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Research Article

ANALYZING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN SEAPORT BUSINESS AND AN IMPLEMENTATION

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ABSTRACT

The rapid increase of commercial relationships with globalization has caused an increase of the importance of maritime industry. The ports, as the start and end of maritime transportation, have strategic importance. Even if technological improvements evolve, the technology substitutes for human resource on one hand and it increases the need for qualified seafarers and maritime businesses daily on the other. At this point, the importance of employee turnover, which is adopted as the efficiency and productivity indicator of seaports in services industry, arises. Employee turnover is adopted an concept which usually causes negative consequences. Low rates of employee turnover generally has positive aspects, however high rates of it refers to negative outcomes such as increasing costs, decreasing productivity, employee unrest and depression.

The aim of this study is to determine the employee turnover and its main causes, furthermore it is aimed for measuring the employees' loyalties to their companies, determining the factors that cause leave from their companies and presenting the findings for possible precautions. In this study a survey is adopted for data collection. The universe of the study is a large-scale port which serves to general cargo ships. According to the findings, the employees don't have sufficient job satisfaction; inability to adapt the business environment is caused by low wages and promotion barriers; and leave the company can be prevented by increased wages, economic security, high morale and positive supervisor attitude. Based on those findings there are some recommendations presented in order to decrease the employee turnover rate in seaport businesses.

Keywords: *Seaport Businesses, Employee Turnover, Efficiency, Turkey, Port.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover can be defined as the leave and joining activities in an organization. When it is evaluated as numerically or proportionally, these activities become an important indicator for human resources. In seaport business, especially in busy seasons, it is believed that employee leaves cause to disruptions, extended work hours, and decline in product and service quality. All of them may also cause higher customer dissatisfaction. It is beneficial to know the reasons of employee turnover, cause it generally relates with leaves and/or joinings. From a general perspective, leaves depend on two reasons voluntarily and reluctantly (Cheng ve Brown 1998). In either way, low and high employer turnover rates closely relate to organizational activities. Employee leaves are costly because they usually increase hiring and orientation costs (Loi, Hang-yue and Foley, 2006). When the employees, who are intended to leave, keep organizational knowledge to themselves, the spread of implicit knowledge would be limited organization-wide. Thus, when they leave, they'll take those knowledge with themselves and the organization would lose this knowledge forever. Consequently, as one of the main antecedents of leave from organization, intention to leave (Griffith et al. 2000; Stejin, 2004; Lui, He and Yu, 2017) seems to be a significant factor. In terms of seaport businesses, employee turnover concept must be handled both in business and operational level. For instance, fatal accidents during loading and unloading operations are usually caused by comparatively inexperienced staff members. Significant part of accidents at sea arise from human fault. Even if technological improvements evolve day by day, the technology substitutes for human resource on one hand and it increases the need for qualified seafarers and maritime businesses daily on the other.

2. EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Employee turnover is a broad concept that includes job dissatisfaction, low morale, gender of employees, automation, wages and organization culture. Thus, it is difficult to make a clear definition that contains all its aspects. For some authors it is viewed as workforce's willingly leave from his/her company, for some others it should include dismissals. However, there are different views on employee turnover in the literature (Dai and Qin, 2016). Employee turnover can be defined as speed of the movement of labors' enter or exit in/from the organization in a certain time (Baysal, 1984; Mucuk, 1998). Employee turnover can be occurred when laborforce experiencing an acute disease, necessity to move due to spouse's changing location, necessity to take care of elder relatives or kids and it is occurred due to some uncontrolled reasons. Besides it is also occurred when the worker has low performance or the management asks the worker to leave due to some violations that the worker has made. Sometimes, it occurs without a reason. In either way, employee turnover has costs for the organization. In addition to the costs of replacement, recruiting and training, there will be also extra time and laborforce needed. This condition may increase non-financial costs for the organization. If

an organization has high employee turnover rates, it may negatively affects organizational memory (Probst, 2000; Croasdell, 2001).

2.1. Importance of Employee Turnover

Mostly people may not find an equivalent position to their talents and skills. With other factors such as wage, location or promotion possibilities, workers continuously change their position or firm until they find the suitable position. Similarly employers continuously seek the right candidate and they replace workers until they find him/her. In that case, when the desire of the worker to find the best position and the employer's desire to find the right candidate gets into a balance, the maximum efficiency is provided. To achieve such a balance, it is necessary to have a certain degree of employee turnover rate. In more detail, employee turnover concept has three aspects (Ikım Şimşek and Derin, 2018): from an economic perspective, from a business perspective and from laborforce perspective. In general, employee turnover have two dimensions: labor movement intersectoral and labor movement interdistricts (Igbaria ve Guimaraes, 1999; Demir, 2002).

The costs of workers to the organization hold a significant ratio in total costs. Thus, replacement of insufficient employees by qualified and talented ones would be beneficial in terms of costs. By doing this, the training costs, travel costs, etc. would be considerably low until the candidate gains experience. On the contrary, when experienced employees start in new positions or industries rather than he/she is experienced, there will be additional costs for new recruitment, plus previous training or travel costs will mostly disappear (Demir, 2002). Another interesting topic related with costs is the laborforce movement across industries may cause to employee dissatisfaction, productivity and work motivation loss due to labor surplus. These incidents may also cause economic loss.

The labor force density in labor force mobility negatively affects local labor force market, on the other hand this would be an economic loss due to transferring the funds of the employees whose families live mostly outside the region. Furthermore, the employee density in some regions may increase the unemployment rate (demir, 2002).

From company perspective, to have low employee turnover rates are desired for almost every company. Because high employee turnover rate has many negative effects on companies. One of those effects is undertaking high costs. Those costs are listed below (baysal, 1984):

- The costs of selecting and placing new employees,
 - Training costs,
 - Costs may increase due to new recruits who are not used to their work environment or the machines of which may cause work accidents.
- High employee turnover rates may increase costs and decrease efficiency. This can be explained below:
- Following leaves the existence of rumors and anxiety among the employees cause working efficiency to decrease,
 - Until new employees replace vacancies, there would be production loss and/or delay,
 - Because new employees are mostly inexperienced or

not be able to use the machines effectively, there would be production & performance loss and machinery deterioration.

Employers leave any company either by his/her decision voluntarily or by the management decision reluctantly (Zaffane, 1994). According to the literature, it is claimed that employee turnover rate is a significant performance indicator for companies and it has to be low. It is also claimed in the literature that when employee turnover rate is high, employers' productivity and product quality would be low respectively. In those studies, in order to lower employee turnover rate it is suggested that to improve the satisfaction and working conditions of the workers (Spector; 1997).

3. METHODOLOGY

An important part of service industries, port business is business which labor is intensively used. In these kinds of industries, the human factor is essential. Human is the key to acquire the quality, success, profitability and efficiency. From this point of view, it is not desired employers to leave or the employee turnover rate to get high numbers.

In those companies which have high employee turnover rates, it is very difficult to serve high-quality services and to ensure this high-quality service constantly. Ensuring high service quality is possible just only with qualified and experienced employees. New hired employees usually make mistakes in the orientation period. These mistakes probably have a negative effect on customers and may be costly for the company. Thus, employee leaves must be under control, and employee turnover rate getting high must be prevented.

In Turkey, there is no comprehensive study relating with employee turnover within the port business sector. Most studies have explored the effect of motivation tools on employee turnover rate and in the field research tourism industry has been used just because it has high employee turnover rates.

The universe of this study is a major commercial port which serves to general cargo ships. Port managers and employees both have participated the study. The factors that effect on employee turnover has been analyzed and evaluated. This study is judged to be important because it is aimed to give solution suggestions by exploring the factors effect on employee turnover both personal and executive level and second it may lead to subsequent studies in this sector.

In this study, after the literature review a field study has been carried out. A structured survey is used for data collecting. Surveys are economic, has a possibility to acquire more data and with surveys the data can be statistically analyzed. Survey questions are determined through literature review (Chen and Brown, 1998; Igarria and Guimaraes, 1999; Demir, 2002). Two separate surveys are prepared, one for executives and one for employees. The executive survey composed of three parts. Questions about the company, demographics for executives and company's employee turnover rate. The employees survey composed of two parts. Questions about the demographics of employees and the factors that may effect turnovers. Before conducting the survey, an interview with five executives from different positions in the company is executed. The final revision

of the survey has been developed after the literature review and the feedbacks getting from this interview.

Surveys has been delivered and collected through face to face interviews. The sample of the study is 200 people who were recently working in the company. There are 193 useable surveys collected from the sample.

In the first part participants were asked to tick the numbers from 1 to 11 which indicate the agreement level of the question "which factors are important your inability to adapt the work?" (11=absolutely not, 6=undecided, 1=possibly be). In the second part of the survey participants were asked to tick the numbers from 1 to 5 which indicate the agreement level of the question "which factors can prevent your leave decision from your company?" (5=may substantially prevent, 4=may prevent, 3=neither prevent nor cause, 2=may not prevent, 1=never prevent). The data are evaluated based on highest and lowest segments.

4. FINDINGS

In the sample which represents 193 port employees and executives, %6 of them are women, %94 of them are men. %14 of the sample are single, %86 of them are married. %10 of them are 40-49 years old, %8 are 50-59 years old, %59 are 20-29 years old and %23 are 30-39 years old. In terms of education, %16 of the participants have high school, %25 have vocational school, %59 have bachelor degree. In terms of experience, %21 of the participants have experience less than 5 years, %33 have 5-9 years, %26 have 10-19 years, %14 have 15-30 years and %6 of the participants have 30 years and more experience. In terms of experience in the current business (the sample port), %9 of the participants have experience less than 1 year, %15 have 1-5 years, %17 have 10-15 years, %17 of the participants have 15 years and more experience. %10 of the participants say yes and %90 of them say no according to the question "Is there anybody changes (in or out) in your position in the last 5 years?".

When the participants asked which reasons are important for their decision to leave the company (1 represents the most common reason, 11 represents the less common reason), %25,61 of them evaluate "not get used to the workplace" factor as 5, %4,13 evaluate it as 8 (Table 1).

It can be seen that %39,99 of the employees evaluate "not get used to colleagues" factor as 7th, %6,61 evaluate it as 9th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %41,32 of the employees evaluate "dislike to superiors" factor as 8th, %1,66 evaluate it as 6th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %23,14 of the employees evaluate "Lack of promotion opportunities" factor as 4th, %1,66 evaluate it as 1st in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %95,04 of the employees evaluate "Insufficient wages" factor as 1st, %1,65 evaluate it as 3rd in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %34,71 of the employees evaluate "health problems" factor as 4th, %17,35 evaluate it as 6th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %91,73 of the employees evaluate "retirement" factor as 10th, %8,26 evaluate it as 11th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %86,78 of the employees evaluate “finding another job” factor as 2nd, %3,30 evaluate it as 1st in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %24,79 of the employees evaluate “family issues” factor as 4th, %9,92 evaluate it as 7th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %93,39 of the employees evaluate “death” factor as 11th, %6,61 evaluate it as 10th in the order of significance.

It can be seen that %55,37 of the employees evaluate “getting fired” factor as 9th, %11,57 evaluate it as 8th in the order of significance.

Table 1. Reasons of the Participants Inability to Adapt Workplace

Which could be the reasons that you are not able to adapt your business environment?	1 ... possibility	2	3	4	5	6 ... undecided	7	8	9	10	11 ... absolutely not
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not get used to the workplace	-	-	23,14	17,35	25,61	22,31	7,43	4,13	-	-	-
Not get used to colleagues	-	-	-	-	7,43	6,61	39,66	35,53	6,61	4,13	-
Dislike to superiors	-	-	-	-	6,61	1,65	19	41,32	31,40	-	-
Lack of promotion opportunities	1,65	5,78	19,83	23,14	15,70	10,74	9,09	7,43	6,61	-	-
Insufficient wages	95,04	3,30	1,65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health problems	-	-	24,79	34,71	23,14	17,35	-	-	-	-	-
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	91,73	8,26
Finding another job	3,30	86,78	9,92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family issues	-	-	20,66	24,79	21,49	23,14	9,92	-	-	-	-
Death	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,61	93,39
Getting Fired	-	-	-	-	18,18	14,88	11,57	55,37	-	-	-

In Table 2, when the participants asked to specify the most important factors to prevent their decision to leave according to its strength (5=may substantially prevent, 4=may prevent, 3=neither prevent nor cause, 2=may not prevent, 1=never prevent) %71,90 of the employees evaluate “wage hike” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %3,31 of them evaluate it as may not prevents.

%33,88 of the employees think that “respect for personality” factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave, %16,3 of them think that it may not.

%47,93 of the employees are undecided with how “fee with bonus payment” factor affects their decision about to leave. %11,57 of them think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave.

%66,94 of the employees think that “financial insurance” factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave, %7,44 of them think that it may not.

%42,15 of the employees are undecided with how “profit share” factor affects their decision about to leave, %10,74 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave.

%66,94 of the employees think that “financial insurance” factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave, %7,44 of them think that it may not.

%42,15 of the employees are undecided with how “profit share” factor affects their decision about to leave, %10,74 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave.%46,28 of the employees are undecided with how “Making employees a shareholders” factor affects their decision about to leave, %5,78 of them think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave. %43,80 of the employees think that “morale” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %5,78 of them are undecided with how that factor affects their decision about to leave. %43,80 of the employees think that “morale” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %5,78 of them are undecided with how that factor affects their decision about to leave. %38,84 of the employees think that referral system factor may not prevents their decision to leave, %4,96 of them think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave. %38,02 of the employees think that “authority to speak” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %9,9 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave. %38,02

of the employees are undecided with how “participation to decisions” factor affects their decision about to leave, %7,44 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees think that

“improvement and success” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %6,61 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave.

Table 2. Potential Precautions to Prevent Employees’ Leaves

Which factors may prevent your decision to leave your company?	May substantially prevent (%)	May prevent (%)	neither prevent nor cause (%)	may not prevent (%)	never prevent (%)
Wage hike	71,90	11,57	13,22	3,31	-
Respect for personality	33,88	19,01	30,58	16,53	-
Fee with bonus payment	11,57	27,27	47,93	13,22	-
Financial insurance	66,94	-	25,62	7,44	-
Profit share	15,70	31,40	42,15	10,74	-
Making employees a shareholders	5,78	11,57	46,28	26,45	9,92
Morale	33,88	43,80	22,31	-	-
Referral system	4,96	23,14	27,27	38,84	5,79
Authority to speak	28,93	38,02	23,97	9,09	-
Participation to Decisions	14,05	28,01	38,02	12,40	7,44
Improvement and Success	23,14	35,54	26,45	8,26	6,61
Compliments	6,61	23,97	42,15	18,18	9,09
Status	25,62	35,54	21,49	12,40	4,96
Adaptation to others	25,62	39,67	22,31	9,92	2,48
Independent working	19,83	26,45	35,54	13,22	4,96
Competition	-	19,00	47,93	23,97	9,09
Be Proud of Work	19,83	33,88	23,14	17,36	5,79
Leadership	31,40	40,50	21,49	6,61	-
Common Goal	7,44	32,23	35,54	19,01	5,78
Communication	23,97	35,54	25,62	10,74	4,13
Balance of Authority with Responsibility	28,1	38,84	23,14	9,92	-
Financial Rewards	9,09	22,31	34,71	24,79	9,09
Training	6,61	23,97	47,11	19,83	2,48
Career Planning	25,62	31,40	35,54	7,44	-
Social Activities	5,79	15,70	30,58	25,62	22,31
Sincerely interest to Work	12,40	31,40	33,89	15,70	6,61
Fair and continuous Discipline System	2,48	21,49	28,1	36,36	11,57
Performance Evaluation	-	7,44	19,01	38,84	34,71
Environmental arrangement at Work	-	4,96	10,74	32,23	52,07

%42,15 of the employees are undecided with how “compliments” factor affects their decision about to leave, %6,61 think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees think that “status” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %4,96 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees are undecided with how “independent working” factor affects their decision about to leave, %4,96 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %47,93 of the employees are undecided with how “competition” factor affects their decision about to leave, %9,9 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave.

%33,88 of the employees think that “be proud of work” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %5,79 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %40,50 of the employees think that “leadership” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %6,61 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees are undecided with how “common goal” factor affects their decision about to leave, %5,78 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees think that “communication” factor may prevents their decision to leave, %4,13 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %38,84 of the employees think that “balance of authority with responsibility” factor

may prevents their decision to leave, %9,92 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave. %34,71 of the employees are undecided with how “financial rewards” factor affects their decision about to leave, %9,90 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave however %9,90 of them think it may substantially prevents their decision to leave.

%47,11 of the employees are undecided with how “training” factor affects their decision about to leave, %2,48 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %35,54 of the employees are undecided with how “career planning” factor affects their decision about to leave, %7,44 of them think, that factor may not prevents their decision to leave.

%30,58 of the employees are undecided with how “social activities” factor affects their decision about to leave, %5,79 of them think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave. %33,89 of the employees are undecided with how “sincerely interest to work” factor affects their decision about to leave, %6,61 of them think, that factor never prevents their decision to leave. %36,36 of the employees think that “fair and continuous discipline system” factor may not prevents their decision to leave, %2,48 of them think, that factor may substantially prevents their decision to leave. %52,07 of the employees think that “environmental arrangement at work” factor never prevents their

decision to leave, %4,96 of them think, that factor may prevents their decision to leave.

5. CONCLUSION

Considering that in the sample %59 of the employees have bachelor and %25 of them have vocational school degrees, employees in the port business have higher education level in general. %25,61 of the employees think that Not getting used to the workplace is the 5th important factor affecting the decision to leave. This points out that, in the port business, the intensive business tempo in the beginning may cause leaves for the apprentices.

The most remarkable issue in the findings is, %95,04 of the employees think that insufficient wages could be the reason that they are not able to adapt their business environment. This is the highest score among all other factors. In Turkey, like many other sectors, it can be seen that employees in port business are not satisfied with the fee they got and because of that they tend to leave their job.

Health issues, especially for the employees working in the field, affect job satisfaction, considering that %34,71 of the employees evaluate health problems as 4th degree important. In many times port workers in the field have to work under heavy conditions. Because there are night shifts, accident risk existence all the time during cargo loading/unloading, exposure to extreme weather conditions (hot or cold), hazardous materials which are risky for human health; occupational health is more important for employees in the port business, and it plays a key role for transfers to another sector or leaves. Being a docker is one of the hardest work. Besides physical difficulties in it, working in the field of ports also have psychological difficulties which may easily wear the dockers down. Dockers should also should also experience in-service training.

Another important issue is that %86,78 of the employees think that finding another job is the 2nd reason that they are not able to adapt their business environment. May be this is because the lack of qualified human resource in the maritime industry. Due to this problem, employees continuously take business offers from another company and have chance to be employed with higher salaries. This makes the problem is getting more serious. The employee is interesting more to the economic side of the salary. This is because, a salary is essential for the employee and his/her family in order to meet their needs. Getting sufficient financial earnings positively affects employees to be more creative, to be permanent and consistent at work. According to findings, with %71,90 of the employees agree it may substantially prevent to leave, the most important factor to prevent leaves wage hike. With %66,94 of the employees agree it may substantially prevent to leave, another important factor to prevent leave decisions is financial insurance. As it can be seen from these findings, financial aspects are essential in employees jobs satisfaction. Considering that its role in employees good performance, salary must be in a sufficient level by taking into account the cost of life in Turkey. Besides wage policies must be clear so that employees can easily understand, they should be adapted to changing economic improvements. Thus, there will be positive developments such as preventing qualified

employees' transfers to another industry in maritime industry due to insufficient salaries.

Considering that %38,84 of the employees thinking that wouldn't affect their decision to leave, it can be said that employees in port business may have chance to share their opinion and suggestions but these contributions wouldn't be taking into account enough by the administration. To encourage employees to feel them an inseparable part of the organization and to work with enthusiasm, administrators should establish good relations with their subordinates, they should enhance employees' morale with less surveillance. Administration team should establish participation to decisions from all levels of the organization. Considering that %42,15 of the employees are undecided with how "compliments" factor affects their decision about to leave, it can be said that in the sample organization, appreciation and compliment system is not working efficiently.

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