

Migration Intention among Hotel Workers in Sri Lanka: Effects of Organisational Commitment and Economic Crisis

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Abstract

Labour migration has increasingly affected Sri Lanka's hospitality sector, with operational-level hotel workers showing high intentions to seek foreign employment. Existing research has rarely examined how organisational commitment and broader economic shocks interact to shape such decisions. This study investigated the determinants of migration intention among Sri Lankan hotel workers, focusing on salary dissatisfaction, job satisfaction, work environment, and organisational commitment, while also considering the moderating role of the economic crisis. The primary objectives were to assess the direct and mediated effects of these factors on migration and turnover intention and to evaluate the extent to which the economic crisis amplifies such effects. A quantitative approach was employed, and data were gathered through a structured questionnaire from 205 purposively selected hotel employees across different operational departments. The standardised measurement scales adapted from prior studies were tested for reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$). Findings from data analysis using multiple regression and moderated mediation techniques (SPSS) revealed that low salary, poor working conditions, and weak organisational commitment significantly increase migration intention. Moreover, the economic crisis amplifies these relationships, underscoring its role as a contextual accelerator of outbound labour mobility. Migration intention also mediates the link between workplace conditions and turnover intention, suggesting a complex decision-making process. The findings provide-theoretical contributions by linking push-pull migration dynamics with organisational commitment under crisis conditions, an area previously overlooked in migration and hospitality research. Practically, it underscores-the need for targeted retention strategies such as improved compensation, better working conditions, and strengthened employee engagement to reduce migration pressure and maintain workforce stability in Sri Lanka's hospitality industry. These insights have implications not only for organisational leaders but also for policymakers seeking to sustain labour in the organisational hospitality sector in Sri Lanka during economic shocks.

Keywords: economic crisis, migration intention, operational hotel employees, organisational commitment, turnover intention