

Chapter 7

Adapting a Theoretical Framework to Reduce Employee Turnover Within a Hotel Front Desk Workplace

ABSTRACT

This narrative describes the background, methodology, and results of a recreated study from 2020 which explored dimensions of an employee's trust both with supervisors and one's coworkers in the hospitality industry in South Korea. The study was recreated in 2023 using hotel employees in the United States. Both an employee's trust in their supervisor and in their co-workers were measured by four distinct factors encompassing reliability, considerateness, confidence, and integrity. Additionally, emotional exhaustion was measured using four dimensions while depersonalization was measured using three factors. The 2023 conclusions mirrored those of 2020, with one notable exception: Hypothesis 4, which posited that trust in co-worker support has a negative influence on emotional exhaustion. This variance may be a result of cultural differences or a larger sample in the 2023 study. Study limitations, possible practical application of the findings, and opportunities for additional study are identified at the conclusion of the narrative.

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INTRODUCTION

The literature review revealed that there are many diverse efforts to explore the factors that influence employee's turnover in a hotel environment. While there are many recent studies focused on this situation, many of these are conducted in an international environment. While these provide great exposure and insight into the multi-faceted phenomenon that drives employee turnover in a hotel environment, there is a need to calibrate for cultural differences between different countries and determine what aspects remain the same and which could be different.

Across multiple studies, researchers agree that an employee's level of trust to receive adequate support from both supervisors and co-workers is a key factor in reducing a decision to seek new employment. Support can be defined as an employee's perception that supervisors and peers will attempt to provide effective comfort and assistance for addressing work-related challenges. Levels and effectiveness of support have been determined to be inversely proportional to an employee's desire to voluntarily separate from an organization.

Han, Quan, Al-Ansi, Chung, Ngah, Ariza-Montes and Vega-Munoz's study of 2020 identified that literature has not previously brought the concept of burnout and its constituents into the framework bridging the association between trust-in-support factors and employee turnover. Their study aimed to fill this gap in literature by demonstrating the importance of trust in support and its role in reducing the burnout phenomenon among hotel employees and explaining their voluntary turnover decision formation in a satisfactory manner. Their research developed a theoretical framework encompassing trust in support groups (supervisor and co-worker) while also defining the factors that comprise the phenomenon of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment) while clearly illustrating how hotel employee turnover occurs by measuring the strength of associations between trust-in-support dimensions and employee burnout constituents.

The original study was conducted with employees at hotels located in various metropolitan cities in South Korea. As a part of this study, this effort has been recreated with hotel front desk employees located within the continental United States as well as compare results from both studies and determine if differences exist between cultural environments.

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