up with employees' intentions to leave or the actual leaving.

4.3 Practices for Employee Retention

When being asked about what company X should do to reduce on the high level of employees' turnover, interviewees come up with a variety of solutions, most of which are related to a more flexible operation from the management team without any influence on the primary strategy or policy of the company. All responses can be generated and classified as following:

Working hours and shifts: most of the interviewees agree that it is the nature of the cleaning work in the ship that workers have to spend more time on travelling than real working time. However, it is advisable for the employees to be allowed to swap their shifts. By doing that, under the acknowledgement of the supervisors, if any worker has urgent personal problem and cannot come to work, other worker who does not have shift on that day can cover for the busy one. This, basically, requires the flexibility and open-mindedness from the supervisors.

Working stress and pressure: none of the respondents deny that stress and pressure are inseparable from service businesses, especially cleaning domain. This can be reduced and eased by proper acts from the management team, including higher appreciation of workers' efforts; thorough inspection on mistakes and complaints so that suitable solutions or reminders can be delivered to the real root cause or agent; updating and changing daily assignments in order that each worker can have more exposure to the working dimension; etc.

Working community: working in a multicultural community is an advantage for the ship department of company X and some interviewees suggest that there should be the so-called Culture Days or Get-together Events in which employees are given opportunities to interact, communicate and thus develop good rapport and higher cooperation in work. Again, the supervisors can also work on this by pairing or grouping workers with different cultural backgrounds on their daily plan. Moreover, all interviewees recommend that the induction process for new workers can be done by pairing old and

new employees, which enhances good communication from the initial stage among workers.

Leadership: a majority of the interviewees agree that the management team (especially supervisors and group leaders) should be more diverse and multicultural to avoid the preferential treatment. The choice for group leading position needs to be considered carefully, followed by continuous team leading training sessions.

5 DISCUSSION

What are the factors influencing voluntary employee turnover in cleaning Service Company X?

The findings from the case analysis identify issues around job being challenging, unrewarding and leadership that doesn't connect to the needs and desires of employees. The perceived feeling of the job being too challenging was identified as one of the most prominent causes of possible voluntary turnover among the housekeeping employees of company X. The concept of a challenging job is supported by Branham's (2012) belief that finding the job stressful and hard may indicate that there might have been unrealistic expectations about the job or that the initial job description was not realistic to the job seeker (Branham, 2012).

Moreover, perceived stress and pressure caused by work may also be an indications of a poor fit with the organization, which is one of the main dimensions of job embeddedness advocated for by Mitchell et al. (2001): generally, those employees with lower job embeddedness may be more prone to leave the organization.

Further, Unrewarding Job dimension seen from the viewpoint of Insufficient and Varying Pay as well as Lack of Appreciation and Opportunity to Develop also complies with Branham (2012) who emphasized that in general, the need to feel a sense of worth (e.g. recognition) is considered one of the human needs that if not being met, can lead to considerations of leaving. Moreover, Unresponsive Leadership is seen to be lacking by not encouraging a work community that is close- knit among frontline housekeepers. This dimension is in agreement with Mitchell et al. (2001) Job embeddedness theory, especially the links within the organization, loose-knit work community is indicative of poor links and thus a potency for staff turnover intention.

What are the potential strategies that can enhance employee retention in cleaning service of company X?

The data analysis is based on the backup data explored in sub-chapter 2.2.4 that featured best human resource management practices (henceforward, BHRMP) in an organization considered to be the 'best place to work and the results that emerged from

the interviewees responses.'- The researcher examined what makes this organization tick in terms of retention strategies in order to recommend the said best human resource management strategies to company X. Alongside the interviews response on possible solutions to enhance retention of employees in Company X.

From the considered company, the featured BHRMPs were highlighted and they accord with the possible solutions advanced by the employees of company X. According to the findings all the interviewees recommend that an induction process for new workers can be done by pairing old and new employees, which enhances good communication from the initial stage among workers. This same dimension seems to be a norm in the case organization conversed in sub-chapter 2.2.4. The company seems to be instilling shared company value through an induction program to the newly recruited staff. If attempted at company x as advocated by the employees, and as proven in the best company to work, an induction program can introduce the new employees to established ethos and conventions that are company X vision specific.

Secondly, company X employees recommend reducing/easing working stress and pressure through proper acts from the management team, including higher appreciation of workers' efforts; thorough inspection on mistakes and complaints so that suitable solutions or reminders can be delivered to the real root cause or agent; updating and changing daily assignments in order that each workers can have more exposure to the working dimension. Similarly, the case organization in section 2.2.4 agrees with this by advocating for showing how the daily work makes sense to the employees. Accordingly, shared meaning is about more than fulfilling company's mission statement, rather it's about forging powerful connections between personal and organizational values. Consequently, it can be said that if company X's human resource managers upheld this principle it will enhance employee's involvement. Again, this will act as a spur to both individual and company's growth.

Moreover, company X employees advocates for continuous leadership training program for the organizations team leaders to offset challenges related to preferential treatment and cultural insensitivity. Similarly, BHRMPs advocate for Magnifying employee's strengths –through a learning and development program that extends to employees imparting knowledge and experiences on their colleagues.

6 CONCLUSION

Reporting findings from selected interviewees who are former and current cleaning workers in the ship department of company X, the ongoing study has presented possible reasons leading to employees' turnover phenomenon. Those driving forces include the unrewarding and challenging aspects of the cleaning job, relating to varying working hours, lack of professional developments and daily stress and pressure from the working place. Another major cause being discussed is the leadership feature which is considered unresponsive by most of the respondents; in other words, the management appear to be dissatisfying and they cannot manage to create a close-knit working community in a multicultural environment. In the latter half of the interview, interviewees make useful suggestions in reducing the realm of employees' departure from company X. Together with the basic practices of employees' retention, workers highly agree on the improvement of the management system whose influence is evident in all factors, so that the employees' motivation and devotion to work can be maintained and enhanced.

As the scope of this inspection is rather limited, the findings just shed some light on employees' turnover from the workers' perspectives only. One improvement for this case study is the expansion of the research to include service supervisors, hotel managers, and human resources staff of company X so that the overall picture of employees' turnover can be analysed and studied from different dimensions with objectivity and unbiased viewpoints.

Furthermore, it is worth conducting an in-depth investigation on employees' retention, covering, for instance, the company's policies or developmental strategies. In conclusion, there is still much more to be done on the employees' turnover topic in general and this phenomenon at company X in particular. After all, it is employees that are still regarded as the life blood of any business organization even when their departure and retention is put as priority in business administration research.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Interview Questions

1. Greeting and brief introduction.

   a. Hi, my name is Brian Ouko, currently studying at Turku University of Applied sciences. As part of my final year assignment I am investigating factors that influence employee turnover in order that I may recommend for ways of enhancing employee retention for company (x).

   b. The information obtained in this interview will be treated with utmost confidentiality; and it is intended to be used strictly for academic purpose only.

2. Introduction of the topic

- The idea is that we briefly talk about your experience in terms of voluntary turnover: so, your views, opinions and understanding are really important for my assessment. Unless you want me to clarify something, we will begin.

3. Questions for Current/Former Frontline housekeepers of ship cleaning department of company X

i. How long have you been working for the ship department of company X? What role/tasks have you been taking in the ship department of company X?

ii. In your opinions, what are the possible *company-related* reasons that make employees leave the company X? (You can choose more than one option and you can add your own reason also)

> a. Working hours?
>
> b. Rewards?
>
> c. General work environment?
>
> d. Group leaders / Supervisors?
>
> Other reasons.................................

iii. Based on the choice(s) you have mentioned above, could you please explain more on each of your choice? For example: you chose 'working hours', please talk more about that.

iv. What do you think about these aspects of leadership qualities being practiced at company X? (Supervisors - Team Leaders - Workers)

   a. Communication (in terms of giving instructions/etc.)

   b. Relationship (with supervisors/team leaders, to what extent does the leadership encourage interaction among staff? What is your opinion on teamwork?)

   c. Trust (to what extent do you trust your group leaders/supervisors? To what extent do you think your group leaders/supervisors trust all of their workers?)

   d. Fairness (in terms of work distribution/conflict resolution/benefits and rewards distribution/promotion/ etc.)

   e. Motivation (to what extent do your supervisors motivate you at work? Please explain more)

   f. Acknowledgement (to what extent do you think the supervisors appreciate your work? How do they usually express that?)

   g. Feedback (do you always get feedback from your work, e.g. complaints, appraisal? What happens if there are complaints?)

   h. Others _____

v. We have been discussing about a variety of reasons that make workers leave the company. With reasons that come from the company itself, according to you, what can company X do to retain employees?

   4. Closing Remarks

   • We have finished our interviews, and once again, thank you very much for making time to help me in this study. See you again

   5. Questions for group leaders in ship department of company X

   a. Tell me about your role in company X. How long have you been in company X? And in this position?

    b. What do you think are the 3 main reasons (in order of preference) why your ex-employees decided to change their jobs? Why?

b.* When you think about your subordinates, who have decided to leave the company:

    i.   Can you recognize any pattern for leaving?

    ii.   Do you see some signs of leaving?

    iii. How can you react if you see a pattern happening? Please give example of your reaction. Could you roughly tell me how your company employees are distributed in terms of age, academic level and nationality?

    6. Closing Remarks

We have finished our interviews, and once again, thank you very much for making time to help me in this study. See you again!