

## Chapter 6

# Exploring Organizational Commitment of Employees Working at Hotel Front Desks: A Phenomenological Discovery

### ABSTRACT

*This study focuses on the various dimensions of organizational commitment for employees working at a hotel front desk. The study also explores how those various dimensions can be leveraged in a positive and engaging way to enhance organizational commitment and job satisfaction while reducing employee burnout and voluntary separation. Following a literature review in this area, multiple interviews were conducted with hotel front desk employees who maintained diversity in tenure, role, and type of hotel where they were working. As a result of these interviews, it was determined that there was a duality of interests that manifested in terms of employees' organizational commitment. Intrinsic motivations appeared with younger employees who were thinking of a longer career pathway for themselves. Extrinsic motivations, such as enjoying a hotel brand's travel-related benefits, were more apparent with older employees. Additional areas of future research are identified based on the results from this qualitative study.*

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## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

How organizations in the hospitality industry attract and retain talent are critical pathways that are becoming increasingly more significant as strategic differentiators for companies in modern eras of globalization and rapid technological change (Grissman, Plank, & Brunner-Sperdin, 2013). As human resource leaders determine how best to compete for talent, there is a tendency to focus more on transactional aspects of an employee / employer relationship including salary, benefits, and work schedule. However, research has also been conducted that explores additional dimensions that may determine greater success with the challenges of attracting and recruiting talent. These include widespread reported issues from employees including perceived lack of personal achievement in a hospitality role, low commitment to a long-term hospitality career pathway and high turnover rates among peers (Dai, Zhuang, & Huan, 2019). These issues ultimately can have a significant impact on organizational commitment within both the hospitality industry as well as within the specific culture of a local property level (Yao, Qiu, & Wei, 2019). According to the World Tourism Cities Federation, the average turnover rate in the travel industry is 18% but is observed as high as 40% in some places in the world (2018).

Transactional strategies to retain employees in the hospitality industry often manifest as material rewards encompassing such tactics as competitive pay and benefits (Jia, Shaw, & Tsui, 2014). To reduce turnover and increase organizational commitment at an employee level, however, research has determined that developmental rewards are regarded as more impactful over a longer period. These types of rewards include training, advancement opportunities, mentoring, recognition programs and in-role empowerment (Jia et al, 2014). When integrated with material rewards, developmental rewards have proven to significantly increase employee retention by enhancing organizational commitment (Moncarz, Zhao, & Kay, 2009). Therefore, it becomes a salient focus to further explore the dimensions and nature of how organizational inducement can influence employee engagement. The employee–organization relationship (EOR) often is considered to encompass two aspects: What employers expect their employees to contribute to the organization and what incentives employers will use to motivate employees to make these contributions (Guan, Yeh, Chiang, & Huan, 2020). Elements such as these which are provided by the employer are often considered organizational inducements (Hom, Tsui, & Wu, 2009). Organizational

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