On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.

An Exploration of Why Employees Choose to Leave Food Service Jobs

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Introduction

The data analysis below is seeking to understand what are some potential predictors of dissatisfaction for employees in the foodservice industry, leading to their decision to leave a position.

Rationale for the Study

Turnover rate in the hospitality industry reaches over 70% in 2016 (National Restaurant Association, 2017). Therefore we are interested in examining the antecedents of why restaurant employees leave their organizations.

More specifically, we examine how polychronicity (a person's preference on conducting multiple activities simultaneously), work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational identification, and job performance influence restaurant servers' decision of leaving their job.

This study consists of 244 participants recruited from Qualtrics. Participants are all full-time restaurant employees who are in non-supervisory roles working in full-service restaurant throughout the United States.

In the questionnaire, polychronicity was measured by 9 questions, sample questions including “I like to juggle several activities at the same time”, “I prefer to do one thing at a time (reversed scored)”. Job satisfaction was measured by 5 questions including "I consider my job pleasant", "I find real enjoyment in my work". Work engagement was measured with 9 questions including “When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work”, “At my work, I feel bursting with energy”. Job performance was measured with 7 questions including "I am a top performer". Organization identification was measured with 6 questions including "Our restaurant’s success is my success". Turnover intention was measured with 6 questions including "It is very likely that I will actively look for a new job in the next year." All questions were measured with a seven-point scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Demographic questions include Gender, Ethnicity, Marital Status, Education, Tenure, and Income.

Beginning exploratory statistics, looking for clues on how to proceed.

Before we jump into building regression models. We need to test for normality of the data set.

Studies have shown that a person's preference of conducting multiple tasks within the same time block (Polychronicity) differs from man to women.

Therefore, we will use t-test to examine the difference.

Now let's take a look at some how to use regression to develop models.

Lasso Regression

f\_regression/Feature regression

R-square is 25% which means polychronicity and job performance explain 25% of the variance in turnover intention.

Recursive Feature Selection (RFE)

Based on the results of RFE, it seemed like polychronicity, job performance, and work engagement are the three predictors that explain most of the variance in turnover intention. Compared to f\_regression (polychronicity, job performance and organizational identification), the model suggestions look quite different. Let's Random Forest Regressor and see if it can help verify the model.

Random Forest Regressor

It seems like Random Forest Regressor suggests to use organizational identification, job performance, and job satisfaction as predictors of the model.

Since all of the different regression models suggest using slightly different predictors. We will try to tie previous literature and empirical research to test different models.

Now let's look at R-square of different models that contain different number of predictors based on previous literature review.

Seems like the second model which contains polychronicity and work engagement explain most of the variance in turnover intention with the least number of predictors.

We will use polychronicity and work engagement as predictors.

Based on the correlation and regression analysis, we concluded that:

1. Polychronicity positively correlates with work engagement, meaning the more polychronic-oriented the servers were, the more they engaged with their job.

2. Polychronicity positively correlated with turnover intention, meaning the more polychronic-oriented the servers were, the more likely they were to leave their organization. This is an interesting finding which contradicts with previous literature. Consider polychronic-oriented employees believe in switching and engaging with multiple tasks, they might like to involve themselves with more than one job and therefore be more active in the job market, constantly looking for better career opportunities and more challenging work roles.

3. Work engagement negatively correlated with turnover intention, meaning the more engaged the servers were with their jobs, the less likely they were to leave their organization.

Based on the finding of this study, we suggest:

1. Management should conduct tests to assess candidate's’ level of polychronicity in order to better place candidates with jobs that will capitalize on their abilities

2. Once appropriate candidates are hired, the key is to retain polychronic-oriented servers through high level of work engagement.

3. Management could try to assign busier section of the restaurant or assign an extra table to highly performed polychronic-oriented servers. Also, providing them with career development opportunities such as promotion to a bartender, a shift leader, or even a manager might be considered in order to motivate and enhance level of challenge and work engagement of polychronic-oriented employees.