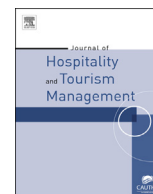


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The effect of employee advocacy and perceived organizational support on job embeddedness and turnover intention in hotels

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the fact that when the employees see that their interests are protected and a favor is done for them, they display positive behaviors in return. Therefore, this study is based on Social Exchange Theory and the Norm of Reciprocity Theory and it tries to investigate the effect of employee advocacy and perceived organizational support on job embeddedness and turnover intention. Data was collected from hotels in the Turkish cities of Antalya, Istanbul, and Mersin. The hypotheses are tested through multiple regression analyses. Drawing data from 400 valid questionnaires, this study argues that perceived organizational support has a significant positive effect on hotel employees' job embeddedness and has a significant negative effect on their turnover intention. This study also finds that although employee advocacy has a significant positive effect on hotel employees' job embeddedness, it does not have a significant effect on their turnover intention. On the basis of these findings, this study provides practical implications for hotel managers regarding employee advocacy and perceived organizational support.

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1. Introduction

As in all sectors (Anvari, JianFu, & Chermahini, 2013), high turnover rate is an important problem in the tourism and accommodation sector in which the most significant factor is human resources (Birdir, 2002; McGinley, Hanks, & Line, 2017). This problem has been revealed in recent studies that have been conducted to investigate the financial determinants of the employee turnover rate (Waldman, Kelly, Arora ve Smith, 2004; Tziner ve Birati, 1996; Simons ve Hinkin, 2001; Hinken and Tracey, 2000). Finding new employees for the organization and training them is costly for a business. For this reason, the turnover intentions of the employees should be addressed at early stages, and the effective human resources management is extremely important in this process (Hemdi and Nasurdin, 2006; Huselid, 1995).

According to Social Exchange Theory (SCT) (Blau, 1964) and Norm of Reciprocity Theory (NRT) (Gouldner, 1960), employees who perceive that their contribution is valued by the organization develop positive feeling towards their job and organization.

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Therefore, determining and applying managerial practices that aim to increase employees' positive perceptions about organizational support can help employees develop positive feelings towards their organization. Gouldner (1960) argues that "people should help those who assist them" and "people should not harm those who help them" in the process of human interchange.

In this empirical research conducted in hotel management, two dependent variables (turnover intention and job embeddedness) and two independent variables (perceived organizational support and employee advocacy) were identified and the effect that the independent variables have on the dependent variables was determined. The first dependent variable of job embeddedness includes having a fit relationship with their job and the sacrifices that employees make for their job and society. Employees' feelings of sacrifice and a fit relationship towards their job and society increase their job embeddedness. Employees with high job embeddedness show an increase in their performance in the organization and in their job satisfaction. The second dependent variable is turnover intention which stands for employees' desire to leave the job and organization voluntarily or to terminate the contribution they make to the organization.

The independent variable of employee advocacy is a judgement of employees that the business represents and supports their own

interests and this judgement is developed as a consequence of assessing the practice of their managers. When managers protect the interests of employees, the trust of employees towards their managers as well as the positive behaviors and feelings towards the organization increase. The second independent variable of perceived organizational support is related to a situation where employees think that their interests are being protected by organizational practices. This perception makes employees think that they are protected and favored.

The purpose of this study, which has been conducted in a hotel, is to examine the influences of the *employee advocacy* and the *perceived organizational support* on the *job embeddedness* and the *turnover intention*. For this reason, the hypothetical explanations of *employee advocacy*, *perceived organizational support*, *job embeddedness*, and *turnover intention* have been provided, according to SET and NRT. The hypotheses were then tested through multiple regression analyses, and finally the results of the study have been discussed and recommendations for hotel managers have been given. The study has practical implications for hotel managers who want to increase organizational productivity, since it handles topics that are only recently studied in behavioral sciences such as *job embeddedness* and *employee advocacy* and *perceived organizational support* and *turnover intention*.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Employee advocacy

Employee advocacy (EA) expresses the state of *being a volunteer on acting in the name of the interests of the employees*, and shows the transparency of the employee policy of the organization (Yeh, 2014). *Employee advocacy* includes issues such as considering the employees' complaints, protecting employees from discriminatory employment practices, behaving to employees in a rightful manner (*promotion and transfer*), protecting employees from harassment; it is also related to the communication and representation of the worries and complaints of employees (Kim, 2009). The internal practices regarding communication and employees are reflected positively in the behaviors and the cooperation in many ways of the employees, and this increases the *employee advocacy perception* (O'Fallon, 2014). The relations between the organization and the employees are based on a win-win concept, and they increase the positive attitude of the employees with regard to their jobs and organizations (Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Yeh, 2014). The practices of the organizations that include *employee advocacy* are becoming widespread in organizations where the employees are perceived as valuable while their adoption is becoming difficult in organizations where the employees are considered as "worthless" (Rynes, 2004). The *job satisfaction* of the employees who believe that their interests are accepted as valuable as the interests of the company increases and their *turnover intention* decreases (Otaye & Wong, 2014).

The employees' evaluation of practices in organization within the scope of employee advocacy may encourage employees to contribute to organizational productivity which is also expressed as organizational citizenship behavior and therefore employee advocacy can be argued to have multiple aspects (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; as cited in Fullerton, 2003). In addition, employee advocacy practices are prevalent in innovative organizations. When managers support their employees, this directly affects employee advocacy. Supported employees who perceive that their skills are trusted put more effort into completing their tasks and maintain their efforts for a longer period of time when they face impediments (Yeh, 2014).

2.2. Perceived organizational support

Perceived organizational support (POS) is the general belief that the organization cares for the contributions and welfare of its employees (Eisenberger, Huntingon, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Employees have a clear sense of whether an organization affects them in a positive or a negative manner. Employees are influenced by the company's appreciation of their contributions to the organizations and when the company cares for their welfare (Narrated from Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988; by Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, & Vandenberghe, 2002). The perceived organizational support must satisfy especially certain needs of the employees such as *respect*, *adoption*, *emotional support*, and *being approved* (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998). The employees' expectations of being cared for and being valued by their organizations increases the trust of the employees that these organizations will approve, reward and appreciate their attitudes and behaviors. The rewarding of the organization may be in the informal form of praise or counseling; or it may be in the more formal form of promotion or pay-rise (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). A perception of increased support from the organization will cover the employee's needs for approval, respect and social identity, it will produce high performance expectations, and it will make the employee feel that extra role behaviors, success for the organization, being appreciated by the organization, and being rewarded are all supported (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997).

Employees who have high perceptions of organizational support will have more positive feelings about their organizations (e.g. *increasing job satisfaction*, *positive spiritual status*, and *decreasing stress*) and will contribute to their organizations more (*increasing perceived organizational support* and *performance*) (Eder & Eisenberger, 2008). If the organization does not care adequately for the contributions of the employees, the organizational support perceptions of the employees will decrease; and, depending on this, the gratitude/responsibility they feel for their organizations will decrease (Eisenberger et al., 1997). In addition, the feeling of obligation created by high perceived organization support makes employees feel commitment towards organizations (Wayne et al., 1997). High perceived organizational support will meet the needs of approval, respect and social identity; it will also create high performance expectancy and ensure extra role behavior, achieving for organization, feelings of appreciation and expectations of reward (Eisenberger et al., 1997).

2.3. Job embeddedness

Job embeddedness (JE) signifies the general factors that affect employees' decision to keep their post (Holtom, Mitchell, & Lee, 2006) and it is particularly related to why employees want to continue their jobs (Karatepe, 2012). It also focuses on factors that connect individuals with their job, organization and society (Wilson, 2010). By and large, the concept is about connecting employees with other people and society, making them adapt to the organization and the wider environment, and about the sacrifices that they have to make after leaving the organization (Mallol, Holtom, & Lee, 2007).

If an employee expects many personal losses for leaving his/her job, the *Job embeddedness* of this employee is high, and this situation ensures that s/he is more devoted has a better work performance, and it is more difficult for him/her to leave the job (Bitmiş, Rodopman, Üner, & Sökmen, 2015). The concept of *job embeddedness* has three important dimensions, which are *fit*, *link* and *sacrifice*. These three dimensions are examined under two separate sub-dimensions, which are *organizational dimension* and *social dimension* (Holtom & O'Neill, 2004). While *job embeddedness* is related to

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