

Exploring the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention among Employees in Hospitality Industry: The Moderating Role of Gender

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Abstract

This study explores the moderating role of gender on job satisfaction and turnover intention, focusing on employees in the hospitality industry. Job satisfaction has become one of the most widely studied topics in research, mainly because of its importance to employees' psychological condition, which in turn affects customer satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. Job related dissatisfaction can cause employee-turnover intention at the workplace. Hence, needful steps to reduce turnover intention are suggested based on results of the study, which will improve employees' job satisfaction and turnover intention. Previous research has consistently shown that job satisfaction is negatively associated with employee-turnover intention. However, little research has been conducted on the potential moderating effects of one or more socio-demographic variables on this relationship. The present study proposed to extend the findings of the previous research by exploring the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention. Using individual employees in tourism and food industry as the unit of analysis, the conceptual framework can be used to analyse the moderate effect of the gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention in the hospitality industry.

Key Words: Turnover Intention, Job Satisfaction, Gender, Hospitality Industry.

Introduction

Organizations nowadays in Turkey are facing extremely severe complex competition and uncertainty due to continuous and rapidly changing technology in the marketplace arising from globalization (Sohi, 1996; Prager, 2003; Jones et al., 2007). In the current global competitive environment, the hospitality industry is selective with regard to areas on providing excellent service quality and making customer satisfaction. This will ensure solid loyal customers which are essential in the tourism sector for their survival and achievement. Loyal employees should make loyal customers (Reichheld, 1996). It is unlikely that the customer will be served well if the employee is actively dissatisfied (Hoffman, 1992; Rogers et al., 1994). Therefore, the organizations should analyze the role of frontline employees, who, the majority of the time, are regarded as representative for the company in the company-customer interaction. They will be

influential in the level of satisfaction and engagement in this interaction which is vital in the case of a service failure or complaint management. However, the hospitality industry is confronted by the challenging task of developing effective methodologies to ensure the behavior and attitude of frontline employees which are consistent with the goals of management and expectations of customers (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996). Based on concise reviews, this study explores the moderate role of gender, its relationship with job satisfaction, and the effect of this relationship on the turnover intention of employees in an organization.

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction

The job satisfaction is maybe the most studied topic in the behavioral sciences (Judge and Church, 2000). It is in the position of an intersection for several theories and models that explain the individual attitudes and behaviors (Judge and Klinger, 2007). Williams and Hazer (1986) define job satisfaction as employee emotion and affection responses to his/her job characteristics. Job Satisfaction (JS) is the individual's attitude towards the various aspects of their job and the job in general Rogers et al (1994). The concept of job satisfaction is viewed as an attitude that relates to overall attitudes towards life, or life satisfaction (Tait et al., 1989; Ilies et al., 2009) as well as to service quality (Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Hartline and Ferrell, 1996). Duffy and Richard (2006) while carrying out their research across six major specialties among physicians opined that exploring the prediction of job satisfaction is extensive and stressed. Tovey and Adams (1999) reported that relevant dimensions of job satisfaction appear to be situational and depending on the particular characteristics of the work environment and on the period in which the studies took place. Jobs provide many sources of satisfaction. They ensure economic stability, provide social interaction, and offer reinforcement contingencies that enhance self-efficacy (De Witte, 1999).

The Magnitude of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an essential factor that affects employees' initiative and enthusiasm. Job satisfaction is a major factor in personal satisfaction (Locke, 1976), self-respect, self-esteem, and self-development. Job satisfaction increases the degree of happiness in the workplace, which leads to a positive work approach. A satisfied worker is creative, flexible, innovative, and loyal ("Enotes", 2010). Job satisfaction is also linked to a healthier workforce and has been found to be a good indicator of longevity for a company (Argyle, 1989). It is important for the worker to feel satisfied doing his/her job and feel great value for his/her efforts. Job satisfaction brings a delightful emotion (Brown, 1996), which leads to an optimistic work manner. A satisfied worker is more likely to be creative and show more durability (Engleza, 2007). Job satisfaction is a very important element that contributes directly to the success (Tella, 2007) or failure of an organization. Satisfied workers influence positively the work outcomes, which lead to the success and growth of the organization (Silverthorne, 1996).

Turnover Intention

Intention to leave is referred to as a worker's intention to leave the present organisation (Cho, Johanson & Guchait, 2009). This term is interchangeable with the term turnover intention. Turnover intention is considered a conscious and deliberate desire to leave an organisation within the near future and considered the last part of a sequence in the withdrawal cognition process. Three elements exist in the withdrawal cognition process, namely, thoughts of quitting, the intention to search for another job somewhere else and the intention to quit. Boshoff, Van Wyk, Hoole and Owen (2002) define intention to quit as the strength of an individual's view that they do not want to stay with their employer. Turnover intention is seen as a dependent variable and is used as an indication of the probability that an individual will leave the organisation in the near future. The authors postulate that the turnover intention starts with the evaluation

by individuals of their current situation, and then they move through several further stages until a firm intention to quit is reached. The final outcome can be a decision to leave the organisation. Turnover intention is the strength of an individual's viewpoint that they do not want to stay with their employer. People who intend to quit are psychologically detached, less motivated and unwilling to contribute effectively to the organisation as they are not engaged (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001).

Job Satisfaction and Employee-Turnover Intention

Job satisfaction has been defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1300). As noted earlier, prior studies have consistently demonstrated that when the characteristics of working environment satisfy the needs of employees, they are more likely to feel a greater sense of obligation to remain in their organizations (Blau, 1964; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Carol & Richard, 2001; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Khanin et al., 2012; Bouckennooghe, Raja, & Butt, 2013). Specifically, Carol and Richard (2001) in a study conducted among 111 family employees from 70 family firms in the United States found that job satisfaction was negatively related to employee turnover intention. Recently, Tschopp et al. (2014) reported in their longitudinal study that an increase in job satisfaction was more strongly related to a decrease in turnover intention among 255 employees in the German and French-speaking parts of Switzerland. Also, there is a string in some literature validating the assertion of the earlier authors that job satisfaction scores can explain employees' turnover intention or actual quits (Clark, 2001; Shields and Price, 2002; García-Serrano, 2004; Delfgaauw, 2007; Lévy-Garboua et al., 2007).

Gill (2008) pointed out that employees in the hospitality industry that are laden with high level of trust will have higher levels of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction ultimately affects several other variables such as turnover intentions. Price and Mueller (1981) stated that job satisfaction has an indirect influence on profitability via its direct control over intent to leave.

Potential Role of Gender as a Moderator Variable

Although employee turnover intention may be engaged by men and women, prior research demonstrates gender differences in employee-turnover intention (Russ & McNeilly, 1995; Lyness & Judiesch, 2001). Social role theory (Eagly, 1987) has been applied in previous studies to examine gender differences in employee turnover intention. Social role theory postulates that men and women tend to behave differently in exhibiting turnover intention. Consistent with this theory, research suggests that women were more likely to leave their job than their men counterparts (Johnsrud & Heck, 1994; Zhou & Volkwein, 2004). Furthermore, prior research has examined gender as a moderator in studies regarding the antecedents and consequences of employee turnover intention (Khalid et al., 2009; Jiang, Liu, McKay, Lee, & Mitchell, 2012). Specifically, in their meta-analytic investigation of 65 independent samples (N = 42,907), Jiang et al. (2012) found that the negative relationships between on-the-job embeddedness and turnover criteria were stronger in female-dominated samples than in male dominated samples. In another study, Khalid et al. (2009) found that the relationship between helping behavior and turnover intention is moderated by gender and this relationship was stronger for females than males. Theoretically, gender might moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention for two possible reasons. Firstly, women are more likely to leave their job because they have weak attachments to the labour market (Khalid et al., 2009) and "are paid less, promoted slowly and are less likely to reach the top ranks that are accorded power and authority" (Miki & Yuval, 2011). Secondly, women are more likely to turnover because the level of family interference with work was found to be significantly higher in women compared to their male counterparts (Watai, Nishikido, & Murashima, 2008). On the basis of theories and extant empirical studies (Blau, 1964; Eagly, 1987; Carol & Richard, 2001; Khanin, Turel, & Mahto, 2012; Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014), we proposed a conceptual framework as depicted in Figure 1. The proposed conceptual

framework shows the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention, as well as the potential moderating role of gender on this relationship.

Theoretical Framework

There are several social theories that our study will be based on.

Maslow's Needs Hierarchy Theory

Shajahan, D. S., and Shajahan, L. (2004) categorized the theories of job-satisfaction into Content theories (Maslow's Needs Hierarchy, Herzberg's two factor theory, theory X and theory Y, Alderfer's ERG theory, and McClelland's theory of needs) and Process theories (behavior modification, cognitive evaluation theory, goal setting theory, reinforcement theory, expectancy theory, and equity theory). This study applies the theory of Maslow's Needs Hierarchy as a principle theory of job satisfaction. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy or Motivation/Satisfaction theory (1943) is the most widely recognized theory of motivation and satisfaction (Wehrich and Koontz, 1999). Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs laid the foundation for subsequent theories of job satisfaction. Hence, the several theories proposed so far are premised on Maslow's ideas. Based on humanistic psychology and clinical experiences, Abraham Maslow stated that an individual's motivational requirements may be arranged in a hierarchical order. Once a specified level of needs is fulfilled, it no longer aids the motivation. Thus, the next higher level of need is activated in order to motivate and satisfy the individual (Luthans, 2005). Maslow (1943) proposed five levels of needs' hierarchy as follows in ascending order: physical needs (food, clothing, shelter, sex), safety needs (physical protection), social needs (developing close relations with others), esteem/achievement (prestige given by others), self-actualization (self-fulfilment and accomplishment through personal growth). However, individual needs are dependent on the significance given to different needs and the level to which an individual wants to accomplish these needs (Karimi, 2008).

Two-Factor Theory (Hygiene Theory) of Job Satisfaction

Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, developed in 1959, which is also known as the two-factor theory or hygiene theory, portrays two different factors-hygiene factors and motivator factors-as the primary causes of job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction. Hygiene factors are sources of job dissatisfaction. It is associated with the job context or work setting, such as organizational policies or quality of supervision (Herzberg, 1987). According to motivation-hygiene theory, improving hygiene factors will prevent people from being dissatisfied but will not contribute to job satisfaction. On the other hand, motivator factors are the sources of job satisfaction (Feder, 2000), and associated with the job content. When Herzberg, Mauser and Snyderman carried out a study on the "motivation to work"; they came up with the development of the "Two-Factor Theory of job satisfaction". The developed theory was based on interview of over two hundred professionals specifically, accountants and engineers in Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania to determine the factors responsible for job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). This was later researched further to explore factors responsible for job dissatisfaction Herzberg (1987, 2003). Since the study was conducted, organizational behaviorists and human resources researchers in both private and public sectors viewed the subject of job satisfaction to be one of the most studied work related attitudes (Ellickson & Logsdon, 2001; Wright & Kim, 2004; Jung & Moon, 2007).

Turnover Intention Theories

Turnover behavior is a multistage process that includes attitudinal, decisional and behavioral components. The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that behavioral intention is a good predictor of actual behavior. Studies (Mobley, Horner & Hollingsworth, 1978; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Shields & Ward, 2001; Fox & Fallon, 2003) have effectively demonstrated that behavioral turnover intentions are constantly

seen with moderate to strong correlations with turnover, substantiating the view of Ajzen (1991). There is extensive support for the idea that intention to quit-stay is almost certainly the most important and direct individual-level antecedent and predictor of turnover decisions (Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Slate & Vogel, 1997; Chiu & Francesco, 2003). Mobley (1977) suggests that there are several other possible turnover cognition types of interest to add in the withdrawal decision, highlighting notions such as thinking of quitting, followed by the intention to search for alternatives. Furthermore, many studies have been based on the belief that turnover is an individual choice behavioral pattern based on the conceptualization that it is a psychological response (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand & Meglino, 1979; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid & Sirola, 1998). Chronic stress, inadequate pay, lack of recognition, increased job demand and other negative job characteristics are identified as reasons relating to worker’s turnover (Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, 2001; Scannapieco & Connell-Carrick, 2007).

Method

Design and Participants

The study was in the form of a questionnaire study. The sample groups were the frontline employees in tourism and food industry.

Instruments

In order to measure the job satisfaction of the participants, Agho, Price and Müller (1992) Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) was applied. Regarding the measure of the employee-turnover intention, the Intention to Leave Scale Bluedorn (1982) consisting of 3 items was used.

Conceptual Research Framework and Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to investigate the moderate role of the gender on the job satisfaction and turnover intention of the hospitality front line staff. Based on the variables described in previews sections a partial conceptual framework was developed in below (Figure 1) and the related hypotheses proposed are presented.

The conceptual framework depicts the relationship between job satisfaction as the independent variable and turnover intention as a dependent variable as well as moderating role of gender on this relationship.

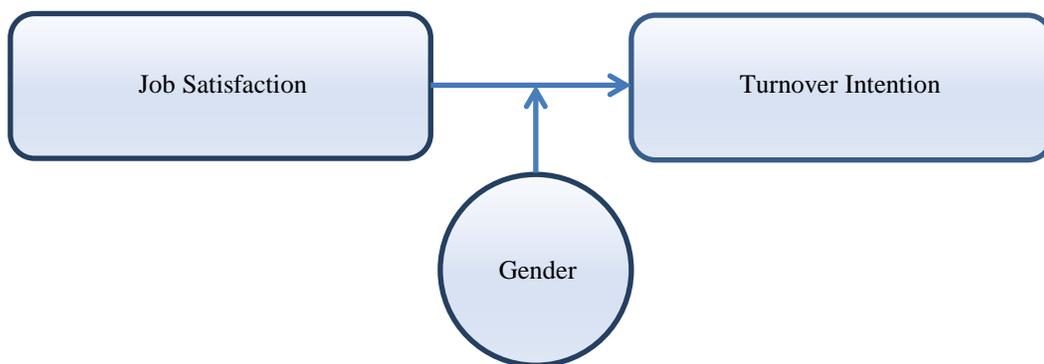


Figure 1. Conceptual Research Framework

The framework can be used to study the moderate impact of the gender on the relationship between job satisfaction construct and turnover intention on the hospitality industry. A great deal of research has validated this process approach to turnover and the important mediating roles played by commitment, satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Hom & Griffeth, 1995 for a review). We incorporate a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention through a moderating role of gender. A number of studies have investigated the direction of causality between these constructs with mixed results. The unit of analysis for the study is the individual employees in the tourism and food industry. The hypotheses based on this goal enumerated as follows:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of front line employees of the hospitality industry and job satisfaction relates negatively to employee-turnover.

H₂: Gender will moderate the positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention, such that the relationship is stronger for women than for men.

Analysis

The questionnaire form was distributed to 525 front line employees in tourism and food industry, of which 362 returned their responses. The SPSS 21 package software was utilized and the compiled data were analyzed and interpreted in line with the determined objectives by using the descriptive statics and employing various statistical analyses (Correlation Analysis and T-Test).

Results and Discussion

368 out of 565 distributed questionnaire forms were returned by the respondents in tourism and food industry within the scope of the study conducted in the period from April to July 2016. 6 of the questionnaire forms were discarded to adhere to the analysis due to the fact they are incomplete or incorrect. Within this context, data obtained from a total of 362 employees were analyzed. According to Table 1, 61 % (n=221) are male and 39 % are female of the employees.

Table 1. Distribution of the participants according to their demographic properties (n=362).

Variable	(n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	221	61
Female	141	39
Age		
18 - 25	131	36
26 - 35	187	52
36 - 45	37	10
46 and above	7	2
Duration of Employment (year)		
1 -5	198	55
6 - 10	122	34
11 -15	27	7
16 - 20	7	2
21 - 25	6	1.5
26 and above	2	0.5

Regarding the age group of the employees, 52 % are between 26 and 35 years (n=187); 36 % are between 18 and 25 years (n=131); 10 % are between 36 and 45 (n=37) and 2 % are between 46 and above (n=7).

Regarding with the working hours of the employees, 55 % are between 1 and 5 years (n=198); 34 % are between 6 and 10 years (n=122); 7 % are between 11 and 15 years (n=27); 2 % are between 16 and 20 years (n=7); 1,5 % are between 21 and 25 years (n=6) and 0,5 % are 26 years and above.

In order to identify the effect of the job satisfaction on the turnover intention of the individuals, the correlation analysis was applied. Table 2 indicates that there is a significant and negative correlation between the job satisfaction and the turnover intention. Negative correlation between the job satisfaction and the turnover intention is consistent with the finding of Mobley et al., 1978; Price and Mueller, 1981; Aryee and Wyatt, 1991; Hellman, 1997; Abraham, 1999; Chan and Morrison, 2000; Ghiselli et al., 2001; Judge et al., 2001 and Eisenberger and Stinghamber, 2011.

Table 2: Correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention (n=362).

Variables	Average	S. Deviation	1	2
1. Job Satisfaction	3.35	0.80	(0.83)	
2. Turnover Intention	3.30	0.99	-0.60**	(0.74)

** p < 0.01; the values in parenthesis are Cronbach alpha values.

When the correlation coefficients among the variables in Table 2 are examined, it can be seen that there is a significant and negative correlation between the job satisfaction and the turnover intention (r=-0.60;p<0.01). Besides, the mean value of job satisfaction (3, 35) is higher than the mean value of turnover intention (3, 30). The internal consistencies of job satisfaction scale and intention-to-leave scale are 0.83 and 0.74, respectively.

Our findings in this study indicated a significant and negative relationship between the job satisfaction and the turnover intention. As a result of the correlation coefficient significance test, it was concluded that the correlation between the job satisfaction and the turnover intention was significant. In the context of the development of the Conceptual Research Framework and in line with the previous studies (Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001; Schwepker, 2001; Egan, Yang & Bartlett, 2004; Silverthorne, 2004; MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010), a direct relationship was discovered from the job satisfaction to the turnover intention.

Table 3. The influence of job satisfaction to turnover intention

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	p
	B	Standard Error	β		
1	(Fix)	5,837	0,18	32,390	0,000
	Job Satisfaction	- 0,75	0,05	-0,60	-14,357
Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention; R²=0,36; S.E=0,79; F=206,123; p=0,001					

As shown in Table 3, the influence of the job satisfaction as an independent variable on the turnover intention is statistically significant and negative (standardize beta: -0,60; p<0,001). The job satisfaction explains the 36 % of the change over the turnover intention. According to the simple linear regression analysis, it has been determined that job satisfaction has negative significant influence on the turnover intention, and then the Hypothesis H₁ was supported.

Table 4 demonstrates the results of t test which was performed to examine whether gender variable has any significant influence on the job satisfaction as well as the turnover intention. The results of Levene test refers to the equality of variances in job satisfaction (p= 0,864>0,05) and job turnover intention (p= 0,744>0,05). Hence, a significant statistical difference was observed in terms of the job satisfaction and the job turnover intention when gender factor is taken into consideration. This result represents that male

employees have higher significant turnover intention than female employees and female employees have higher job satisfaction than male employees and then the Hypothesis H₂ was also supported.

Table 4. t- test for gender variable.

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t-test for the Equality of the Means				
						t	df	p	Mean Differences	Standard Error Differences
Job satisfaction	Male	221	3,19	,80121	,05390	-4,91	360	,000	-,41267	,08393
	Female	141	3,60	,74188	,06248	-5,00	314,911	,000	-,41267	,08251
Turnover Intention	Male	221	3,59	,95954	,06455	6,99	360	,000	,70689	,10106
	Female	141	2,88	,90208	,07597	7,09	311,710	,000	,70689	,09969

Conclusions

Prior research has consistently demonstrated that job satisfaction relates negatively with employee-turnover intention across different research context. The present study verifies and extends the findings of the prior research by exploring the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention. It then provides an evidence base for the impact of moderating role on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention. Therefore, identifying the gender role factor in an organization will significantly improve job satisfaction, which in turn strengthens staff's loyalty to the organization. Moreover, organizations need to acknowledge the contribution made by each employee in order to instill loyalty and a strong sense of belonging as well as reduce the tendency to resign from the organization. Based on the review of existing studies, the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention and the moderating role of the gender were identified. The research also provided a new framework for the relationship of job satisfaction and employee turnover intention with a moderating effect of the gender. Implementing this framework will benefit studies conducted on hospitality industry management to review the impact of gender differences, and its moderating effect on job satisfaction and turnover intention.

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