

Effect of middle level managers on employee turnover

[Profession](#), [Manager](#)



Abstract

Management at any organization can be classified into three levels and they are Top level, middle level and low level management. Each level of management has its roles and responsibilities to be executed for the better functioning of the organization. Middle level managers play a key role in any organization. They are point of contact for many of the resources across the top level and low level management. There were many cases where high level management contacts the middle level managers for several operational issues with low level management and even low level management has made the middle level managers as the single point of contact in order to resolve their issues. Usually the job profiles in middle level management differ based on the organization structure and number of employees operating in a particular division.

There were many research and theoretical aspects, that has proved middle level management has nothing to do with turnover of an organization. This particular turnover is not and no where related to revenue terms and this entire discussion is based on the turnover of employees and their work done. Here, we can review an article “ Effect of Middle level managers on Employee Turnover” published by Mr. Morgen S. Johansen. In this particular article author mainly concentrates on High level and middle level manager and their impact on the overall employee satisfaction that results in the turnover of the organization. This review is published in “ Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University”. The results and their impact are discussed in the public management literature.

Introduction

Public management is a vast subject and if any one is interested in studying this particular subject, the most important area to be concentrated is the relationship and level of interactions between managers and workers, and the result of work done which is affected by their levels of interactions.

(Frederickson and Smith 2003, p98). After much research, the most important aspect came in to light is that, maximum study of public management is concentrated on the relationship between management activities and output of work and has neglected the relationship between management and workers (Meier and O'Toole 2002, 2001; Goerdel 2006; Brewer and Selden 2000; Walker and Boyne 2006; Moynihan and Pandey 2005; see also Lynn, Heinrich, and Hill 2001; although see Ingraham, Joyce, and Donahue 2003).

This particular negligence of management on employees has become the main drawback and is affecting the organization performance a lot. The management should understand this effect of performance on organization turnover and proper steps are required to get rid of these activities. Lack of attention on workers may definitely affect the employee performance. A deep focus on relationship between management and workers is required to understand the few aspects like whether management is effecting the employee performance or employee performance is effecting the management. To concentrate more on this, the basic management activity like Human Resource can be considered, as it is the core functionality's of any management (Daley 2005). Typical management activities include providing better workplace needs, recruiting right resources, training them to

develop their skills and finally motivating and encouraging them in many aspects (Ingraham, Joyce, and Donahue 2003). In simple words Human Capital can be considered as biggest asset of any organization.

Short Literature Review

As per the previous discussion, Human Resource can be considered as the biggest asset of any organization and maintaining it effectively will always result a positive impact on both employee and organization performance (Ingraham, Joyce, and Donahue 2003; Daley 2005). According to Author, for better understanding of relationship between management and work outcomes, one should concentrate on the missing term i. e. Workers. Thus, in determining how management matters, the question becomes, what effect does management have on workers? In order answer these questions, author mainly concentrated on the effect of management on the turnover of street level. Turnover has a major role in building the organization performance. As per author, turnover is directly related to work satisfaction and this particular work satisfaction from workers side is essential for any organization for it's effective operations and performance. Workers may not perform well and in some cases, they may leave the organization, if the work or job satisfaction is not up to the level. All these factors make turnover as a bad thing for any organization and should be managed properly (Mobley 1982).

Consequences and causes of Turnover

As per author reviews, high turnover always poses a negative impact on organization performance (Meier and Hicklin 2008; Brill and McCartney 2008). Turnover has much importance, as it could be considered as the main

factor that affects the costs in many aspects like lost recruiting, interviewing, training, and socialization investments (Mobley 1982). Apart from all these factors, turnover can also affect the morality of any company (Rainey 2003) and can cause a huge of scope of disturbance is in the smooth flow of the organization like social and communication platforms (Mobley 1982). Economy, inflation and labor force composition can be considered as external cause, that can't be controlled with in management. Several organization factors also effects the turnover and few of them are size of organization and each department, work pressures and salary (Mobley 1982). The compensation workers receive is a strong predictor of turnover (Mobley 1982; Moynihan and Pandey 2008; Selden and Moynihan 2000; Theobald 1990). Workers should be at a satisfaction level of their pay. This particular satisfaction can be measured with respective to their cost of living and the work place conditions. Even the fiscal resources of the organization affect the turnover. The fiscal resources of an organization matter because an organization with more resources is more likely to provide supplies, training, and other resources that better enable workers to do their jobs. Apart from these, there were many individual factors that effect the turnover and one among them is the work satisfaction (Nigro, Nigro, and Kellough 2007), for all these managers are responsible for building up the confidence levels and turnover too.

Methodologies and drawbacks

The basic methodology implemented by author is to study the relationship between management and workers and their total effect on the turnover. He

has collected data from many aspects and concluded that middle level management poses a negative impact on the turnover.

Turnover and Management

Turnover is something that must be managed (Mobley 1982). The impact study of Human resource management can be considered as the best among the methodologies used by author to explain the turnover. HR management is directly related to job satisfaction and it strongly influences the organization performance (Mobley 1982; Riccucci 2005). In simple words, management can impact the job satisfaction, as managers are the key persons who can make the workers not to dissatisfy (Riccucci 2005). Job satisfaction can be considered as a typical measurement factor, that how an organization body behaves and treats the employees (Mobley 1982; Morrell, Loan-Clarke, and Wilkinson 2001). Hiring the right persons, who can adjust to the organization environment and worker, is the primary task of any manager. Moreover, the support workers have from management (Parker 2002; Moynihan and Pandey 2008) also matters.

Apart from HR management, budgeting also effects the job satisfaction of employees (Donahue et al. 2004). As per author methodology, there is a very tight relation between pay of the organization and turnover (Mobley 1982; Moynihan and Pandey 2008; Selden and Moynihan 2000; Theobald 1990). Managers are responsible here because, they were the key persons to decide the word on budgeting and many other aspects like distributing the available budget to several departments, employee salaries and reserves etc (Gulick 1937; Mintzberg 1979; Donahue et al. 2004).

Drawbacks and un-answered questions on this methodology

Author has given an excellent discussion, on the relationship between managers and covered all important aspects of management activities. Apart from the positive aspects, there were many aspects author could not cover and few questions that were un-answered, and few of them are discussed below

- Author has missed to clearly explain the exact level of management that was affecting the turnover and job satisfaction. He always refers that it the responsibility of management, but no where he mentioned that middle level managers are responsible and this does not fit as per the article title.
- Human resource management is directly focused in this article. Even there were many cases, where HR is not morally responsible for job satisfaction. The best example could be, even there exists a separate policy to motivation and job satisfaction, the attitude of any single employee can effect the entire division.
- There were no special case studies included, where the author can support that budgeting can effect the job satisfaction. Even a good budget can meet the requirements of workers.

Multi-level management

The second methodology considered by author is the important aspect and is Multi-level management. In a multinational organization, there could be always a scope for multi levels of management. At each level there are different managers with their own roles and responsibilities (Ricucci 2005;

Lynn, Heinrich, and Hill 2001). Thus, to really determine if management affects workers, we need to look at managers at more than one level and their effect on street level bureaucrats. So, they can directly effect the salaries and the respective job satisfaction with respect to the pay outs. Organization goals are also set by top level management and as per first hypothesis of author " Hypothesis 1: Upper level managers will have an impact on turnover".

Apart from Upper level manger, middle level mangers are also responsible for many factors that directly affect the turnover. This is because; middle level mangers are the key persons, with whom the low level managers and workers are in contact (Mintzberg 1979; Barnard 1938). As middle level managers are close to workers, all the issues related to worker job satisfaction are directly influenced by middle level managers and thus author concludes his second hypothesis as " Hypothesis 2: Middle level managers will have an impact on turnover ".

Drawbacks and un-answered questions on this methodology

Author has justified the classification of levels in management in an organization and their respective impact on the job satisfaction and turnover. Apart from these, there were many points that were missed and few of them are highlighted below:

- Author could have classified the roles and responsibilities of different management levels, but failed to explain their respective level of impact on the overall job satisfaction.

- There was no percentages sort of things, like what percentage of upper management affects the turnover when compared to middle level management.
- Again the focus has been divided among upper and middle level managers, but there is no special theory that could explain the view of author, that only middle level management has imposed negative effect on turnover.

Organization size

The third and most important methodology considered by author is the Organization size. Organization size badly affects the turnover of any organization and this is due to the reasons that big organizations are designed in a critical and more complicated manner (Rainey 2003).

Considering all these reviews, author concludes that smaller organization pose more negative results on turnover when compared to larger organizations and came up with his third hypothesis on this as “ Hypothesis 3: Management will have an impact on turnover in smaller organizations but not in larger organizations.” But when inner details are considered and also in ideal cases, even there exists many issues that effect the turnover with HR managers and this does not support the third hypothesis and author has came up with his fourth hypothesis as “ Hypothesis 4a: In large organizations, upper level management will have an impact on turnover ”. As already discusses by author, upper level managers are always responsible in setting high level standards like budgeting and financial issues. But if a smaller organization is considered, both the upper level and middle level managers are responsible and author came up with newer version of his

hypothesis as “ Hypothesis 4b: In small organizations, upper level and middle level management will have an impact on turnover ”.

Drawbacks and un-answered questions on this methodology

In this particular methodology, author has come with good hypothesis on the organization size and it's relation with upper and middle level management, apart from these, there are many issues with his and few of them are discusses below

- As per author, organization size effects the turnover and here he could not explain the how the organization size is effecting the job satisfaction of employees.
- Author has mixed his hypothesis with the previous methodologies and could not justify the hypothesis as it was done in the previous case.
- Again upper level and middle level management were brought into picture, but no justification was done how, only middle level managers are responsible for turnover of employees.

Review and critics on methodologies followed

When the employee turnover does become complicated?

Author could not to able to explain the intensity of effect caused by the employee turnover. As per the review of author, he could not explain the range of turnover tolerable in any organization. There were cases, where employee turnover can positively affect the organization performance and author could not cover the positive side of this article. (<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/turnover/empturnretent.htm>)

How to measure employee turnover?

Author is successful in explaining the levels of management and their effect on turnover, but failed to explain the methodologies adopted to measure the employee turnover. The best way to measure this employee turnover is as below

$$\left(\frac{\text{Total number of leavers over period}}{\text{Average total number employed over period}}\right) * 100$$

(<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/turnover/empturnretent.htm>)

Author could not justify the reasons for which the employees leaving the organization and special definition is derived for this.

How employee turnover does effects the cost to organization?

Author could not explain the effects of employee turnover on the cost perspective of any organization. As per this article, middle level managers are posing negative employee turnover rates, and let us the actual one's as below

The following are the cost terms to be measured

- recruiting costs
- training cost
- administrative costs
- induction costs

If one can observe these cost factors, all these are related to middle level managers and at the same time, cost cutting activities are nowhere related to middle level management and directly related to upper level of managers, as they are responsible for budgeting issues. Thus even HR activities and their impact on employee turnover are related to upper level management indirectly and could not justify the authors review discussion.

(<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/turnover/empturnretent.htm>)

Why do people leave organization?

Usually employees resign, to the job because of many reasons like getting a good offer and may be due to many personal reasons. All these are missing in author's discussion, where he just concentrated on the management defects.

How to retain employees?

Author is successful in explaining the bad affects of employee turnover, and failed to give methods to retain the employees. When coming to management side, even they are responsible to retain the employees and this part is completely missed in author's review of the article. (<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/turnover/empturnretent.htm>)

Lack of any survey reports

Author has missed the practical implementation of things. He could have managed to explain the hypothesis derived by him, and failed to submit any practical reports on his discussions. The actual survey reports may not be in

synch with authors discussion and few of them can be downloaded from the below referred URL

(<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/turnover/empturnretent.htm>)

How to prevent turnover?

Author could not explain and suggest any preventive mechanisms for low employee turnover rate and few of them can be found under

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnover_\(employment\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnover_(employment)))

Aren't Middle level managers employees in an organization?

Author has concluded that middle level managers are more responsible for high employee turnover. Here, he has just failed to explain, if the job satisfaction of middle level managers is low, even there are chances, where they may skip the organization and he could not suggested how upper level managers are responsible in retaining the middle level employees.

Conclusion

Employee turnover, which is rate of gaining or loosing the employees in an organization

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnover_\(employment\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnover_(employment)))

has become major disadvantage for many organizations and there were many factors to cause this. The most important aspects to be considered are the management issues (Ricucci 2005). Different levels of organization have their own impact on employee turnover these days. As per discussion on the review part, it the middle level managers, who effect the employee turnover

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of the organization. There were multi-level organization and each of them has their own standards to measure the turnover. Upper level management is responsible for high end activities like budgeting and designing organization size. Middle level management is mainly responsible for typical HR acts like hiring, training and development. The main focus is done middle level managers as per the title of the article, but fewer topics were covered to explain the same, as per author.

Proper set of standards while hiring the employees can be the best solution for this situation. The quality in training and motivation to employees can stop them in jumping here and there. Good development opportunities and job satisfaction for employees can make middle level managers more confident in reducing their part in turnover aspects. If author could have covered inner details of management, this article could be the best. Author has given excellent justifications for many aspects like, level of management and organization size and their effect on turnover. All the methodologies covered by him are much qualitative approaches and could have suggested methods for less employee turnover rate. Examples could have helped for better understanding of the article.

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