Personality Traits and Turnover Intention among Front Level Managerial Personnel

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Due to diversity in workplace and complexity in nature of executives, it is very difficult to understand why potential executives are leaving organizations. Employee turnover is a burning issue in present at workplaces. Several researches have been conducted to identify the cause and consequences of the employee turnover. In this line of research, the present study is an effort to explore the relationship of trait emotional intelligence and personality (Big-Five) with turnover intention (intention to leave). The study was carried out on 100 front level executives of Indian organizations. Three standardized psychometric devices namely TEIQue-SF, Big Five Inventory-10 and Intention to leave were used for data collection. Obtained data was analyzed by using correlation and hierarchal regression analysis. Results of correlational analysis indicate that trait emotional intelligence and conscientiousness was significantly negatively correlated with intention to leave whereas neuroticism was significantly positively correlated with intention to leave. Results of hierarchal regression analysis conforms the results of correlational analysis. It can be concluded form the obtained results that personality play a crucial role to determine the executive’s intention to leave the organization.

Keywords: Big Five, trait emotional intelligence, turnover intention, hierarchal regression analysis

We are living in the world of globalization where life at work is being too much complicated to predict. Business process outsourcing is on the peak. Employers have to face a multi-cultural work place. It is very difficult to understand the nature of executives and motivate them to work properly within the organization. Financial incentives have failed to motivate executives. High skilled executives are leaving organizations without any appropriate reason. Due to these rationales, employee turnover is becoming an annoyance for employers and employee retention is emerging as a challenge for human resource practitioners (Singh, 2007).

Abassi and Hollman (2000) identified employee turnover as a rotation of workers around the labor market; between firms, jobs and occupations; and between the states of employment and unemployment. The terms—employee turnover, turnover intention and intention to leave/quit—have been used interchangeably in literature and in this article as well. Turnover intention is defined as “one’s desire or willingness to leave an organization” (Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, de Chermont, & Warren, 2003).

Most of the current researches classified employee turnover into involuntary turnover and voluntary turnover. Involuntary turnover occurs when an employee is fired or laid off. A certain amount of involuntary turnover is inevitable and possibly even beneficial. Mobely (1982) proposed that firing workers who are not performing at desirable levels can be viewed as a positive, “weeding” process. This type of turnover increases the effectiveness of organizations.

Voluntary turnover takes place when competent and capable employees leave the organization to work elsewhere. This turnover proves costly to organizations because losing a valued employee reduces organizational productivity, increases expenses associated with recruitment, hiring and training a replacement and also provides an opportunity to competitors.