



The Impact of Labour Turnover on Organizational Effectiveness and Performance in the Law Enforcement Agencies in the Northern Region of Malawi

Kennedy Mwakaswaya

(*kmwakaswayak@gmail.com*)

MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN FINANCE AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
DMI-ST.EUGENE UNIVERSITY, ZAMBIA

Date of Submission: 10-03-2023

Date of Acceptance: 23-03-2023

ABSTRACT

Background: The Malawi Law Enforcement Agencies have been plagued by employee turnover, and sadly, little information is available in the country, despite the significant studies on the topic globally.

Aim: This study, therefore, aimed at assessing the Impact of Labour Turnover on Organizational Effectiveness and Performance in the Law Enforcement Agencies in the Northern Region of Malawi.

Method: A cross-sectional study was executed, and participants were purposefully selected. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data, and it was processed using Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions tables and percentages were used to present the data. Additionally, content analysis was also engaged on qualitative data.

Result: The study noted that more females (82.9%) than males (17.1%) terminated employment, reflecting the overall gender imbalance in the study field, and job-related factors determined the termination. Also, domestic issues (33%) and seeking green pastures elsewhere (31%) were the most significant *personal causes*; insubordination (92%) was the record *unavoidable cause*, and low wages (31%), lack of proper accommodation (25%) were the main significant *avoidable causes*. However, lack of training and training facilities, lack of job security and long hours of work, retrenchment and accidents were insignificant.

Conclusion

For achievement of our Vision 2063, under Enabler 2 (*Effective Governance Systems and Institutions*), the Law Enforcement Agencies must control and prevent the employee turnover to ensure sustainable peace and security. Therefore, conducive working conditions must be created for healthy and efficiency of services. In addition, Law Enforcement Agencies needs to analyze recruitment and retention patterns, survey job satisfaction, identify employees who are likely to quit and conduct exit and stay interviews. Furthermore, Law Enforcement Agencies to allow the employees to have a voice whether it be through grievance procedures, consistent appraisals or even surveys to gauge employee attitude

I. INTRODUCTION

The exact definition of what constitutes employee turnover varies from one research study to another. Price (1977) defines turnover as “the degree of individual movement across the membership boundaries of a social system” (p.4). When a group of employees is considered a social system, this definition applies and includes accession and the hiring of new employees within an organization. Mobley’s (1982) definition most accurately reflects the conceptual position of this research, and it states that turnover is “the cessation of membership in an organization by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization”

Several significant studies, especially prior to 1980, focused primarily on the causes of turnover (Mueller & Price, 1989; Price, 1977;



Staw, 1980). Some employee turnover are cause by job-related factors, those within the direct control of the employer. For instance, dissatisfaction with working conditions, supervising conflicts, scheduling conflicts or salary discrepancies. In addition, others are non-job-related causes, and are things in the employee's personal life that impact their performance in the workplace. These includes relocation, family problems and chemical abuse.

Globally, the problem of employee turnover has been one of the most studied topics in organizational history (Schwab, 1991). However, in the country, there has been no prior similar study focusing on Law Enforcement Agencies, and recently, it been plagued of the turnover, for there are no clear solutions to the problem. This study provides relevant information that can be used as an input in addressing labour turnover, since its main objective was to investigate the Impact of Labour turnover on Organizational Effectiveness and Performance in the Law enforcement Agencies. Specifically, this study, identified the type of employees who terminate employment, identified the causes (*factors*) of employee turnover, and also determined the possible opportunities for the employer to decrease future employee turnover within the Law enforcement Agencies

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are a few generally accepted models of employee turnover. The first model suggests that turnover is either voluntary or involuntary, whereby an employee has chosen to leave or been forced to leave organization, respectively (Jackofsky, 1984). The model, significantly varies from an employee and an employer viewpoints, and if a below par performer resigns due to firing threats, unattractive working hours or assignments, it is recorded as voluntary, but since it is not their desire to leave, it should be treated separately.

Another model, generally describes it as job-related or non-job-related, and also lack of fit within the organization (Ulschak & Snowantle, 1992). Job-related factors, are those within the direct control of the employer. For instance, dissatisfaction with working conditions, supervising conflicts, scheduling conflicts or salary discrepancies. In addition, non-job-related causes, are things in the employee's personal life that impact their performance in the workplace, and includes relocation, family problems, marital issues, emotional instability or mental health, addictions, and chemical abuse.

Lastly, lack of fit within the organization model, involves employees who were so uncomfortable in the work environment that they could not continue the employment, either because are unqualified and struggling to fulfilling the position, or qualified but their working environment is unsuitable (*wrongly placed*).

In general, a booming economy has several prosperous benefits, yet attracting and keeping competent loyal employees isn't one of them. Despite the overall prosperity of the economy, it is getting harder and harder to find qualified employees to fill positions (Gardner, 1986). Accordingly, staff turnover has both positive and negative effects whereby the positive effect include: new ideas and skills being introduced into the company, it opens up promotion channel for employees, it helps in reducing redundancy in the organization and it also helps in replacement of poor performers (Ampomah, 2016). And, the negative effect involve: loss of skilled manpower, additional cost of replacement recruitment, poor quality of work and difficulties in attracting new staff affect the organization most.

According to Mobley (1982) and Staw (1980), decreased satisfaction among employees who stay may lead to their demoralization and affect their performance and the organization's effectiveness. Mabindisa (2013) further highlighted that, if staff turnover is not taken into consideration, it will cause the productivity of the organisation to decrease, customers will lose trust in the organisation and that it will damage the image of the organisation in addition to the fact that employees will be demotivated to work for an organization with a high staff turnover rate.

Zeeshan et al, (2016) assert that organizations all over the world are giving more attention and assigning importance to employee turnover as they know that high levels employee's turnover slow down the performance of the employees as well as of the organization and that it inflates the expenses related to recruitment and new employee training.

Depending on the level of the position, replacements may infuse the organization with new skills and knowledge, and give the organization the ability to make use of new technology (Mobley, 1982). Mobley stresses further that, losses in productivity while replacement employees are hired and retrained are also incurred. In addition, while the costs of lower-level employee turnover often focus solely on financial aspects, turnover of



higher-level individuals is often attributed to disruption or demoralization effects (Staw, 1980).

While the administration of employee turnover has generated much interest in security, there has been limited research in the security sector. This is also evidenced with Mobley's (1982) publications referring to approximately 100 articles or presentations in the security sector, but limited attention has been devoted to its study in the sector. Despite the lack of research in the security sector, the fact remains that Law Enforcement Agencies rank among the highest in turnover when compared with other organizations (Keaveney, 1992). In the security sector, high turnover is expected at the associate job level because many of these positions are part-time, the hourly wage is low, and they encompass many of the reasons discussed above that aid in causing high turnover.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design, Study Area and Population

A cross-sectional study was carried out to determine the impact of staff turnover on organizational performance of Northern Region Law Enforcement Agencies. The participants were sampled current, and former employees.

Sampling procedure and Sample Size

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants, and then simple random sampling was used to recruit the final participants from the sampling frame. The sample size was 96, and was calculated using the single proportion formula¹. However, but due to high 'attrition' (*loss of participants*), 49 people were interviewed.

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire administered to the sampled officers through face-to-face interviews. Secondary data was obtained from the reports of the department. Confidentiality and privacy was observed by coding the data, and it was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), and descriptive statistics presented the findings. In addition, 'thematization', a qualitative analysis, to identify the main themes that emerged from the interviews' responses was conducted.

¹ $n = \frac{z^2(1-p)p}{e^2}$ | n=sample size, z=confidence interval (95%), p= prevalence rate (50%), e=absolute error (50%)



IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Personal Causes of Employee Turnover

Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative %
Domestic Reasons	16	33	33
Retirement	10	20	53
Accidents	0	0	53
Women taking household duties	0	0	53
Dislike for job or place	3	6	59
Death	5	10	69
Finding better job	15	31	100
Others	0	0	100

Table 2 Unavoidable Cause of Employee Turnover

Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative %
Discharge due to insubordination	45	92	92
Continued or long absence from work	4	8	100
Retrenched due to shortage of work	0	0	100

Table 3 Avoidable Causes of Employee Turnover

Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative %
Low wages or allowances	15	31	31
Unsatisfactory working conditions	0	0	31
Job dissatisfaction	4	8	39
Long hours of work	0	0	39
Lack of promotion opportunities	5	10	49
Unfair methods of promotion	5	10	59
Lack of training	0	0	59
Lack of job security	0	0	59
Lack of accommodation	12	25	84
Lack of training facilities	0	0	84
Unsympathetic attitude of management	8	16	100

Results indicated that, domestic issues (33%), seeking green pasture elsewhere (31%), and retirement (20%) had high significance rate (*domestic factors*). Accidents and women taking household duties were insignificant. Refer Table 1.

Furthermore, the major unavoidable factor was discharge due to insubordination (92%), thus, failure to carry out instructions as advised by senior officer, and also by overdue-absence from work (8%), and retrenchments was insignificant. This implies that, MLEA is already understaffed, and thus, hardly retrench, instead annually recruits to replace staff that leave due to the cited reasons. Refer table 2.

In addition, the study noted that low wages (31%), lack of proper accommodation (25%) were the main significant avoidable causes. Also, unsympathetic attitude of management (16%),lack

or unfair promotion opportunities (10%), job dissatisfaction (8%) were significant factors. Lack of training and training facilities, lack of job security and long hours of work were insignificant, suffices to that, MLEA is doing quite a lot in these area. Check table 3.

The study noted that, two-thirds of the employees who terminated employment, had been with MLEA for twelve (12) months or less. Among them, 16.6% left without notice, and 13.4% left for other employment in MLEA. Precisely, more females (82.9%) than males (17.1%) left MLEA, reflecting the overall gender imbalance evidenced in the departments. Job related reasons were most frequently given as the reason for leaving by employees.

The study identified several opportunities to reduce or control staff turnover in the organization, and



there are highlighted below. The Law Enforcement Agencies must control and prevent the employee turnover to ensure sustainable peace and security. Therefore, good working conditions which may be conducive to healthy and efficiency should be provided. In addition, Law Enforcement Agencies needs to analyze recruitment and retention patterns, survey job satisfaction, identify employees who are likely to quit and conduct exit and stay interviews. Furthermore, Law Enforcement Agencies to allow the employees to have a voice whether it be through grievance procedures, consistent appraisals or even surveys to gauge employee attitude.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Normal employee turnover is sometimes advantageous because it helps in the injection of fresh blood into the organization by allowing people with new ideas, skills and attitudes join the firm. This enables the organization to grow and stay fresh. However, excessive employee turnover is not desirable because it can disrupt day to day operations as people leave and take their knowledge and skills with them. In addition to that escalating turnover can affect morale and productivity the staff.

Therefore, with respect to this study findings, and to ensure sustainable peace and security in the country, for achievement of Vision 2063, we recommends:

✓ The framing of the human resource policy to ensure efficiency of services (*recruit right personnel, and ensure equity in in treatment of all the officers*).

✓ Create conducive working conditions for staff welfare (*e.g. good houses, improved wages*) and efficiency of services. An environment must offer more life security and job security and stability, interesting work and respectable supervisors.

✓ Introduce incentive plans whereby efficient officers must be rewarded accordingly, to enhance performance and reduce turnover, and establish a talent management system which could include coaching, mentoring, job rotation, and job expansion.

✓ An employee suggestion box scheme should be introduced, and rewards the officers with good suggestions on improvements in methods of service delivery, and also, increase employees' participation in management to improve working relationship.

✓ Promote transformational and transactional leadership while shunning avoidant leadership, and periodically, analyse recruitment and retention patterns, survey job satisfaction, identify employees who are likely to quit and conduct exit and stay interviews

That said, therefore, the Law Enforcement Agencies must remove the avoidable causes which give rise to excessive employee turnover, and send a strong message that the senior management does cares about their welfare. The study did not include education information in the demographics, and therefore, further studies on the relationships between staff qualifications and organizational performance must be conducted.

References and Bibliography

- [1]. Ampomah, P. (2016). The Effect of Training and Development on Employee Performance in a Private Tertiary Institution in Ghana (Case Study: Pentecost University College (Puc) - Ghana). *Asian Journal of Social Sciencis and Management Studies*, Vol. 3 No. 1.
- [2]. Gardner, J. E. (1986). *Stabilizing the workforce: A complete guide to controlling turnover*. Westport: Conn.: Quorum.
- [3]. Jackofsky, E. F. (1984). Turnover and job performance: An Integrated process model. *The Academy of Management Review*, 9(1), 74 -83. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.2307/258234>
- [4]. Keaveney, S. M. (1992). An Empirical investigation of dysfunctional organizational turnover among chain and non-chain retail store buys. *Journal of Retailing* , 63(2), 145-173.
- [5]. Mobley, W. H. (1982). *Employee Turnover: Causes, Consequences, and Control*. New York: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.
- [6]. Mueller, C. W., & Price, J. L. (1989). Some consequences of turnover: A work unit analysis. *Human Relations. SAGE Journals*, volume 42, 89-402. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872678904200502>
- [7]. Price, J. L. (1977). *The Study of Turnover*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
- [8]. Schwab, D. P. (1991). Contextual variables in employee performance-turnover relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 34, 966-975.



- [9]. Staw, B. M. (1980). The consequences of turnover. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 1, 255-273.
- [10]. Ulschak, F., & Snowantle, S. M. (1992). *Managing Employee Turnover: A Guide for Health Care Executives*. Amer Hospital Pub.