

# RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SERVICE INNOVATION, JOB ATTITUDES, JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER INTENTION IN HOTEL EMPLOYEE'S POINTS OF VIEW

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the relationship between service innovation in the hotel industry and job satisfaction, work attitudes, and turnover intention from the employee's point of view. 255 valid samples were collected from hotel staff.

Results of the analysis showed that service innovation has a significant impact on job satisfaction and job attitudes, and that both job satisfaction and work attitudes have a significant impact on turnover intention. In the past, limited research was conducted on the potential impact of service innovation on employees in the hospitality industry. This paper is an important contribution to research in this area.

The results of this study provide a valuable contribution to understanding the impact of service innovation on hotel industry employees and provides a theoretical framework for researchers, policy makers, and managers in the hospitality industry. Therefore, it has made significant contributions to the literature.

**Keywords:** Service innovation Job attitudes, Job satisfaction and Turnover intention.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Innovation has become a strategic weapon for successful hotel management and is one of the most important intangible assets in the hotel industry. However, the hospitality industry already has a wide range of service innovations, such as offering new services to new markets, providing minor modifications or simple adjustments to existing services, and the provision of new or additional facilities (Ottenbacher and Gnoth 2005; Vinar-ski-Peretz *et al.* 2011). Employees play an important role in service innovation and the provision of high quality services (Lee and Hyun 2016).

The hotel industry is a people-oriented industry, so in order for a hotel to succeed in a highly competitive market, the continued provision of high quality services to customers is of the utmost importance (Hu *et al.* 2009; Kim and Lee 2013; Lee and Hyun 2016). Managers need to understand the work employees do as well as their expectations. Employee commitment to achieving a company's business goals depends on whether they believe this effort will result in the company meeting their own needs and desires (Lam *et al.* 2001; Lee and Hyun 2016).

Due to the high turnover rate of employees in the hospitality industry, it is vitally important to focus on retaining the manpower in an organization. Hallowell (1996) believed that there could be no satisfied customers without satisfied employees, because job satisfaction affects customer service quality and helps to increase customer satisfaction (Choi and Kim 2012; Grandey *et al.* 2005; Gunlu *et al.* 2010). Karatepe and Sokmen

(2006) believed that providing high quality services and creating loyal customer relationships in a highly competitive hotel industry was the key factor to ensuring success. Therefore, high-level managers need to ensure that their employees have a high level of job satisfaction in order to provide superior customer service (Gunlu *et al.* 2010; Lam *et al.* 2001; Matzler and Renzl 2007). Considerable research has been done on the impact of employee attitudes and behavior on turnover intention (Arustei 2014; Davidson and Wang 2011; Meng, and Han 2014). Orfila-Sintes *et al.* (2005) based their research on the innovative activities of Spanish hotels and found that higher grade hotels utilized more innovative strategies than the lower grade ones. As a result of this research, they concluded that higher grade hotels had the ability to differentiate their products and services, while lower grade hotels tended to focus on follow-up innovations. From the above literature, it is clear that few studies have explored the impact of innovative services on job satisfaction or the effect of job attitudes on turnover intention.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Theoretical background

Social cognitive theory is widely applied to interpret the theory of individual behavior (Compeau and Higgins 1995a), so the "individual" is not viewed as an abstract concept of social reality, but is related to the environment and behavior, and all of these components interact with each other, as shown in Figure 1-1. Personal self-concept is affected by the environment, but an individual is also able to explain, select and influence the environment. The behavior of individuals is affected by environmental factors, but behavior can also affect the environment. Personal self-concept affects behavior, but an individual's self-concept is affected by their performance or results (success or failure).

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This relationship between environmental factors, self-concept and behavior, is what Bandura refers to as “Triadic Reciprocity” (Bandura, 1982, 1986, 2006b, 2008). This can be used to explain how forces in the surrounding environment, personal factors and behavior affect an individual and how changes between the three determinants as well as patterns of interaction can play a role. Hunt and Vitell (1986) argued that the interaction of individual personal experiences with organizational environmental factors (which seem to remain intact within the organization) leads to a unique individual perception and interpretation of the organization.

## 2.2 Service innovation

Betz (1987) first proposed the concept of service innovation, and distinguished it from innovation that introduced new technology into the production process of a product. Rather, this innovation emphasized the introduction of new technology-based services into the competitive market. This definition draws clear distinctions between service innovation, process innovation and product innovation, and clearly points out that service innovation is based on technology. Members of organizations generate useful ideas and introduce them into the enterprise. The effective use of creative practices in companies is innovation (Danaei and Iranbakhsh 2016; Van de ven 1986; Kanter 1988).

Scott and Bruce (1994) determined the pattern of employee service innovation behavior by interviewing senior management. Managers can learn from successful leaders in the hospitality industry and benchmark the most successful practices to guide and motivate other innovators (Enz and Siguaw, 2003; Hallin and Marnburg 2008). Chan, Go and Pine (1998) found that hotels, restaurants and travel businesses tend to focus on innovation.

Danaei and Iranbakhsh (2016) proposed that service innovation needs to include an initial analysis of market demand through a technical method, the development of new concepts, and the development of new service prototypes. The service prototype is then tested via internal testing or through consumer use and any shortcomings are identified, so that the service can be revised. Finally, it is placed on the market (Van de ven, 1986; Kanter, 1988). With changes in the market over time, this new service must continually be improved to facilitate the next innovation activity. Employee service innovation behavior can be used as an organizational management resource to accumulate new ideas and knowledge and solve problems, such as questions relating to the repeated failure of certain services (Kim and Lee 2013). Lee and Hyun (2016) defined employee service innovation behavior as the willingness of employees to present their own ideas, persuade customers, and believe that it is possible to improve service quality and customer satisfaction.

## 2.3 Job satisfaction

Hoppock (1935) believed that job satisfaction involved the psychological and physiological satisfaction of the working environment, and that it was part of a holistic approach to mental health. Job satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied issues in human resources research. It can be defined as “the happy emotional state that results from a person's evaluation of the value of their work” (Locke 1969). Campbell (1970) suggested it involved the inner psychological state of the individual, that is, the positive or negative feelings or attitudes of an individual with regards to their job or certain aspects thereof. Price (1972) stud-

ied the feelings that members had about their roles in the work system. Those who had positive feelings or reactions were satisfied. Likewise, those who did not have positive feelings were not satisfied.

Davis (1977) argued that job satisfaction is the degree to which employees like or dislike their work.

Front-line staff in the hotel industry communicate directly with the customer in the form of customer interaction. Perception, satisfaction and loyalty emerge at this time. Therefore, front-line employees should be satisfied with providing quality service and satisfying customers (Danaei and Iranbakhsh 2016; Foote and Tang 2008; Spinelli and Canavos 2000; Kong *et al.* 2015).

Smith *et al.* (1969) argued that job satisfaction is the difference between the employee's actual reward and the expected salary in a specific work environment. If the gap between them is smaller, the employee's job satisfaction is higher. If the gap is larger, job satisfaction is reduced. Witte and Buitendach (2005) argued that job satisfaction involves the employee's evaluation and cognition of work, and includes the feelings of employees at all levels within the organization. Employees use satisfaction as an important factor to evaluate their work. Oshagbemi (2000) defined job satisfaction as “a person's positive emotional response to a particular job.” Cheung *et al.* (2014) argued that employees with higher levels of trust will have higher job satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

## 2.4 Job attitudes

Kalz and Stotland (1959) believed that attitudes are composed of three levels: cognition, emotion and action. Cognition refers to an individual's understanding of a particular situation and their knowledge and perception of something. Emotion refers to an individual's feelings, their likes and dislikes regarding something. Action refers to an individual's tendency to act and the ability of an individual to observe something. (Warr and Wall 1975).

Attitude is an evaluation of people and things and whether they are liked or disliked. However, most people are more concerned with job satisfaction (Harrison *et al.* 2006; Riketta 2002; Teh and Sun 2012). Job satisfaction refers to the overall attitude of an individual towards his or her work. A highly qualified employee may have a positive attitude towards the job (Hon 2013; Madera *et al.* 2013). When employees are dissatisfied with their work, they have a negative attitude towards the job. In fact, the terms “employee attitude” and “job satisfaction” are often used interchangeably (Humborstad *et al.* 2007; Humborstad and Perry, 2011).

“Service attitude” is intangible, but it can satisfy consumers. Good service can make customers feel happy and leave a good impression. “Service attitude” is not a mass-produced product, but a feeling of interactive experience between customers and staff (Harrison *et al.* 2006; Humborstad *et al.* 2007). Kotler (2003) defined services as “intangible activities or interests provided by one party to another where there is no change in ownership after the service has been received. The service generated may or may not relate to the real entity.”

## 2.5 Turnover intention

Rice *et al.* (1950) believed leaving a job to be a social process. When an individual enters an organization, they naturally develop a relationship and interact with the organization. If such

interaction fails to reach a certain level, the employee will leave the organization. Porter and Steers (1974) described the phenomenon as the resignation tendency and explained that employees experience a withdrawal from work when they are not satisfied. Caplan and Jones (1975) argued that turnover intention is the intensity of an individual's desire to leave his/her current job and find other job opportunities.

Mossholder *et al.* (1981) linked the tendency of employees to leave their current jobs to their desire to find other job opportunities. Williams and Hazer (1986) argued that turnover intentions are the tendency, desire, and plan workers have to leave their jobs. Huang, Chuang and Lin (2003) pointed out that employee turnover intention may sometimes be due to the lack of suitable job opportunities or other restrictions, but that often the employees do not actually leave. In an employee's mind, there may only be the intention to leave the organization (Kong *et al.* 2018; Nadiri and Tanova 2010).

Retaining a stable workforce in an organization is an important human capital goal for growing companies (Zin *et al.* 2010). However, the high turnover rate is a major problem in the hospitality industry (Kong *et al.* 2011). Jang and George's (2012) report pointed out some of the many reasons employees leave a company which included poor communication between employees and management, lack of resources for employees, uneven distribution of job responsibilities, lack of proper training, and poor working conditions. Kim *et al.* (2014) believed that lack of training, poor working conditions, inefficient leadership, workplace conflicts and communication were the main reasons for high employee turnover and low productivity.

## 2.6 Hypothesis Development

The hospitality industry is facing a turbulent, rapidly changing environment (Withiam 2012) which means that it is being forced to modify and update its existing services to meet customer needs and changes in demand in order to survive in the marketplace. Therefore, the implementation of innovation has become an important factor in successful hotels (Danaei and Iranbakhsh 2016). Promoting employee service innovation is very important in the hotel industry (Chen 2011; Hu *et al.* 2009; Lee and Hyun 2016).

Forbes and Domm (2004) claimed that the development of new services and products and the continuous improvement of internal processes require a high degree of employee creativity. Hu *et al.* (2009) also found that there is a significant impact on employee service innovation behavior (ESIB) and new service development (NSD). H1 is therefore presented as the following:

### H1: Service innovation has a positive effect on Job attitudes

An employee's perception of innovation is influenced by the organization, supervisors and colleagues. This subjective experience can stimulate employee service innovation and increase services.

Innovative input ultimately improves the overall level of innovation in an organization (Amabile *et al.* 2004; Danaei and Iranbakhsh 2016). An organizational climate of innovation can have a positive impact on employee service innovation behavior (Hsu and Chen 2017).

The instability of employee service innovation behavior and work pressure significantly weaken the impact of the innovative organizational atmosphere on employee service innovation behavior. A high level of work pressure may result in the complete

loss of organizational innovation and a reduction in service innovation (Ren and Zhang 2015). H2 is therefore presented as the following:

### H2: Service innovation has a positive effect on Job satisfaction

The hospitality industry is part of the service industry and most of the services are propped up by employees; when employees are satisfied with their work, they tend to provide quality customer service (Choi and Kim 2012; Grandey *et al.* 2005; McPhail *et al.* 2015; Meng and Han 2014). Job satisfaction can be defined as "a state of pleasant emotions that can be achieved by assessment of a person's work and which would achieve or promote work value" (Locke 1969). Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as "people's perception of work". Michaels and Spector (1982) demonstrated that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are predictors of the employees' intention to quit their jobs.

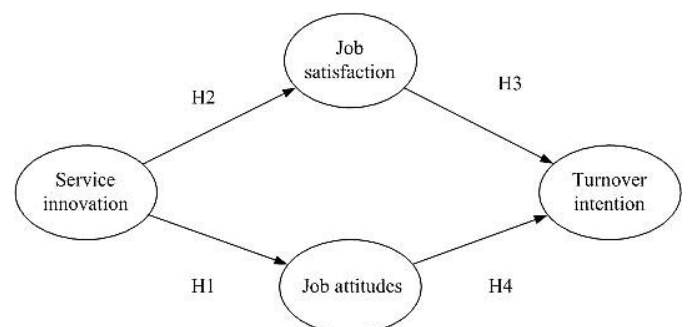
Karatepe and Uludag (2007) applied front-line employees as a sample to demonstrate the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention. Yang (2008) studied hotel employees in Taiwan and found that job satisfaction significantly affected emotional commitment and may lead to turnover intention. In addition, hotel employees tend to have lower job satisfaction but higher job quitting intentions (Kim *et al.* 2016; Jang and George 2012; Tuna *et al.* 2016; Kong *et al.* 2018). H3 is therefore presented as the following:

### H3: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on Turnover intention

Dissatisfied employees exhibit abnormal behavior in the workplace which leads to a reduction in service quality and job performance (Jang and George 2012). Service quality can suffer if service workers are unwilling or unable to provide the required services (Giannikis and Nikandrou 2013). In order to succeed in a competitive business environment, some necessary conditions include competent management and a high quality, stable service, as well as employees dedicated to providing service innovation to customers (Lam *et al.* 2001).

Employees play a vital role in hotels that are committed to providing quality services to meet important customer expectations (Jang and George 2012; Kong *et al.* 2018). Job attitudes are important because they inspire employee confidence and loyalty and this leads to gains in productivity and reduces turnover intention (Cheung *et al.* 2014; Humborstad and Perry 2011; Kong *et al.* 2015; Nadiri and Tanova 2010). H4 is therefore presented as the following:

### H4: Job attitudes have a positive effect on Turnover intention



**Fig. 1 The proposed theoretical model.**

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A survey questionnaire was designed using latent variables, including Employee service innovation behavior, Job satisfaction, Job attitudes, and Turnover intention. A pre-test survey was conducted in Dec.2018 using convenience sampling. In total, 23 valid questionnaires were obtained. An item analysis was conducted to improve the questionnaire instructions and assess the Likert scales. Cronbach's alpha scores for the latent variables of Employee service innovation behavior, Job satisfaction, Job attitudes, and Turnover intention were 0.878, 0.846, 0.888 and 0.674, respectively, indicating an acceptable internal consistency (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994).

The formal questionnaire was then formulated and included the following four sections: The Employee service innovation behavior section was borrowed from Hu (2009) and Lee and Hyun (2016) and consisted of six items. The Job satisfaction section was borrowed from Danaei and Iranbakhsh (2016) and consisted of three items. The Job attitudes section with five items was developed from Teh and Sun (2012). The Turnover intention section was borrowed from Nadiri and Tanova (2010). The responses for Employee service innovation behavior, Job satisfaction, Job attitudes, and Turnover intention were placed on a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from one for "strongly disagree" to seven for "strongly agree".

#### 3.2 Quality of the research instrument

High-level supervisors in the hotel permitted and supported the surveying and sampling of their employees. The average length of each interview was around 5 minutes. The survey was conducted from Dec. 2018 to Jan. 2019. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and 266 responses were returned, including 11 incomplete questionnaires; this led to 255 valid questionnaires. This type of survey results in a response rate that is almost 87%, higher than for surveys sent via traditional mail or email (Cook *et al.* 2000).

#### 3.3 Data analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics 24 for Windows was used to evaluate descriptive statistics and profiles, and LISREL 8.80 for Windows was used to conduct Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and SEM. The measurement model was used to examine the measurement model, the model fit, composite reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity for Employee service innovation, Job satisfaction, Job attitudes, and Turnover intention. SEM analysis was applied to estimate the SEM parameters by using maximum likelihood estimation. Simultaneously, all the hypotheses were verified.

## 4. FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Profiles of the respondents

Of the respondents, 38.4% were male and 61.6% were female; 47.1% were married and 52.9 % were single; 2.0% were aged over 61, 11.0% were aged 51-60, 24.7 % were aged 41-50, 28.2% were aged 31- 40, and 34.1% were aged 21-30; 43.9% had a university education and 54.5% had only a high school education.

#### 4.2 Measurement model

A measurement model specifies how latent variables or hypothetical constructs are assessed in terms of observable variables and represents the validity and reliability of the observable responses for the latent variables (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). Many researchers have divided the value of  $\chi^2$  by degrees of freedom to adjust for the sample sizes (Kline 1998). Marsh and Hocevar (1985) suggested that an  $\chi^2/df$  rating of less than 3 is favorable for a large sample. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of the model was 513.30 with 113 degrees of freedom (df), implying that the measurement did not fit the data well. The other model fit indices were GFI = 0.80, NNFI = 0.96, NFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.12, and SRMR = 0.080. There were some problems regarding the variables in the initial measurement mode. The fitness index was not suitable, indicating that it should be partially adjusted using the modification index (MI) correction. The  $\chi^2$  value of the model was 157.90 with 59 degrees of freedom (df), implying that the measurement did not fit the data well. The other model fit indices were GFI (0.91), NFI (0.97), NNFI (0.98), CFI (0.98), RMSEA (0.084), and SRMR (0.047). Based on these fit indices, the measurement model appeared to fit the sample data well (Hair *et al.* 2010).

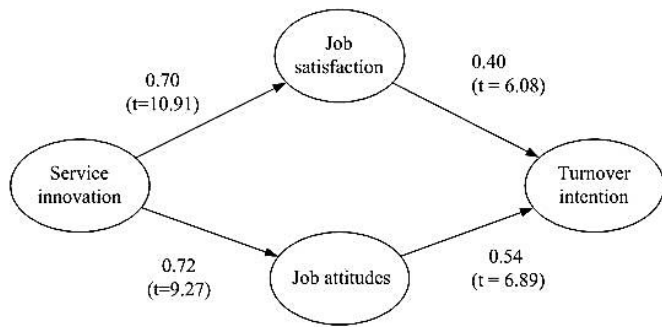
#### 4.3 Structural Model

Structural model analysis includes the fitness analysis of the research model and the explanatory power of the overall research model. This study selected the ratio of the Chi-square value to its degree of freedom, and GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI, RMSEA and SRMR indicators for overall model fit assessment (Bagozzi and Yi 1988; Bentler 1990). The sample size was considered to be an element of the fitness of the overall patterns, and to leverage the ratio of the  $\chi^2$  value to its degree of freedom and the degree of adaptation of the verification mode (Bagozzi and Yi 1988; Marsh and Hocevar 1985).

In this study, the  $\chi^2/df$  ( $191.58/61 = 3.14$ ) ratio of less than 5 was generally considered to be indicative of a reasonable fit between the proposed model and the data on which the model was constructed (Kline, 2005). GFI, NNFI, NFI, CFI, RMSEA and SRMR were also used to assess model adaptability (Jöreskog and Sörbom 1996; McDonald and Ho 2002). Nonetheless, the accessories included GFI (0.89), NNFI (0.97), NFI (0.96), CFI (0.97), RMSEA (0.095) and SRMR (0.086), all of which indicated an acceptable level of model fitness for the structural modeling of the data.

#### 4.4 Constructs and the relationships between them

The path diagram for the final model is illustrated in Figure 2. The path analysis revealed that Service innovation had a direct, positive and significant effect on Job attitudes ( $\gamma_{11} = 0.72$ ,  $t = 9.27$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), so hypothesis 1 was accepted. Service innovation directly affected Job satisfaction ( $\gamma_{12} = 0.70$ ,  $t = 10.91$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), so hypothesis 2 was accepted. Job satisfaction had a direct effect on Turnover intention ( $\beta_{21} = 0.40$ ,  $t = 6.08$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), so hypothesis 3 was tested and accepted. Job attitudes directly affected Turnover intention ( $\beta_{31} = 0.54$ ,  $t = 6.89$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), so hypothesis 4 was accepted. The squared multiple correlation (equivalent to  $R^2$ ) was 0.70, indicating that 70 % of the variance in Service innovation could be attributed to Job attitudes, Job satisfaction and Turnover intention.



**Fig. 2 Fingl model on relationships among service innovation, Job attitudes, Job satisfaction and Turnover inten**

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Theoretical Contributions

This research has several practical implications for hotel practitioners. The results showed that service innovation plays a key role in improving job satisfaction and reducing the turnover of hotel employees. Employees exhibiting innovative service behaviors are more likely to be satisfied with their work, feel empowered, and choose to stay. This study examined the relationships among service innovation, job satisfaction, job attitudes and turnover intention from the perspective of hotel employees.

This study is the first of its kind in that it attempted to integrate the concept of innovative service into the study of job satisfaction, job attitudes, and turnover intention. It expanded on previous research regarding creative innovation in the field of hospitality. The results of this study showed that service innovation improves job satisfaction, job attitudes, and turnover intention.

### 5.2 Management Implications

Although there are many factors that affect the innovative behavior of employees, this study explored employee service innovation behavior from the perspective of social cognitive theory. The content involved in service innovation is more intuitive; through the innovative use of equipment that provides novelty and encourages service innovation, employees experience convenient working conditions and job satisfaction. According to the analysis results, service innovation has a direct positive impact on work satisfaction (Enz and Siguaw, 2003; Hallin and Marnburg, 2008). If employees have a strong sense of service innovation in the tourist industry, there is an increase in their job satisfaction (Ren and Zhang, 2015). Therefore, the results demonstrated that service innovation affects job satisfaction.

The results of this study found that service innovation has a direct positive impact on job attitude (Amabile *et al.* 2004). If employees exhibit positive feelings about the hotel's service innovation, they tend to have a good work attitude. However, the reality is that more and more service innovations are offered using relatively standardized processes, especially for tourist hotels where standardized processes are conducive to ensuring stable service quality (Chen 2011; Hu *et al.* 2009; Lee and Hyun 2016).

Job satisfaction of hotel staff has a positive impact on turnover intention, and employee recognition has an effect on behav-

ioral intentions (Choi and Kim 2012; Grandey *et al.* 2005; McPhail *et al.* 2015; Meng and Han 2014). Therefore, hotels should pay attention to the needs of their employees and satisfy them if possible so that the employees experience job satisfaction and their job attitudes improve, thus reducing the turnover rate (Amabile *et al.* 2004).

### 5.3 Research Limitations and Future Research

In this study, the survey questionnaire method was used. The participants only relied on the questionnaire to answer literal questions. The range of service innovation in this industry is wide, so examples were cited along with the questions to improve readability in case readers lacked sufficient understanding. However, this decreased the possible performance of service innovation. The results may have been limited by the examples cited by the researcher and influenced responses to the questionnaire.

Hall (2009), Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson (2009) believed that service innovation involved other aspects besides product innovation and process innovation. This study focused on the effect of service innovation from the perspective of employees and considered the current stage of hotel staff in the tourism sector. The level of service innovation that can be reached is limited, no other innovations are involved, and there is a lack of one-sidedness. The role of the co-creation network formed by customers and employees should be included in future research considerations.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In order to improve competitiveness and compete with international tourism in the fierce competitive environment of the tourism industry, hotels need to change old concepts and see employees as a community that jointly creates company value. This study highlighted the fact that service innovation not only attracts employees and reduces employee dissatisfaction with work, but also drives employees to work harder for the company in terms of the job requirements.

This study showed that hotels should aim to increase employee job satisfaction and improve job attitudes, provide salary adjustments, feedback bonuses, and establish good management systems. In particular, hotels should provide employees with clear performance goals as well as opportunities for horizontal communication and staff coordination, so that the work is felt to be less boring and more enriching. Harmony among employees also affects an employee's decision on whether to stay or leave a company. An important factor in this decision is whether employees feel they can reach their full potential through the support of their colleagues and the work itself. Research shows that under these conditions, even in cases where the wages are lower than average, the employees are often still willing to serve the company.

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