

EFFECTS OF REALISTIC JOB INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWER AFFECT ON RETAIL EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

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ABSTRACT

Employee turnover has been one of the major concerns of retailers for a very long time. When the costs of recruitment and training are taken into consideration, the impact of employee turnover on the retail organization is considerable. Perhaps even more significant, however, are the opportunity costs of having hired the wrong person while allowing a better applicant to slip through the selection net.

Most of the studies relating to employee turnover reported in the marketing literature in general and retailing in particular have investigated relationships between turnover and other variables (job satisfaction, tenure, performance, etc.) from the perspective of existing personnel in the organization (performance, motivation and work environment) rather than prior to entry (recruitment). The focus in these studies has essentially been from the point of view of the organization selecting a person for a retail position rather than to look at situations from the perspective of individual applicant selecting the organization. The present study is an attempt to understand retail employee turnover from the perspective of recruitment - individual applicant selecting the organization.

With nearly one in six of the total labour force employed in retail firms, retailing is one of the largest and growing industries. A retailing job is no doubt an attractive proposition to the potential incumbent because of the limitless opportunities for career progression, challenges, avenues for meeting people, attractive financial rewards and its capacity to offer a high level of job security to the capable individual. However, a retailing job has also a number of less attrac-

tive attributes, such as need to work extra hours to get ready for busy seasons and sometimes work Saturdays and evenings, travel for several days on buying trips, responsibility for profit margins in difficult competitive market conditions, awkward customers to mention but a few. The obvious question facing retail organizations in this regard is thus: If applicants for a retail position perceive that they have been given realistic information concerning the job and have more favourable perceptions of the interviewer, will they be less likely to leave the job in the short term than those who feel they have only been given a cursory view of the job and have less favourable perceptions of the interviewer? The present study was designed to investigate the combined effects of realistic job information and interviewer affect (extent to which job applicants like the interviewer and perceive him or her as trustworthy, knowledgeable, and credible) on retail employee turnover. The study focuses on the effect of providing job candidates in retail organizations with a realistic view of the job during the recruitment process on turnover.

The important conclusion suggested by this study is that accurate, relevant and detailed job information play a significant role in reducing retail employees' decision to leave the job, and that simple information "glut" alone will not solve the problem. The results of this study did not reach the conventional level of significance for the role of interviewer credibility on turnover suggesting that general interviewer affect by itself does not contribute to reducing retail employees' decision to quit the job.