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Effect of Time Wastage on Salesforce Retention in FMCGs of Pakistan with mediating role of Intention to Quit.

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ABSTRACT

Retention of talented employees is one of the necessities of employers for the long-term growth and prosperity of any organization. Therefore, keeping in view, the required importance of this factor, this research study has been conducted to investigate and analyze the effect of time wastage on Salesforce retention in FMCGs (fast-moving consumer goods) sector of Pakistan with mediating role of intention to quit. It is important to mention that thinking to leave was out of the scope of this study. This is a quantitative research study. Data collected was cross-sectional using Qualtrics through an online survey. A questionnaire has been used as a tool to collect the data. The unit of analysis was individual and a simple random sampling technique was used. Data is analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM) technique using PLS-SEM on statistical software SmartPLS3. This study has multifaced implications for academicians, practitioners, and policymakers.

Keywords: Time wastage, intentions to quit, retention

1. INTRODUCTION

Frontline line staff members mainly the salesforce are responsible for the success of the organization (Paul & Dissanayake, 2020). The author stated further that no matter how good the strategies are and no matter how good they are designed credit goes to salesforce for all the success coming to organizations. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to retain top-performing salesforce members Butler (2008). The performance of the sales professionals adhered to the time being allocated to various activities. Lack of time affects the performance of sales professionals Rostami et al., (2019) It is evident from the literature related to retention maximum of the studies are conducted regarding employee's retention in the management cadre, little academic research has been

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executed related to retention of employees belonging to the field of sales. According to Adidam (2006), salesforce retention is becoming the most challenging issue for executives in organizations. Although salesforce turnover has been emphasized by the researchers, little research has been conducted on salesforce turnover and retention (Dubas & Hershey, 2007). Hom et al., (2017) mentioned that employee turnover remained an important concern for managers and executives of organizations. When salesforce employees leave, they just don't leave they also put negative effects on current staff retention (Anvari et al., 2014). Therefore, a more in-depth research study is required on salesforce personnel retention. It also affects the organization's ability to attract talented people into the organization according to Anvari et al., 2014). Which in turn affects the overall performance of the organization. Selling and the processes related to it have a direct effect on the financial performance of an organization (Paul & Dissanayake, 2020). Therefore, it is considered important to focus on and investigate the factors, how salesforce personnel could be retained in the organization?

The salesforce personnel is employed in both manufacturing and services industries. This research is related to the manufacturing industry and the focus of the study is FMCGs in Pakistan. FMCGs are the products that are consumed on daily basis (Francis, 2006). The product category is based on food and beverages, personal care products, tobacco, and other household products. Detailed and in-depth study is lacking in the FMCG sector (Mohan & Sequeira, 2016). Therefore, the FMCG sector is chosen in this study. As FMCGs are sales-dependent organizations, this makes them crucial for managers to retain their talented and well-performing salesforce (Butler, 2008). For any sales-based organization, salesforce is a real asset because it adds value and gains a competitive advantage for its organizations over other organizations. But this asset has some risks and uncertainties associated with it. These uncertainties related to salesforce personnel need to be sorted out. However, these issues which are related to salesforce management are unexplored, leaving the gap in the existing literature. This gap needs to be filled with any alternative theoretical rationale. This would be a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge and implementation of suggested strategies would be beneficial for managers and executives to hold the experience and well-performing

salesforce for a much longer period within the organization. Eventually resulting in high revenue generation. Therefore, FMCG sector companies must retain their top sales-generating salesforce employees. But the important question to investigate was why these FMCGs related organizations fail to retain their experience salesforce employees. To get the empirical answer to the question stated, this research study has been executed

1.1. Conceptual Framework

The model for this study is based on earlier studies of Dalessio et al., (1986) and the Bluedorn model (1982). The models of these researchers are based on the Mobley model (1977). O'Connor (2018) stated that Mobley's model was among the initial studies related to turnover. In light of the base models, this research came up with a set of relationships between variables. This relationship was detailed within the frame of reference of salesforce retention.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Research Questions

1. What effect time wastage has on Salesforce retention?
2. What effect time wastage has no intention to quit?
3. What effect does intention to quit have on Salesforce retention?
4. Does intention to quit mediate the relationship between time wastage and Salesforce retention?

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the effect of time wastage on Salesforce retention.
2. To investigate the effect of time wastage on intention to quit.

3. To investigate the effect of intention to quit on Salesforce retention.
4. To investigate the mediating effect of intention to quit between the relationship of time wastage and Salesforce retention.

Hypotheses

H₁: *Time wastage has a negative influence on Salesforce retention.*

H₂: *Time wastage has a positive influence on intention to quit.*

H₃: *Intention to quit has a negative influence on Salesforce retention.*

H₄: *Intention to quit mediates the relationship between time wastage and Salesforce retention.*

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Time is considered as most valuable aspect as sales are concerned for sales professionals Rostami et al., (2019). It changes behavior when it became scarce Rostami et al., (2019). It emerges as an additional pressure along with many others like meeting sales targets and managing relationships. Therefore, sales professionals cannot afford to waste time. Time wasted refers to an individual's belief that their time or their efforts have been used ineffectively (Keenan and Newton, 1985). Time wasted has been linked to activities such as engaging in non-sales-related chores, preparing paperwork and reports, and attending meetings (Locander, 2004). Research indicates that high-performing salespeople spend more time selling and servicing customers and have higher vocational esteem (Brashear, 1997). Thus, salespeople who believe that they can allocate their time to activities that result in high performance are likely to be more satisfied with their jobs, less affected by stress, and happier (Nonis and Sager, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Reinforcement theory suggests that the sense of accomplishment that results from achieving high performance is a powerful motivator (Komaki, 1991). On the other hand, when individuals are engaged in job activities that are perceived as wasteful, they are likely to feel unproductive and become demotivated and unhappy (Locander, 2004). A qualitative study of 133 salespeople revealed that time wasted is one of the most frequently mentioned stressors at work (Narayanan, 1999). Hence, the inefficient allocation of time may result in negative consequences for salespeople and ultimately, the

organization. This is because salespeople believe that a large portion of their productive time is wasted on non-selling tasks instead of pursuing sales opportunities that can help them meet their performance goals (Cummings, 2004). The resulting frustration and stress impact both physical health and emotional well-being (Jex, 1998).

Turnover intention is defined as the desire of the employee to voluntarily leave the job Christy et al., (2019). Cuma Sungur et al., (2019) states that intention to quit refers to looking for a job in an alternative organization because of dissatisfaction with the current job situation. According to turnover researchers' behavioral intentions is predictors of retention (Steel and Ovalle, 1984). Several literature reviews specify that intention to leave is the most common factor to determine turnover behavior (Bluedom, 1982). Tett and Meyer (1993) state that purposively and deliberately leaving the organization by an employee with his full consciousness is known as turnover intent. According to (Deci & Ryan, 1987) intention is the engagement of a person in any specific behavior with full determination.

Retention is the most important concern of HR managers Redondo et al., (2021). The concept of employee retention according to Gbirevbie (2008) referred to a set of activities or a set of decision-making behavior that is used by firms to retain their competent workforce for performance. Similarly, Akani (2015) referenced, employee retention includes all efforts made by the organization in direction to provide support for current employees to stay with the organization. Singh and Dixit (2011) were of the similar opinion that retaining employees effectively is systematic efforts to create and foster a kind of environment that encourages the existing employees to be remained employed with the organization, by having policies and practices in place.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bonds (2017) referenced that researchers are usually reluctant to use the method or design in the available research literature that is different from what they know or understand. Similarly, stated by Chu (2015) that unfamiliar techniques and methods are generally not used by the researchers who better fit the needs of the study. Data were analyzed through the structural equation molding (SEM) technique using PLS-SEM on

statistical software SmartPLS3. According to Ringle, Sarstedt, Mitchell, and Gudergan (2020) SEM belongs to the multivariate techniques' family and is a widely used method for complex model relationship investigations that determine the attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Two main approaches are followed in SEM (i) partial least square (PLS-SEM) it is component-based approach (ii) CB-SEM it is covariance-based approach (Hair et al., 2014; Ringle et al., 2020). If the object of the researcher is to test or confirm a theory then the CB-SEM approach is more suitable (Ringle et al., 2020). PLS-SEM is suitable in a situation when the researcher intends to predict or wants to develop the theory (Hair, Mathew, Mathews, & Sarstedt, 2017). These advantages made the PLS-SEM able to reduce many CB-SEM limitations related to data and model characteristics. Therefore, the use of PLS-SEM use has expanded in marketing research and practice (Hair et al., 2011). Although CB-SEM and PLS-SEM share the same roots (Jorskog & Wold, 1982; Hair et al., 2012; Ringle et al., 2020) PLS-SEM distinctive methodological features made it an alternative to CB-SEM (Henseler et al., 2009). Therefore, in the light of the above discussion PLS-SEM approach was considered a better option to choose to analyze the data through structural equation modeling technique using SmartPLS3 software. In this research study, the quantitative research method is used. Boeren (2018) stated that the quantitative research method is a method in which data is gathered through the predetermined instrument, collected data is then analyzed statistically. The primary data collection technique is used to collect the data related to the research objectives and hypothesis stated. A survey research design has been used in this research study. The causal model is predicted by examining the relationship between latent variables. Cross-sectional data is collected. Data collection is cross-sectional when the researcher intends to examine the phenomenon or people at the same time, and it is longitudinal when it is examined over two or more periods Barker et al. (2015).

The data gathered for the stated purpose is analyzed on computer-aided statistical software SmartPLS3. According to Sarstedt and Cheah (2019), SmartPLS3 is a detailed and complete software program to carry out analysis related to PLS-SEM and path models. The questionnaire is used as an instrument to collect primary data. As mentioned earlier data has been collected cross-sectionally. Questionnaires are administered through

an online survey using Qualtrics software. It is a software platform that provides data collection and analysis products for conducting market research and academic research (Childs, 2020).

The number of salesforce personnel is the total population, working in selling organizations from the FMCG sector in Pakistan. The targeted population includes salesforce personnel, working in selling organizations listed on KSE 100 index from the FMCG sector in Pakistan. The sample population includes sales representatives working in five organizations listed on KSE 100 index from the FMCG sector with a distribution network available in Pakistan. A simple random sampling technique is used. The unit of analysis is individual salesforce employees.

Table 1. List of Companies

S. No	Category	Company Name	Brands/Products
1	Food	ENGRO Foods	Olper's Milk
			Omore Ice cream
		Fauji Foods	Nurpur Milk
2	Confectionary	English Biscuit Manufacturers	Peek Freans biscuits
		Ismail Industries Limited	Bisconi biscuits
			Candyland candies
3	Personal Care	Unilever Pakistan Limited	Fair & Lovely
			Sunsilk Shampoo
4	Beverages	Murree Brewery Company Limited	Big Apple
			Lemon Malt
		Nestle' Pakistan Limited	Nescafe'
			Fruita Vitals

To measure the turnover intentions of salesforce personnel, which is a salesforce desire to leave an organization was measured with the turnover intention scale published in literature by Bothma and Roodt (2013) known as TIS-6. To measure the retention of salesforce, the Moncarz et al. (2009) scale was utilized. To measure the time wastage variable scale used by Rostami et al., (2019) was adopted. All the items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to strongly disagree”. The reliability coefficients fall within an acceptable range of 0.76-0.92 using Cronbach's

Alpha reliability analysis.

For data collection, a survey method was used. The instrument used to collect the data was a questionnaire. An online survey was administered through Qualtrics due to COVID 19 pandemic restrictions.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Empirical findings are presented in this section. The process of screening the collected data is essential for protecting the scrupulousness and correctness of the statistical tests. The suggestions of Hair et al. (2014) were followed for data screening and SPSS (version 21) was used for carrying out the related tests for data screening.

PLS-SEM

PLS-SEM is suitable in a situation when the researcher intends to predict or wants to develop the theory (Hair, Mathew, Mathews, & Sarstedt, 2017). All the assumptions were met to carry out PLS-SEM. Data characteristics also met the requirement to run PLS-SEM. No missing data was found. The normality of the data was checked as one of the requirements. Collinearity assessment was carried out by computing the VIF of each item and found to be in an acceptable range. Internal consistency reliability was checked by Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability (CR) values (Hair et al., 2014). The value of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) higher than 0.70 and below 0.95 ensures internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2017). Convergent validity was measured by values of average variance extracted (AVE). All the values were found in an acceptable range of above 0.50.

Table 2. Internal Consistency

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Time wastage (TW)	0.912	0.922	0.912
Intention to Quit (ITQ)	0.918	0.926	0.918
Salesforce Retention (SR)	0.895	0.898	0.895

Table 3. Convergent Validity

Constructs	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
TW	0.751
ITQ	0.810
SR	0.738

Path Coefficients

The structural model is assessed by analyzing the path coefficients. It is similar to regression coefficients which represent the relationship between constructs (Hair et al., 2014). The values fall between +1 to -1. Closer to +1 indicates a strong positive relationship and closer -1 indicates a strong negative relationship (Hair et al., 2014).

Figure 2. Path Model

Table 4. Path Coefficients							
Hypothesis	Path Coefficients	SD	t-values	p-values	Confidence Interval		Decision
					2.5%	97.5%	
TW -> SR	-0.134	0.050	2.667	0.008	-0.041	-0.236	Supported
TW -> ITQ	0.261	0.085	3.161	0.002	0.425	0.089	Supported
ITQ -> SR	-0.714	0.053	13.434	0.000	-0.821	-0.612	Supported

Coefficients of Determination

The values of R² of all endogenous variables need to be observed. Values of R² to 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 are weak, moderate, and strong respectively (Hair et al., 2014). All the values are found significant.

Table 5. R square/Model Quality							
Constructs	R Square	SD	t-values	p-values	Confidence Interval		Decision
					2.5%	97.5%	
TW	0.096	0.039	2.399	0.016	0.031	0.174	Significant
ITQ	0.581	0.051	10.083	0.000	0.467	0.671	Significant
SR	0.598	0.068	9.011	0.000	0.461	0.722	Significant

Mediation Analysis

For mediation analysis, guidelines suggested by Zhao et al., (2010) are followed.

Table 6. Mediation Analysis											
Hypothesis	Total Effect		Direct Effect		Indirect Effect						
	β - values	p- values	β - value	p- values	β - values	SD	t- value	p- values	Confidence Interval		Decision
									2.50%	97.50%	
TW $\rightarrow$ ITQ $\rightarrow$ SR	0.318	0.000	0.134	0.008	0.195	0.065	3.030	0.002	0.068	0.323	Complementary

5. DISCUSSION

Path coefficients analysis is carried out to assess the structural model. The path coefficients analysis is much like regression coefficient analysis. Path coefficients represent the hypothesized relationship between constructs (Hair et al., 2014). The values of standardized path coefficients fall between +1 to -1. Closer to +1 predicts a strong positive relationship and closer to -1 predicts a strong negative relationship (Hair et al., 2014). Complete bootstrapping was performed, and its relevance was considered according to the recommendations of Ringle et al., (2020). For the mediation analysis the guidelines of Zhao et al., (2010) were followed.

H₁: *Time wastage has a negative influence on Salesforce retention.*

H1 evaluates whether TW has a significant negative effect on SR. It is revealed that TW has significant negative effect on SR ($\beta = -0.134$, $t = 2.667$, $p < 0.10$). Hence hypothesis H1 has been supported (see table 4).

H₂: *Time wastage has a positive influence on intention to quit.*

H2 evaluates whether TW has a significant positive effect on ITQ. It is revealed that TW has significant positive effect on ITQ ($\beta = 0.261$, $t = 3.161$, $p < 0.005$). Hence hypothesis H2 has been supported (see table 4).

H₃: *Intention to quit has a negative influence on Salesforce retention.*

H3 evaluates whether ITQ has a significant negative effect on SR. It is revealed that ITQ has significant negative effect on SR ($\beta = -0.714$, $t = 13.434$, $p < 0.001$). Hence hypothesis H3 has been supported (see table 4).

H₄: *Intention to quit mediates the relationship between time wastage and Salesforce retention.*

For H₄, mediation analysis was performed to measure the mediation role of ITQ on the linkage between TW and SR. The indirect effect of TW on SR through ITQ was found significant ($\beta = 0.195$, $t = 3.030$, $p < 0.005$). This shows that the relationship between TW and SR is complementary (partial mediation) by ITQ. Hence hypothesis H₄ has been supported (see table 6).

6. CONCLUSION

Proper time management is required to avoid time wastage. Salesforce employees give time and emotion to their duty to be performed in the best possible way. It is an outdoor task that they do. Its nature is different from those jobs which are carried out on deck under the roof sitting in a cold atmosphere. In worst weather conditions it became more difficult to carry out the daily tasks related to office work. Therefore, it is understandable that Salesforce personnel after covering the field feel tired. And with this all managers and executive demand to fill the papers to describe the daily meeting activity with new and old clients along with visits details. Managers and executives need to realize that Salesforce personnel are putting extra effort into their jobs. Therefore, it is unjustified to demand extra time or to spare time from the field. This unjust attitude cause dissatisfaction leading to intention to quit and eventually leads to actual turnover. It is primarily the job of the organization to avoid dissatisfactory elements to retain the experienced and top-performing sales staff. It would be better to focus on management information system tools supported by technologically advanced equipment to carry all the necessary inputs in real-time while being in the field.

Future Recommendation

1. Time wastage can be analyzed for its effect on the intention to quit with mediation and moderation of variables like stress, workload, and employee relationship.
2. This study was cross-sectional by nature. In the future longitudinal or time-series, data can be used.

3. To record the behavioral responses of the Salesforce employees interviews can be used in future research studies.
4. In future research studies other than the FMCG sector other industrial sectors can be used to study the variable of retention related to Salesforce.
5. Intention to quit can be studied in relationship with other variables like thinking to quit.

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