

Mediating Role of Employee Well-Being in Relationship between Health-Oriented Leadership and Turnover Intention among Apparel Sector Lower-Level Employees in Gampaha District of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of health-oriented leadership (HoL) on turnover intention among lower-level employees in the apparel sector of the Gampaha District, Sri Lanka, with a particular focus on the mediating role of employee well-being. High turnover rates in the Sri Lankan apparel sector create challenges such as increased recruitment costs, reduced productivity, and operational disruptions. To address this issue, the study examines whether health-oriented leadership can improve employee retention by enhancing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Drawing on the Job Demands-Resources model, Social Exchange Theory, and Conservation of Resources Theory, the research employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design. Data were collected from 100 lower-level employees through structured questionnaires using convenience sampling. While the sample size is modest, it provides initial insights into the sector and paves the way for larger-scale studies. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses, with the PROCESS macro (Model 4, version 4.2) in SPSS 25. Findings indicate a significant negative relationship between health-oriented leadership and turnover intention ($\beta = -.3509$, $p < 0.05$), and a significant positive relationship between health-oriented leadership and employee well-being ($\beta = .4518$, $p < 0.05$). However, the mediating role of employee well-being on turnover intention was not statistically significant ($\beta = .4630$, $p > 0.05$). These results suggest that health-oriented leadership directly reduces turnover intention, while employee well-being does not significantly mediate this relationship. The study contributes to the underexplored literature on leadership and employee retention in the Sri Lankan apparel sector and provides practical implications for implementing leadership development and well-being programmes to address workforce stability.

Keywords: apparel sector, employee well-being, health-oriented leadership, lower-level employees, turnover intention