

# Factors motivating people to get into management sector in retail industry

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ASDA

Super market of UK

Factors motivating people to get into  
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#### INTRODUCTION:

Employees seek to work in industries where they perceive growth in terms of salary, personal development and work –familybalance. There were a number of views on the way that organizations attract and retain the employees to maintain their Intellectual property and skill set. However different industry sectors needs different skill sets and follows different strategies to recruit the relevant experts. Retail sector is one such sector, where the professional skill set of the employees is required on large basis at all levels. And the sector is doing more in nowadays to market itself positively to recruit talent than the previous years. The increasingtechnologyapplications are also demanding the strategically hire and retention of skilled professionals in the industry. In this context the current study tries to identify the factors in retail industry that are motivating the mangers to choose the retail sector than traditional industry.

#### Purpose:

The study identifies the factors that are attracting the managers to join the Retail employment as well as from the corporate perspective in U. K

#### Back ground Context:

#### Overview of Retail Sector:

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## Current and future employment prospects in UK retailing

The retail sector is the largest private sector employer in the United Kingdom. This

section describes recent trends in retail employment, outlines its prevalence and looks at

its likely future growth.

The retail sector's contribution to the UK economy is raised during the year 2004 with approximate sales of £259.3 billion. Retail accounted for 5.7% of UK Gross Value Added and over one third of all retail spending occurred in UK shops. Retail sector has become a major employer of the era, in the private sector employment in UK. According to Labour Force Survey (LFS) statistics, by the end of March 2005, the retail industry employed 2.9 million people and in September 2005, the industry has recruited over 3 million people, contributing 10 and 12% of the national workforce (Skill smart retail, 2006.)

Realizing the importance of employees for the success and growth of industry, the employers made a recruitment drive over 190,000 across the last five years and the industry continues to be one of the biggest providers of net new jobs in the UK economy.

The South East Economic Development Agency (SEEDA) has identified retail as a priority sector of future employment in UK. There is a vast difference observed in the past and future trends of employment in UK retail sector. In previous years, Retail sector has poor outstanding in the national economy

in terms of the qualifications held amongst the workforce. ' According to the LFS data to September 2005, fewer than 15% of the retail workforce have NVQ level 4 or above (degree level qualifications), compared with 30% for the economy as a whole, and only 10% of 16-24 year olds employed in retail have level 4 or above qualifications. Although level 3 qualifications are more common - with around 17% of the workforce holding them, the most common qualification level held by retail employees is NVQ 2, or GCSE or equivalent.'

#### Retail employment and structural changes

Employment Research (IER) study on Working Futures in 2006 suggests that the retail sector will require 298, 000 new managers as expansion or replacements between 2004 and 2014 and therefore the sector, traditionally not seen as a popular option by young graduates, faces a substantial skills challenge, by not getting ready for the boom, (sussexlearningnetwork)

There is an increasing awareness among the employees of the wider range of professional and non professional career paths which are available in the retail sector. Large retailers have steadily grown in importance and continue to employ a larger share of the retail workforce, as owning more of the establishment's accounts for a larger share of the sector's turnover. Till now, retail sector was giving an image of ' stop gap' to the employees and now the need to change its image with the advent of technology interventions is apparent. Also it is clear that the current level of recruitment of degree holders into retail is insufficient to meet sector demands for managerial talent in the next ten years. The different managerial professional pathways

in retail include accountancy, human resources, buying, e-commerce/IT and management.

#### Overall occupational profile of the UK retail sector

Due to its size and scope of operations, the retail sector covers a wide range of occupations. ' Just fewer than 70% of all the UK's sales and customer service staff and 13% of managers and senior officials work in the retail sector.' (Skill smart retail, 2006) Overall, the occupational structure of the retail sector nationally and regionally is largely consistent with the UK picture. The majority of people work in sales and customer service, followed by management roles and elementary occupations (such as shelf fillers and trolley collectors). There are some variations however between the nations and regions. Many retailers' head offices and substantial operations are based in London and thus the highest

proportion of managers and senior officials work there (22%), closely followed by the

East of England at 21%.

#### Number of retail employees by major occupation

Occupation

Number

%

Sales and customer service occupations

1, 536, 695

50. 8

Managers and senior officials  
557, 680  
18. 4

Elementary occupations  
342, 270  
11. 3

Administrative and secretarial  
198, 640  
6. 6

Associate professional and technical  
136, 397  
4. 5

Skilled trades occupations  
109, 978  
3. 6

Process plant and machine operatives  
83, 021  
2. 7

Professional occupations  
52, 149  
1. 7

Personal service occupations  
6, 457

0. 2

Total

3, 023, 284  
100

Source taken from current and future trends in UK retailing: Skillsmart Retail analysis from

Type of employment in UK Retailing:

The retail sector is renowned for its part-time employment opportunities which many

regard as a key component of its competitiveness. As per the labor survey report a quarter of people employed in the UK as a whole are in part-time jobs. And in that 1. 5 million are employed in the retail sector constituting half of that part time employment.(Skill smart retail)

There are various career options, including store management, buying, merchandising, central management, and the booming area of e-tailing (online retail) which bridges the technology, marketing and retail sectors. Professional sales people are the essential part of any company. The managers have their desire for satisfied fulfilled through the retail and wholesale sales, marketing management, product planning, market research, and product display, promotion, and distribution functionalities of the retail industries.

Opportunities for young generation and new skills:

The retail sector has a rich history of employing newly arrived populations. The UK's growing economy, historically low levels of unemployment and ageing population are encouraging employers and government to look once more at the benefits of employing foreign workers or the workers who has high capabilities. This has created a demand for a potential opportunity for the professional managers to seek more levels in the retail sector.

The sector's reliance on a young workforce is also making many student graduates or management graduates to choose the retail sector as the first preference. Careers in retail offer fast-paced and stimulating career growth. Students look for management trainee positions through entry level operations to gain experience. ' A significant proportion of younger workers in the retail sector are employed in sales and Customer services: 40% are below the age of 25.' (Skill smart retail, 2006) Also, the retail sector employs a smaller proportion of people aged 28 to 62 than the economy as a whole. (Skill smart retail, 2006). And the collaborated changes in demographic and market forces create future recruitment and retention challenges in the sector. Also, many of the retail positions enable students to combine study and earning at the same time.

Industry strategies to attract the Management Professions:

The employees are more likely to continue with the organization when there is an expected work environment and vice versa (Zuber, cited in Henry Ongori 2007). The changing scenario of the retail sector has brought out a change in the philosophy of retail Corporates. Retail companies want to be able to manage their staff with minimal regulatory burden, so that they can ensure,



as far as possible, a workplace environment that is enjoyable and rewarding, without being forced to comply with unnecessary and over-burdensome legislation.

Also the Employment Research (IER), made a forecast for overall demand for jobs in the retail sector will grow during the period 2004 to 2014 by 1.4 million, creating new jobs that arise due to demand and expansion with the increased demand and in the way of replacement for the exits. (Trevor (2001), cited in Henry Ongori 2007) The local unemployment is interrelated with job satisfaction to expect the turnover in the market. IER estimate that around 1.17 million positions will be created as a result of people moving out of the sector. This high estimate of replacement demand is feasible given the sector's reputation for high employment turnover.

Why to choose employment in retail sector only?

Retail employment gives good foundation to any one who is starting their career. The skills gained in the retail industry can be useful in all jobs in later life. So, the people are moving to retail sector for learning skills which are useful through out their career development in later life. Although the enjoyment is an intrinsic motivator, the perceived usefulness is the extrinsic motivator while selecting the job (Davis et al. (1992) cited in Sanjaya S. Gaur, K. Abdul Waheed). Retailing is one of the UK's largest sources of graduate vacancies. Retail industry offers immediate responsible positions to the graduates, whereas in the other sectors there are only few careers for young graduates to take immediate responsibility for their performance and skill. This factor is motivating the students to choose career

in retail industry. As soon as the employment, the employee will be introduced to new environment, where he or she has to absorb or learn the new organization culture. This has lot of impact on the performance and job satisfaction of the employee. A field study by Vandenberg and Scarpello (1990) tested Wanous'(1980) matching model proposing a link between Realistic Job Previews (RJPs), and new employees' adjustment to work. This industry is the global industry as the core skills of retailing hold good anywhere in the world. Retail industry is looking for skilled people though the people are not having experience where as in the other sectors seeking the people with work experience. Retail is a large and fast growing industry, one can be found in every corner of the UK and across all parts of the world. This is truly a universal business, one that provides excellent career opportunities for everyone including those who have an interest in owning their own business. One of the great things to choose the graduate career in retail is its potential and rapid progression into the more remunerative senior roles. The retail sector holds a range of careers and opportunities for people with diverse interests and ambitions. From shop work to management, PR to finance, specializing in fashion, sports, food and a whole host of areas, careers in retail are international, potentially lucrative, and wide-ranging. The retail industry offers to have a 20 year-old earning £25, 000 as a manager of a shop and it is common to find 30 years-olds earning in excess of £150, 000 at board level. (The British Institute of Retailing)

In retail industry career progression is very fast and very varied. Retail industry knows the important of young talent to succeed the business. Retailing is all about people, it focuses on people, it profits from people.

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Good communicators at all levels are very important from the sales ambassadors on the shop floor to the marketing department, store designers and caterers. Retail industry provides excellent career growth opportunities. If some graduates join as trainee store managers. They can gain a combination of shop-floor experience and management training before adopting responsibility for a particular phase of store management and then progressing to higher-level jobs. The Large organizations provide better chances to employees for their progression and higher salaries and hence ensure organizational attachment (Idson and Feaster 1990, cited in Henry Ongori 2007). After a period in stores, some graduates move on to 'head office' posts such as buying and recruitment, with a few high-flyers recruited directly into these areas. Pay in the retail industry is low but the more senior positions can expect pay corresponding to their level of responsibility. The opportunities in this industry are open and scenario is limitless with the right company.

Retailing is strong on training. It provides training, if people are keen to learn retailing they will be given the chance to shine and be rewarded accordingly. The enthusiasm and willingness of the employee is important. People can be educated to learn retailing skills and most companies, even small organizations also giving training courses to the staff.

Work place opportunities in Retail sector:

Training: Retail industries are offering the good on the training system on the skills required to retail industry and also to develop the employee skills. These skills can be very useful to move to the other industries. It is providing

the opportunity to gain national recognized qualifications. Training will be competency based. Programmes usually last from 1 to 2 years and with drive, commitment and ability you can usually achieve promotion in less than a year. Fast-track training will develop the management competencies to build business and personal strengths

**Flexibility:** Retail industry is 24 hour industry which is characterized by seasonality and peak trading periods. Retail industry is offering the both full and part time careers with the flexibility of limited working hours and certain times in day or night.

**Mixing business and pleasure:** Retail industry is providing the excellent workplace environment to the employees. Retail is one of the few industries which is combining employee interests and hobbies with work. Working in retail is all about people and relationships, an industry where people work hard, but also have fun and enjoy themselves. This is an industry in which employee can meet people and make many friends. One can develop their relations with people in retail.

**Career growth:** Retail is recognized as one the best industries to join into management. Promotion opportunities are come at an early age and also these are based on skill rather than how long employee have been with the company or qualifications. People with all kinds of ambitions, personalities and backgrounds have found their perfect address in this fast moving industry. Required skills for retail industry are commercial awareness, self-confidence, flexibility, strongtime managementskills, team-working,

leadership qualities, communication skills, analysis and problem-solving skills and an aptitude for learning new concepts.

Government support:

The UK Government encourages the employment through the following policy areas for retail workers:

- National Minimum Wage – Adult (22+)
- National Minimum Wage – Salary Sacrifice
- National Minimum Wage – 16-17 year olds
- Age Discrimination
- Discrimination Law Review/CEHR
- Balancing Work and Family Life
- Warwick Agreement
- Pregnancy Discrimination
- National Implementation of the Information and Consultation Directive

Need for managerial skills in retail industry:

The retail industry is a business at the sharp end. Fast moving and complex, high profile and constantly changing, it is an environment where only the best managed and most innovative organizations can succeed and succeed. The retail industry is offering the different choices of demanding and highly rewarding opportunities for management trainee at school leavers and graduates. The only the thing is it and requires a range of different qualities and skills. The ability of good retail managers are flexible and should have the mental agility to switch between day - to - day decisions and strategic issues such as competitor analysis and market research. Retail managers

must be innovative in controlling of the retail environment. They are responsible to ensure the delivery of the very highest standards of customer service by recruiting, training and developing their staff. As the boom in continues to develop the retail industry, organizations are offering great range of services and incentives to retain their custom and attract new ones. So, there is range of occupations and career paths within the retailing sector have opened up. There are graduate careers in fields such as retail management, head office management, commercial management, personnel, merchandising, product development, development technology, business systems and information technology, finance, and many more. Retailing is still undergoing quite dramatic changes. Those changes need to be managed and consciously exploited to the advantage of customers and the retail businesses. As a result, retailing is exciting, well rewarded and growing. In a world where graduates often have to choose between either high financial rewards or excitement and job satisfaction, retailing offers no such dilemma. In retail industry graduate employees are identifying the degree of satisfaction in the early employment experience it self in UK. In retail industry short-term needs are more easily satisfied than longer-term needs.

#### Entry Qualifications:

Retail sector offers entry level positions to the minimum education qualifiers. Retail sector not only offering job but also offering career growth to the entry levels. A consequence of the retail sector's current demand for a growing number of high-caliber staff is raising salaries, reports Carl Gilleard of the

association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR). 'Our latest study shows that the average starting salary for graduates in the retail sector is £18, 400. These starting salaries rise extremely quickly

Rewards:

The Salaries are ranging from £10, 000-£14, 000 for school leavers and £15, 000 to £20, 000 for graduates, (ca. courses-careers. com). Additional benefits may include bonus schemes, company discount and pension. Retailers are managing their staff with minimum burden, workplace environment is enjoyable and rewarding, without being forced to comply with unnecessary and over-burdensome legislation.

A career in retailing is exciting and high-speed rate. It offers variety of opportunities that is hard to match anywhere else. Retail is an increasingly popular graduate career choice and consequently it remains very competitive, especially for those positions that offer early responsibility and quick promotion.

Retailers are very aware that their employees are vital for the continuing success of their businesses. So, over the last five years, employment in retailing has grown by over 190, 000 and the industry continues to be one of the biggest providers of net new jobs in the economy. (BRC Report 2005)

Hence retailers started investing in acquiring people who can bring more value to their organization. According to the retail recruitment trends report in 2006 the retail sector has created 2. 9m jobs in the UK and accounting to 11 per cent of the total labor force.( Peter Gerrard)

Generally employees look for the change of jobs when they want to upgrade their skills or want to earn extra money or not satisfied with the current jobs. If a retailer is perceived as having a long-term, secure future and a culture that tangibly values its people, then high staff turnover can be arrested.

#### Staff retention:

Staff retention is important to an industry but getting the staff retention is difficult. But it is not in the case of retail industry. Because retailers have real succession plans and a structured progression programme at each level of the business, it results to have happier staff. People feel sustained by the fact that they can see their next career opportunity ahead and the clear objectives they must achieve to reach this. Not surprisingly, companies renowned for natural growth find that their employees are much happier to sit tight and wait for the next move.

#### Recruitment:

Many retail positions need strong management positions. The industry specific skills of the retail sector are related more to customer relations, supply chain management and sales promotion. Such skills are always on demand in the market, particularly so in the more specialist areas such as fashion.

So, many retailers started head hunting for the talented individuals who are already working within the industry and offering attractive positions pay packs to bring them to their in house.



The key competencies required for the successful career in the retail sector include Business Focus, Personal Effectiveness, Relationship Management, and Critical Thinking (CORTCO)

The Consortium of Retail Training Companies (CORTCO) further elaborates the above as, skills like- commercial awareness, self-confidence, flexibility, strong time management skills, team-working, leadership qualities, communication skills, analysis and problem-solving skills and an aptitude for learning new concepts.

And for buying and merchandising jobs Numeric and attention to detail are more anticipated in retail sector.

Scope for Management students for the development of skill set like,

Managing	Customer	Relations
Retailing	channel	management
Professional	Development	
Qualitative	Techniques	for Retail Management
Retail	Communication	and Promotion
Retail Loyalty and	Events	
Strategic	Brand	Management

also the following transferable skills:

self	management
learning	skills
communication	
teamwork	

problem solving  
Information technology.  
Career prospects

Management professionals have a wide range of skills to offer employers in the retail sector and business in general. By possessing certain skill set, management professionals are able to reflect upon, understand and articulate the dynamics affecting the retail sector.

Through their vast accumulation of knowledge and information, management professionals demonstrate awareness concerning the factors determining the changing retail and business environment, and their linkage with each other.

Having functional specialist expertise in different areas, the managerial skill set can be used within retailing, such as human resource management, law, finance, information systems, budgeting, marketing, and investment appraisal, to mitigate and avoid various problems arising in these functional areas

Can easily integrate different functional areas of retail operations such as buying, merchandising, logistics, marketing, operations and computing, in a profitable way.

Will be able to demonstrate practical skills which are fundamental to the retail process such as store layout, elements of merchandising, site location, research skills, communication and negotiating skills

Can easily demonstrate skills to adopt strategy of the company in retailing, such as developing and presenting a business plan or planning and

implementing a new project or promoting a brand or price promotions in certain geographical areas and timelines.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW:

Retail industry includes largest food retailers, high street giants and a multitude of luxury, niche and owner-managed businesses. The above market overview shows that the recruitment activity continued at an increased pace in 2006. In this context the current literature tries to find out the factors influencing the growth of job satisfaction and in retail sector and the factors influencing the companies to attract the highly professional managers to their companies.

There is a growing body of literature examining the relationship between workforce diversity management and performance in organizations (Frink, Robinson, Reithel, Arthur, Ammeter, Ferris, Kaplan and Morrisette, 2003, cited in Sally Howell, Donna M Buttigieg, Wendy Webber).

Prior research on professional choices has compared the importance of various intrinsic

and extrinsic factors that influence students in their choice to pursue becoming other profession as a career (Paollilo ; Estes 1982; Kockanek ; Norgaard 1985, cited in JE Myburgh); Deci (1972) argued that behavior is determined by intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity itself (Davis et al. 1992). Extrinsic motivation is defined as the performance of an activity because it is perceived to be instrumental in achieving valued outcomes that are distinct

from the activity itself. According to Teo et al. (1999) cited in Snjaya. S opinion that perceived usefulness is an extrinsic motivator, while enjoyment is an intrinsic motivator. The intrinsic factors that affect the student while taking a decision about career is satisfaction derived from a job that provides the opportunity to be creative and autonomous in an intellectually challenging and dynamic environment. And extrinsic factors as financial remuneration and market-related factors that are extrinsic to the nature of the job itself.

Various factors such as financial remuneration ranked high on the list of decisive factors

in studies while choosing the job (Wheeler (1983) et al., cited in JE Myburgh). Other factors, such as job market considerations (which encompass job satisfaction, job security, job availability, job flexibility and opportunities for advancement over the short term and long term, were found to be important in career decision studies done by Paollilo and Estes (1982), et al., cited in JE Myburgh)

Factors that can influence the Job selection for employees:

Job related factors

Good local labor market conditions improve the organizational capability of coping with economic-level changes and hence enhance the odds for organizational stability and growth (Eagly (1965 cited in Rita Mano-Negrin). Large organizations can provide employees with better chances for advancement and higher wages and hence ensure organizational

attachment (Idson and Feaster 1990 cited in Henry Ongori). And according to the Trevor (2001)cited in Henry Ongori, local unemployment rates interact with job satisfaction to predict turnover in the market. In UK, non availability of the desired skill set forth job improvement for managers may be causing the managers to join the retail industry, to hop on multilevel tasking.

Job Involvement ; organizational commitment:

Job involvement describes an individual's ego involvement with work and indicates the extent to which an individual identifies psychologically with his/her job (Kanungo, 1982, cited in Henry Ongori). Organizational commitment is an affective response to the whole organization and the degree of attachment or loyalty employees feel towards the organization. Job involvement represents the extent to which employees are absorbed in or preoccupied with their jobs and the extent to which an individual identifies with his/her job (Brooke et al., 1988, cited in Henry Ongori). The degree of commitment and loyalty can be achieved if management they enrich the jobs, empower and compensate employees properly. Empowerment of employees could help to enhance the continuity of employees in organizations. Empowered employees where managers supervise more people than in a traditional hierarchy and delegate more decisions to their subordinates (Malone, 1997 cited in Henry Ongori).

Involvement would influence job satisfaction and increase organizational commitment of the employees. Employees who are more involved in their jobs are more satisfied with their jobs and more committed to their

organization (Blau and Boal, 1989; Brooke and Price, 1989; Brooke et al., 1988; Kanungo, 1982, cited in Henry Ongori).

Task Characteristics ; Job satisfaction:

Satisfaction represents an affective response to specific aspects of the job or career and denotes the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or career (Locke, 1976; Porter et al., 1974; Williams and Hazer, 1986, cited in Henry Ongori).

Workers who have a greater variety of tasks tend stay in the job. Task characteristics of the job have been found to be potential determinants of turnover among employees (Couger, 1988; Couger and Kawasaki, 1980; Garden, 1989; Goldstein and Rockart, 1984, cited in Henry Ongori). These include the five core job characteristics identified by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1980, cited in Henry Ongori): skill variety, which refers to the opportunity to utilize a variety of valued skills and talents on the job; task identity, or the extent to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work - that is, doing a job from beginning to end, with visible results; task significance, which reflects the extent to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether within or outside the organization; job autonomy, or the extent to which the job provides freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling work and determining procedures that the job provides; and job feedback, which refers to the extent to which the job provides information about the effectiveness of one's performance (Tor et al., 1997, cited in Henry Ongori).

Also, According to Keller ; Dansereau, Employees show high job satisfaction and responsibility when they get support from superiors. Superiors empowering subordinates by delegating responsibilities to them leads to subordinates who are more satisfied with their leaders and consider them to be fair and in turn to perform up to the superior's expectations (Keller and Dansereau, 1995, cited in Henry Ongori).

Retail sector is the one that provides most of the above tasks to the employees and hence the being satisfied with the job they are involved or having the high job involvement, employees tend to remain within the sector.

#### Organizational factors

With increased competitiveness on globalizations, managers in many organizations are experiencing greater pressure from top management to improve recruitment, selection, training, and retention of good employees and in the long run would encourage employees to stay in organizations.

Studies prove that employees are more likely to stay when there is a predictable work environment and vice versa (Zuber, 2001, cited in Henry Ongori). Therefore, in situations where organizations are not stable employees tend to quit and look for stable organizations as with stable organizations they would be able to predict their career advancement.

As the managers perceive the steady growth in the retail sector and also the growing future for the sector, they tend to associate themselves more with the sector.

### Employee information:

Employees have a strong need to be informed. Organization with strong communication systems enjoyed lower turnover of staff (Labov, 1997, cited in Henry Ongori). Employees feel comfortable to stay longer, in positions where they are involved in some level of the decision-making process. That is employees should fully understand about issues that affect their working atmosphere (Magner et al. 1996 cited in Henry Ongori). In order to stay ahead in the competition, the Multinational and national retail organizations are practicing 'transparency' in their HR policies and that being shared and communicated as a recognized factor for the success by the companies, employees are being satisfied with what they are expecting from the known policy structures. This accessibility of information would lead to strong performance from the employees and creating strong corporate culture (Meaghan et al., 2002, cited in Henry Ongori) in the retail industry.

### Reward systems:

(Griffeth et al. (2000), cited in Henry Ongori) noted that pay and pay-related variables have a modest effect on employee turnover. Their analysis also included studies that examined the relationship between pay, a person's performance and turnover. As the retail sector is also offering pay raises and good incentives and providing adequate financial incentives more employees will likely to remain with organizations in the coming future.

### Increasing demand for the techno functional expertise:



Retail technology initiatives such as ECR, Supply Chain management systems, CRM systems and increase in consumer expectations are creating greater challenges in recruiting the retail employment. The introduction of new technologies and increased service expectations has altered the skill requirements of managerial and non managerial jobs, and this is forcing retail firms to recruit, train, manage and compensate employees accordingly. The education and skill level of store-level employees has been cited as a major constraint to the implementation of ECR practices (Kurt Salmon Associates, Inc., 1996, cited in Robert P. King, Sara M. Ashman and Stacie A. Bosley). There is a need for higher levels of customer satisfaction in store establishments and supply chain establishments. This even puts much pressure to recruit and retain highly professional employees at all levels like management professionals who are techno functional experts.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

##### Qualitative Method

Qualitative method is used to collect the secondary to evaluate the preliminary facts of the retail employment. Qualitative research methods can be described as naturalistic, anthropological, and ethnographic and can be used through interpretivism paradigm in the current research. As per definition of Byrne's definition (cited in Rob O Neil), qualitative research is about 'inquiries of knowledge that are outside the framework prescribed by the scientific method, as well as assumptions of inferential statistics', the current study inquires the facts of the retail employment. Though, qualitative study is assumed as 'vague' (Byrne) and 'loosely defined

category of research designs or models (Preissle). The same authors again confirm that qualitative method is a tool that “ elicit verbal, visual, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory data as descriptive narratives like field notes, recordings, or other transcriptions from audio and videotapes and other written records and pictures or films” (Preissle 2002 cited in Rob O Neil).

Qualitative research methodology includes the types like, action research, case studyresearch, Delphi studies, grounded theory, life histories, content analysis, hermeneutics, or general narrative enquiry or participant observer research. Qualitative methods are the most certainly appropriate option when in need of researching patterns and trends in the industry and to understand the depth of the environment around the research point, the cultural characteristics that influence the industry especially when the research is adopting new areas of identification. Qualitative research is ‘ mainly concerned with the properties, the state and the character’, (Labuschagne 2003 cited in Rob O Neil).

Qualitative research also gives the flexibility of driving the research according to the scope. This aspect is very helpful where the research area is very vast and the scope of the research needs to go in particular direction. That’s why qualitative methods are being preferred in studying the sensitive subjects. The personal skills of the researcher bring out the quality in answering the questions of hypothesis. However the personal skills of the researcher may also become hindrances to elicit the exact answers from the responders as it may be influenced by the gender and ethnicity of the researcher.

Qualitative methods allow openness in conducting the research and help to generate new theories. Participating subjects can discuss issues that are important and relevant to the scope of the research, rather than responding to closed questions, and there is a lot of space to clarify ambiguities and confusion over concepts. 'It certainly seems reasonable to suggest that one may have a better understanding of a community member situation by reading a descriptive passage than just looking at demographic statistics', (Kruger, 2003). Qualitative results are difficult to total and are difficult even to replicate due to the lack of structured design and standardized procedures. However, the qualitative study gives a greater depth in understanding the entire scenario of Retail employment in UK.

In-depth interviews:

An in-depth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee, but for most of the part in one way. Its goal is to extract rich, detailed data that can be used in analysis (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). In depth interviews are best conducted face to face giving an advantage of taking true expressions of the respondents into consideration.

In-depth interviews are characterized by open-ended questions probing more towards drawing information from the interviewee. The list of questions or issues that are to be explored and suggested will be formulated by the researcher well in to make interviewing more systematic and comprehensive. (Lofland and Lofland, (1995) cited in Joy Frechtling).

The dynamics of interviewing are similar to a guided conversation. The interviewer takes a portion of an attentive listener who shapes the process

into a familiar and comfortable form of social engagement - a conversation - and the quality of the information obtained is largely dependent on the interviewer's skills and personality (Patton, 1990). However, an in-depth interview is not intended to be a two-way form of communication and sharing limiting the subjective bias of the researcher on the findings. The personal opinions, perceptions, or feelings of the interviewer should be limited by selection and training process from the implementation of in-depth interviews. The selection of the interviewer also makes a key position in eliciting the responses from the responders showing a bias arising from age, sex, profession, race/ethnicity, etc., Poor interviewing skills, poor phrasing of questions, or inadequate knowledge of the subject's culture or frame of reference may result in a collection that obtains little useful data.

In-depth interviews can be used at any stage of the evaluation process. They are especially useful in answering questions such as those suggested by Patton (1990) cited in Joy Frechtling, in the current research,

- What does the program look and feel like to the participants?
- What are the experiences and opinions of program participants towards their job roles in retail sector?
- What do stakeholders know about the retail employment prospectus?

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The study observes a qualitative study of the ASDA retail organization and conducts an in-depth interview of its managers to identify the facts about retail employment.

## ASDA- U. K retail Giant- Overview

ASDA is the UK's third largest supermarket chain spread across the country. ASDA is promising endless challenges and responsibilities from day one to the employees. Employees can able to look forward to real variety. The training in the ASDA is beyond comparison and employee contribution is encouraged and as well as rewarded.

Stephen Lohead, head of graduate recruitment and development at Asda - who are recruiting 120 graduates this year - also points to the growing number of global opportunities. 'Next year, we will be changing our scheme to make it possible for new recruits to spend time.

In February 2006, an employment tribunal found that the supermarket chain, Asda, had breached the law by offering financial incentives to employees to give up their rights to collective bargaining. The case is one of a series of disputes involving the company and the GMB general union, and highlights the deteriorating state of management-union relations in the company. Caroline Massingham, Asda retail people director, said: " It's the hard work and enthusiasm of our colleagues that has made the business a success this year. It's great to be able to share the rewards with them."

ASDA is leader in retail sector when it comes to employee benefits. Its workers across 300-plus stores can now take advantage of shift-swapping schemes, job-sharing, grandparents' leave, and even IVF leave, to name just a few. ASDA management discusses with the employees about their needs and collects the feedback from employees about rewards and incentives. A

flexible approach to reward has enabled the ASDA to achieve the lowest staff turnover in the supermarket industry.

Sarah Dickins, who is the Asda's head of reward and recognition, says that all these initiatives were introduced in response to employee feedback. " We talk to colleagues about their package and feed that into our reward strategy. The whole philosophy is built around listening to people," she says. When there is communication between employees and management regarding reward and pay issues establishes the satisfaction about management in employees. Employees need to have strong information. Organizations which are following strong communication systems can enjoy lower staff turnover (Labov, 1997, as cited in Henry Ongori). Also the friendliness of management and sharing of information with employees increases the competitiveness in the employees. This ease of access of information would lead to strong performance from the employees and creates strong corporate culture Meaghan et al. (2002).

ASDA Employment Features:

ASDA policies are aimed at promoting diversity in the work place and the ' Talent Race' initiative to encourage skills development have captured the attention of all its employees

Also ASDA offers sick leaves, flexible working hours, training and rewards to employees.

Bonus:

ASDA offering the bonuses to the employees depending on their

performance and targets achieved. ASDA rewards all the employees' hard work and good ideas with an impressive discretionary bonus scheme. ASDA offered the occasional bonuses to their employees. On eve of five years completion of ASDA supermarket in U. K., ASDA offered nearly £70m as a performance related bonuses. ASDA strongly believes that its employee's hard work and enthusiasm are causes for its business success. The employers are happy with sharing the reward with employees. In 2004, the company has distributed nearly £70m bonus among the employees. (Dan Thomas)

Colleague

Discount:

If the employee is working in ASDA for three months, the person become eligible for a colleague discount card which gives 10% off in ASDA shopping as well as Wal-Mart shopping.

Share

Plans:

After six months service, the employees are getting the fantastic opportunity in ASDA to join in the ASDA Share Plans which enables the employees to become a Wal-Mart shareholder.

Share

save

Plan:

Share save gives the chance to be part of ASDA and Wal-Mart's success to employees. This shows value of employee contribution to ASDA.

The employee can decide the amount to save between £5 and £250 every four weeks. This amount will straightly add into employee own account. After saving for three years employee will receive savings plus a tax-free bonus. The employee can use this to buy discounted Wal-Mart shares.

### Pension:

The ASDA provides Pensions to employees and also employees are qualifying for life assurance of four times of base pay subject to the necessary scheme rules.

### Voluntary

### Benefits:

ASDA negotiate special deals and savings on a range of products and services for colleagues in every year. These benefits are highlighted in a Benefits Book and are categorized under: Days in or out, Holidays, Cars, Money, Household and Health. The employee will receive the actual savings depending on a number of factors including your personal circumstances, location, seasonality and other timings.

For example, you'll enjoy preferential rates with Hilton Hotels and Livingwell gyms, Chester Zoo, Alton Towers, Johnson's Dry Cleaners, T Mobile and Denplan, to name but a few. We also provide a law club for only 12p per week for ASDA colleagues and their families.

### Recognition:

The employee can get reorganization and appreciation for their extraordinary performance.

### Private

### Medical

### Cover:

It provides fast treatment to their employees when they are suffering from illness or injury needs. ASDA is teamed up with leading health care provider to offer comprehensive care plans at normal costs.

### STAR

### Points:

These are the rewards and recognition to individuals for their well



performance in job. These rewards are trading and non-trading incentives such as Recruit a Friend and Tell Bondy

You can win points by taking part in any number of in-store incentives that can be redeemed for an ASDA gift card, a holiday through Apollo Travel or a gift experience through Golden Moments.

Flexible Working hours in ASDA:

ASDA believe that colleagues are essential to their success. That's why it offers the flexible way of working for colleagues.

Parental or Childcare Leave: ASDA offering four weeks off for employee to take care of their children or parent, when the children is not well or when ever they need time to settle into a new school. But this leave is unpaid. The employees can extend unpaid leave up to 8 weeks during the summer holidays if they have need.

Time off to look after dependents:

ASDA provides leave also to take care of dependents in the family and in the case of unplanned emergency.

Care for Kids: If any employee wants to balance their personal commitments or to look after child under the age of 6 or disabled, the employee can apply for change the working hours. ASDA is providing 3 hours off while the employee is joining the child in school.

Maternity or Adoption Leave:

ASDA is providing leave of 52 weeks as legal leave for all parents as maternity leave. And also the time off to consult the doctor for antenatal care

and all new parents can get a choice of 2 weeks paid leave or up to 3 months unpaid leave as Paternity Leave. In emergency cases, it is offering reasonable unpaid leave as an emergency family leave. And to take over of dependents for long term ASDA providing the unpaid leave up to 6 months as a career leave. In addition to this ASDA provides swap shifts to the employees. ASDA arranges to exchange of shifts with colleague when the employee needs a time off for a family reason.

Career

Break:

If the employee is working with ASDA for 3 years or more, then that employee is eligible to take a break of up to 2 years for extended maternity leave or time off to care of children or to take a professional break or for pursue to further education.

Study

Leave:

It provides excellent flexible working hours to help the students to maximize their earnings. It allots more working hours during holidays and few working hours in term time or exam time.

Store

Swap:

ASDA supports the away from home students with excellent facilities. They can even enjoy the transfers during their work term and also can avail holidays in between.

Career progression:

Promotions in ASDA are quick with performance. The career growth can be enhanced through on-the-job training, computer-based learning,

development centers, interactive video learning and open learning workbooks.

#### In-depth interviews- Study setting

7 Participants were considered for In-depth interviews who are the working managers in ASDA at various operation levels like, stores, purchase, channel partners, branding and financial areas. Participants were all managers having a management graduation working with ASDA from quite some time and are responsible for the duties they are handling.

#### Data Collection

One week before the interview is was conducted; a letter from the ASDA management was circulated to the participants allowing their permission and to give the information. All the participants were given a questionnaire to know the questions and the purpose o the interview was well informed before hand. The participants were asked to express their opinions freely where the response is recorded with the help of a tape recorder to have accuracy of information. A response rate of 100% was obtained with the sample being small and selective. This helped to maintain accuracy in the out come of the research design. The researcher has personally involved in conducting the in-depth interviews aiding the respondents with relevant information wherever necessary in directing towards the scope f the study.

#### Measures:

**Motivating Factors:** The managers were asked to find out the motivating factor to work with retail environment

Workplace opportunity: The managers were asked to name the workplace opportunity or the task characteristic they like in the retail industry.

Organizational Factors: The managers are asked to name the factor that makes them work for ASDA

Job Satisfier: The managers are asked to name the job satisfiers in their Job.

Jon Involvement Factors: The managers are asked to name the factor that makes them involve in their current job

Performance Boosters: The managers are asked to name the factors that makes them work to achieve their targets

Organizational Commitment: The manager's attitude or the factors that contribute the organizational commitment towards ASDA was also examined by asking them to compare the current job with other traditional jobs.

Influence of Reward system: The managers were asked to express their opinion on the link between their job performance and the monetary reward system.

Comparison of job criteria with traditional organization: The manager's preferences were observed by asking them to give their opinion on difference of retail employment with other industries.

Success of ASDA HR strategy: The managers were asked to reveal the successful strategy of ASDA that makes them satisfied and to adhere to the company growth from a long period.

Complexity of the job structure: The managers were asked to express the type of skill set required for the retail operations.

Entry level expectations of the employees from retail sector: Managers were asked to point out the expectations of the career starters in retail sector.

Success ladder opportunities: The managers perception about the career growth is also sought through the questionnaire.

Results ; Discussion:

Warehouse department, Grocery Department, Frozen department, Night replenishment, Fresh stock Department, Beauty Cosmetics department, and Consumables departments. All the managers are having 2+ years working experience with ASDA and are committed to the vision. The manager's responses revealed the impact of their job, work culture of ASDA on their organizational commitment and the factors influencing the employment growth in retail sector in UK.

The respondents expressed that retail sector gives a growth for opportunity as well as its realistic environment. The respondents also expressed that retail segment gives them work challenges to move up in the career ladder. The business environment is also fast moving, competitive and also adjustable and flexible with seniors support.

This finding proves Keller and Dansereau's finding that employees are more satisfied with superiors empowerment.

The intrinsic factors (Ahmed et al. (1997: 326)), like challenging and dynamic work place to improve intellectual capabilities are proved to be the motivating factors in retail segment.

Presence of scope for improvement, Team environment (Keller and Dansereau, 1995), valued skills and talents on the job Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1980) and possession of skill set (Idson and Feaster 1990) to other industries are also making the employees to choose the retail industry.

Flexible work opportunities, Pay for performance Griffeth et al. (2000), team environment, multi site working are some of the interesting factors of their job sites for the respondents to work with retail sector.

Creative and Autonomous work delivery (Ahmed et al. (1997: 326) , learning , inner Satisfaction, difference in ethics, job involvement are the primary motivating aspects of the managers to fulfill their tasks with high performance in ASDA. This finding correlates with Kanungo's finding on link between job involvement and organizational commitment, which was proved with managers commitment to work with ASDA.

Recognition and own satisfaction, autonomy, superior-subordinate relations and team environment are the driving factors to achieve work targets for the respondent managers in ASDA, proving the Keller and Dansereau's empowerment concept. Also the managers expressed that they are highly motivated to pass on the empowerment value to their subordinates and that makes them feel achieved a level of responsibility in the organization. This finding strengthens the opinion of Malone, who states that empowered

delegate more decisions to their subordinates than a traditional hierarchy system.

As a opinion on changing the career from retail industry, all most all the managers shown a reluctance to shift from the challenging environment. The task characteristics (Couger, 1988; Couger and Kawasaki, 1980; Garden, 1989; Goldstein and Rockart, 1984, cited in Henry Ongori) of their retail job has made them loyal to the sector they are working and created an organizational commitment towards ASDA and as well as to the industry they are. The task structure has become potential determinants of turnover among employees in ASDA.

As a response to their opinion on money as their biggest motivator, only one or two agreed that money makes a part of their job involvement. But for the rest of the managers money is secondary, while the aspects like - learning, sense of responsibility, and the people they work with being their primary motivators at work place.

'Retail is very competitive' is the statement mentioned from all the managers. challenging tasks, customer interactions and day to day work dealings that has both physical and mental involvement are the big job involvers in the retail industry for all the managers.

As a secret to its successful strategy in retaining the skill set with ASDA, the managers revealed the strengths of ASDA like good compensation, employee recognition, fair play , transparency, People friendly atmosphere, employee appraisals, ease of communication, crisis resolving, flexible work durations

and reward systems are some of the best features that any employee could ever anticipate from an organization.

#### CONCLUSION:

The retail industry in U. K is attracting the more professional talent in now days. Keeping their organizational cultures more suitable for the intrinsic motivators' retail sector is achieving organizational commitment from the management professionals. Employees being highly involved and empowered by superiors and motivated by task characteristics in retail industry are showing commitment to the organizations. And this changed scenario of employee –employer relations in retail sector is attracting the management professions to choose retail sector than the traditional office works as it is evident in the case of ASDA.

#### Recommendations:

Though the study could identify that intrinsic factors are motivating the managers to choose retail sector than extrinsic factors, it is further recommended to have a research including more participants and taking the other cases of retail sector also. As the population and the sample size is very small in the current study, the findings can be said to have limited reliability. Hence a detailed study covering high number of managers working in other retail sectors and stores will evaluate some more valuable facts to contribute to the HR practices in retail employment.

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