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## CAREER CHANGE AND DISSATISFACTION REASONS OF HOTEL MANAGERS: ANKARA EXAMPLE

Feriyal FARHADI ANDARABI\*

### Abstract

Career change models evaluates career change as a separate variable apart from turnover. Despite comprehensive researches on this matter, few studies examined career change and the leading factors. The purpose of this article is to explain the reasons underlying career change of hotel managers. In the study, career change decisions of young hotel managers is examined depending on grounded theory approach. In order to explain career change decisions of managers in hotel companies in Ankara, data obtained through a set of open-ended interviews performed with young managers who have quitted job were analyzed. It was paid special attention on the fact that all respondents were working in another job except hotel industry during the research; but worked as entry-level hotel manager in their previous careers. Interviews were performed on skype or face to face. Interview protocol was applied depending on suggestions in Grounded Theory and Damaské which enables carrying out a systematical analysis between respondents. In line with interviews conducted with young managers who have changed their careers in hotel industry in Ankara, three factors influencing their turnover decision were found. These three factors leading career change are job satisfaction dimension, daily life-work conflicts and weak ties. It is considered this study would contribute to available knowledge of senior managers via explaining the effect of job satisfaction-based expectations of young managers, daily life-work conflicts and weak relations on reasons underlying possible career change.

**Keywords:** Career Change, Dissatisfaction, Social Relations.

### 1. Introduction

Because of their dynamic structures, busy working environment, complicated organization structure and necessary close relationship with individuals in every unit of the company, hotel companies have a tiring nature (Nebel, 1991: 34). Long and tiring working hours, non-stop working, continuously changing demand at high rates, necessity to operate production and consumption processes simultaneously are included in fast pacing working environment that managers have to cope with every day (Meier, 1991: 79).

Researches have revealed hotel managers deal with various problems. Hotel managers cannot work so long in hotel companies where organizational and professional approaches are not adopted at highest levels. They quit job due to conflicts they have experienced with investors or other different reasons (Birdir, 2000: 145).

Although career change is a burgeoning topic of research, it is seen the number of researches on young managers having 15% unemployment rate in 2010 which is quite over national mean are insufficient (US congress joint economic committee, 2016). Career change is defined as a progression movement to a new job without being a part of expected or typical career planning (Lawrence, 1984: 46) and is quite different from transferring to a rival company.

Today, human factor is accepted as an important component which has innovator, creative and competition provider characteristics and manages other production factors and develops new ideas rather than being a normal production factor in almost all countries, primarily in developed ones. Therefore, ensuring commitment of such an important factor, human, to the organization is of quite significance (Bakan, 2011: 14).

According to Kanter, organizational commitment is that managers satisfy specific need, desire and expectations of the organization in a way of feeling positive to organization and commit themselves to the organization (Kanter, 1968: 449). However, the fact that a manager considers s/he does not have any control on internal and external environment of organization leads his/ her foreignization feeling intensified and affects his/her turnover.

Some people may quit job even though they do not take any job offer (Meier, 1991: 80). Rhodes and Doering indicate turnover intention is a part of career change process; however, this process should be tested (Rhodes and Doering, 1983: 631).

The purpose of this study is to find reasons underlying career change decisions of entry-level young hotel managers, and depending on a Ground Theory and research findings, to give recommendations to young managers in hotel companies with regard to change their opinions on turnover. This study not only

\* Student of Doctorate, Gazi University, Social Sciences Institute, feriyalfarhadi@hotmail.com.

includes experiences and difficulties managers deal with in hotel industry and during career changing process but also lays a foundation for future studies on career change.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Career Change Models

In integrated career change model, Rodos and Doering examined career change and turnover as separate dependent variables (Rhodes and Doering, 1983; Mobley vd., 1978). As can be seen in Figure 1, integrated career change model (Rhodes and Doering, 1983) is composed of 17 blocks.

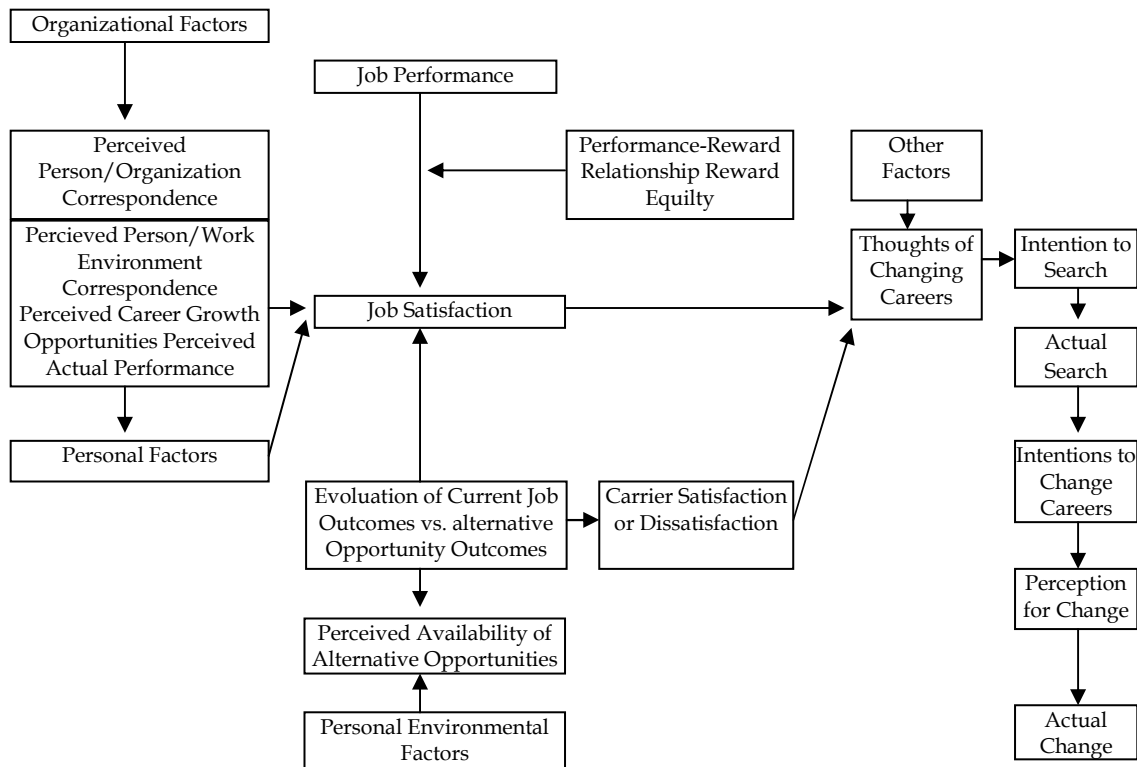


Figure 1: Integrated career change model, (McGingley vd., 2014)

Rhodes and Doering assumed job satisfaction, career satisfaction and career promotion are key factors for career change (Rhodes and Doering, 1983: 635). Recent studies on career change have extended integrated career change model by including following factors: stress at work (Mobley, 1978: 412), occupational safety (Carless and Arnup, 2011: 82) social pressure and professional identity (Khapova, 2007: 590).

Job satisfaction, according to description by Williams, is global emotional reactions of people as to their jobs and is one of most studied topic in terms of turnover literature (Williams, 2016). Besides, it is also considered as one of the most important factors of career change (Rhodes and Doering, 1983: 637).

It is also seen that job satisfaction and organizational commitment which are quite important for organizational efficiency are also important factors for turnover intention. Particular evidences emphasize turnover intention is an indicator of organizational commitment. In the event that individual has commitment to his/her job and wants to contribute to improving organizational values, s/he would not want to quit job (Porter vd., 1973: 609).

The promise for career facilitates development of capabilities. In previous studies, it was observed individuals, who took this promise, determined high career objectives and got into action and kept going despite all obstacles so as to reach these objectives (Colarelli, 1990: 158). Job satisfaction occurs as a result of "organizational career management", "a word for career" and "career competencies" (Konga, 2012: 712).

Under such circumstances when employee feels him/herself under danger and realizes industry does not provide necessary opportunities to grow in the sector, occupational safety becomes effective on career change (Shropshire and Kadlec, 2012: 6). The concepts "occupational identity" and "social pressure" also explains the reasons why individuals change their careers (Lee vd., 2008; Khapova vd., 2007). In contrary, in professional identity, "the set of attributes, beliefs, values, patterns and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role" has an inverse relationship with the career change intention.

Recent studies have shown that integrated career change model ignores such important factors as stress at work, occupational safety, professional identity and social pressure. In last two studies carried out on different groups, IT managers and employee group whose members were not a member of industrial organization were chosen as sample and both turnover intention and action of career change were measured so as to determine whether occupational stress was an important factor in career change (Carless and Arnup, 2011; Shropshire and Kadlec, 2012).

McGinley and others in their recommended model explain effective factors in career change process and show the relationship among them (McGingley vd., 2014: 89). In the mentioned model, it is seen combination of factors push individual to change their careers and at the same time, their future concerns intensify the effect of these pushing factors. Non-existence of powerful bounding components in an organization renders working in the same job difficult and also alternative careers satisfying job preferences of individuals provide the necessary opportunity to change career.

## **2.2. Career Change in Hotel Industry**

One of the most discussed points in hotel industry is turnover rates of managers (Deery and Shaw, 1997; Cleveland vd., 2007). The highest turnover rate in hotel industry are observed in entry-level young managers (Deery and Shaw, 1997: 375). In hotel industry, the term "entry level" is used so as to describe managers who perform administrative duties like assistance of front office manager which does not require previous administrative experiences.

In order that entry level young managers could organize operation process in hotels, they need to have the ability to work in a fast facing environment (Chuang and Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010) and could manage large teams (Testa and Sipe, 2012: 512) However, they work for a very low wage (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005: 421) despite possessing all these capabilities. Due to nature of hotel industry, no matter what department it is, managers are required to work at weekends and during day-offs besides work shifts in day and night time (McGingley vd., 2014:95). Very limited number of studies explaining the reasons underlying career changes of entry level young managers in hotel companies shows the necessity of this research.

Mobley and others carried out a research on reasons effective on turnover and observed dissatisfaction as to job was the most effective one (Mobley vd., 1978: 408). Through presenting integrated career change model, Rodos and Doering at the first time emphasized the term "process" effective on career change and separated career change from turnover (Rhodes and Doering, 1983: 637). Ibarra indicates individual characteristics, beliefs, values, patterns and experiences are effective on career change (Hom and Kinicki, 2001: 975). Lee and others put forth the influence of professional identity and social pressure on career change decision (Lee vd., 2008: 651). Shropshire and Kadlec claim individuals decide to change their careers as they work under unsafe conditions (Shropshire and Kadlec, 2012: 14).

## **3. Method**

Cresswell indicates especially qualitative approaches are more appropriate for researches being carried out on a sample group like entry level hotel managers (Cresswel, 2007: 12). In this study, qualitative method was used as it was considered it clarifies the reasons of career change in a better way. During interview process, it was utilized from Grounded Theory (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Damaske, 2011) questions.

### **3.1. Sample**

First five respondents in this study was chosen from recommended group within professional manager network in Ankara. Other respondents were chosen via guidance of these five persons and snowball sampling method from LinkedIn web-site users and various tourism and hotel management graduates. It was paid special attention on the fact that all respondents were working in another job except hotel industry during the research; but worked as a entry level hotel manager in their previous careers. Taking career change processes of respondents into consideration, interviews were carried out with 14 respondents in total. Interviews were performed on skype or face to face. Respondents were given the opportunity to tell their own career change stories and data were collected elaborately through open-ended questions during semi-structured interviews. During interviews, Damaske questions that enable systematical data analysis were used (Damaske, 2011: 5). Interviews continued until reaching the research objective. Questions included in interview forms used during interviews were categorized as following:

1. The effect of job satisfaction on career change
  2. The effect of daily life-work conflicts on career change
  3. The effect of family support on career change
- In the study, a number was attributed to each respondent.

### **3.2. Data Analysis**

In the research, obtained data were analyzed via content analysis method which is one of the important document analyzing methods because of being commonly used in qualitative data analysis and

providing related data in numerical or statistical way. Open coding of data was carried out at two stages through separating them line by line, paragraph by paragraph or page by page. At first stage, meaning, name and tag were attributed to coding. At second stage, considering description of each code, all codes were compared and similar ones were removed. Thus, the most significant codes were analyzed as data. In addition, these data were examined by two academicians working in related research field. Obtained data were presented on Table and supported with quotations from interviews.

### 3.3. Validity and Reliability

During research process, so as to fulfill validity and reliability, the steps were taken as following:

- Research method, process and results were explained in a clear and detailed way.
- In data collection process, multiple data collection methods as observation, semi-structured interview, document analyzing were used.
- In-depth research and analysis approach (data collection, analysis and evaluation) was adopted.
- From data collection to analysis and evaluation, an inter-connected and consistent process was followed.
- Purposive sampling method was utilized for selecting study group.
- Research data and results were shared with respondents for verification.

### 4. Findings and Discussion

Data obtained during interview process and related analyses are as following: 4 respondents are female and 10 respondents are male. They are between 26-33 ages and 3 of them are studying bachelor's degree, 5 are studying master degree and 6 are studying post-graduate degree. Respondents worked in hotel companies as entry level manager at least 1 and at most 4 years.

**Table 1:** Turnover frequency leading to career change (n=14)

| Participant | Turnover (staying with company) | Turnover (leaving current company) | Industry changed careers to |
|-------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1           | 0                               | 2                                  | Government contractor       |
| 2           | 0                               | 1                                  | Private accounting          |
| 3           | 0                               | 1                                  | Academician                 |
| 4           | 1                               | 0                                  | Academician                 |
| 5           | 0                               | 3                                  | General marketing           |
| 6           | 0                               | 1                                  | Academician                 |
| 7           | 1                               | 3                                  | Academician                 |
| 8           | 0                               | 2                                  | Academician                 |
| 9           | 0                               | 2                                  | Government contractor       |
| 10          | 0                               | 1                                  | Private accounting          |
| 11          | 0                               | 4                                  | Academician                 |
| 12          | 0                               | 1                                  | Human resources             |
| 13          | 0                               | 2                                  | Academician                 |
| 14          | 1                               | 4                                  | Academician                 |

Table 1 shows frequencies of hotel managers' career changes in the same or to another company. As seen on Table, 8 of respondents have changed their careers and preferred being an academician. Respondents generally do not make in-house career changes. They have changed their careers outside the company at least 1 and at most 4 times.

#### 4.1. Job Satisfaction on Career Change

Mobley and others included in their studies on job satisfaction a common description upon which many researchers agreed (Mobley vd., 1978). According to this description, job satisfaction is an emotional reaction that an individual feels as a result of comparing outcomes s/he expects or desires from job with those really happening. In the study, Respondent 2 indicated following statements about his/her last position and job satisfaction:

At my first job in hotel industry, I was working at lower status but I satisfied more. The second one made me more unsatisfied and therefore I quit. (Respondent 2, Male)

In her research on job satisfaction, Çekmecioğlu reported job satisfaction was a powerful component creating positive effect on productivity (Çekmecelioglu, 2006: 153). Low job satisfaction level decreases organizational commitments of employees. Therefore, they prefer a new job where they can get more satisfaction or keep unwillingly working in the same job. Even respondents who have worked at the same position for a long time have experienced decrease in their job satisfaction levels. Respondents who have changed their careers emphasize the link between job satisfaction and career change. While evaluating the relationship between job satisfaction and career change, they stated they agreed with Respondent 7 and similarly used following sentences:

I am really satisfied with my new job. Career change was a perfect decision for me. My previous job in hotel industry was far away from satisfaction (Respondent 7, Male).

In line with answers of respondents, it can be pointed out job satisfaction levels of respondents have increased after changing their jobs.

#### 4.2. Daily Life -Work Conflict

Research findings show daily life-work conflict is an important factor in career change decisions of individuals and has a strong effect on those working in hotel industry. Some examples of respondents as to daily life-work conflicts are as following:

Yes It is really a big conflict. I did not have any private life in my previous job. I was working 6 days a week. At least 12 hours a day. I did not have any spare time to join normal daily activities, therefore I could not maintain relationships with my immediate vicinity. Sometimes, my phone was ringing during my day-offs. I no way could get away from my job (Respondent 5, Female).

In their answers in this section, respondents especially emphasized their isolation from social life. They stated they were not only isolated from their friends and families but also from society.

Young managers generally put emphasis on stress their jobs created in their minds. Respondents claimed stress-based conflict was as effective on daily life-work conflict as time-based conflict. Emphasizing physiological aches resulting from stress at work, respondents explained the bother caused by stress-based conflict with following sentences:

I had a tough and stressful day, I just wanted to quit job at that moment but I could not decide. I considered the new position I found that day. I was over consuming alcohol when I was the hotel manager and this was getting me worried day by day. In order to relieve stress on me and be able to sleep, I consumed pills and alcohol. I realized I generally came home with a terrible headache. I decided to leave the job for getting rid of this situation. (Respondent 6, Male).

Daily life-work conflict is generally observed in entry level hotel managers as both time-based and stress-based. During interviews, respondents continuously mentioned about their experiences regarding daily life-work conflict which pushed them to choose a new job in another sector except hotel industry.

#### 4.3. Weak Relationships: Social Support and Professional Identity

Most respondents emphasized the lack of family and immediate vicinity support while they were working at hotel and stated their families always told them to not stay at that position in hotel. Respondent 3 explained his family's opinion on his career as a hotel manager with these sentences:

They told me not to accept the job in hotel. In my family's opinion, people working in service sector are not respected so much (Respondent 3, Male).

Other respondents could only get a conditional support as to their careers from their families:

My family and my husband thought I worked so much but could not paid what I deserved. I realized that when I was happy, my family was happy, too (Respondent 1, Female).

Lack of social support from family and immediate vicinity and professional identities of respondents prevented their organizational commitment. It is seen that not being able to get the necessary support from social groups and the pressure of family as to leaving the job at hotel forced respondents to change their careers. As a matter of fact, families of 5 respondents helped them to find another job in another sector and supported their decision to quit job.

Through open-ended questions, respondents were asked to say three main reasons regarding career change. Obtained results were provided in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents' answers as to open-ended questions (n=14)

| First word that comes to mind  | Second word that comes to mind  | Third word that comes to mind  |
|--|---|--|
| Social status-Stress-Working conditions-Senior management-Hotel owner- Wage-External Factors-Value-Creativity-Hotel policy-Organizational culture-Time-Progress-Duty definitions | Nature of work-use of capabilities-additional opportunities-practices-moral values-feedbackproblem-grouping-safety-family-authority-promotion-quality of communication-productivity | Performance-based prize-success-communication with those at lower status-social services-quality of communication-personal reputation-opportunities-operating procedures-social life-general work behaviors-duty definitions-internal and external respect |

In Table 2, Respondents explained the most important reasons of career change. Analyzing the answers, three main results come to forefront: The first one is that individuals' feeling themselves precious has become as important as physical benefit. The second one is that the relationship between career change and job satisfaction is negative. As job satisfaction increases, intention to change career decreases. The third and last one is that if senior managers could well analyze the behaviors of entry level young managers, they could manage human resources in a better way. Therefore, it is of vital importance for senior managers to know whether entry level young managers are satisfied with their jobs or their feelings regarding the job.

#### 4. Conclusion and Suggestion

Main purpose of the study is to determine the reasons underlying career change decisions of entry level young managers. Various factors that could lead respondents changing their careers were analyzed.

This study in which a comprehensive qualitative method is used provides findings that confirm the results of other studies on career change and turnover (Mobley vd., 1978; Rhodes and Doering, 1983; Carless and Arnap, 2011; Hom and Kinicki , 2001) It was observed dissatisfaction as to job was an important factor leading career change. In recent studies, daily life-work conflict has become prominent in hotel management literature (O'Neil, 2012; McNamara vd., 2011; Xiao and O'Neill, 2010). In this study, it has been explained by respondents that daily life-work conflict is an important factor for career change and research findings support the results of other studies. Lack of powerful social support network preventing respondents from changing their careers and of possessing a professional identity helping them to feel commitment to the organization cause career change.

Today, the general opinion as to the fact that wage and additional opportunities are leading factors in career change has disappeared and the relationship between entry level and senior level managers and job qualifications (physical and non physical factors) become more prominent. Employees' working in a job they love and also in a pleasant environment and providing them a working environment in which they can take necessary responsibilities positively affect their job satisfaction and at this point, senior managers bear important responsibilities to ensure and maintain such working environment. Senior managers are of quite importance in terms of improving the in-house communication. On the condition that management method that senior managers adopt is in compliance with the one that entry level young managers expect from them, job satisfaction is ensured. There are particular limitations in this study. In the study, career change was explained through Turkish cultural values and opinions of respondents. It is considered different results could be obtained in future studies to be carried out on different cultures.

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