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Discussion # 3

The National Commission on the Public Service and the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs have issued different reports highlighting the issue of high turnover in the federal government. These concerns are however as old as the American republic. Policymakers in Washington, D.C. are making efforts to reduce employee turnover in the U.S. federal government. Different factors responsible for employee turnover are individual characteristics, employee insolences, organizational situations as well as managerial practices. Sun Young Kim and Sergio Fernandez have proposed the strategy of employee empowerment to reduce employee turnover in the public sector. Employee empowerment refers to the psychological state of employees in which they experience enhanced intrinsic task motivation at work. This is a multifaceted managerial approach that requires information and resources sharing in addition to rewarding frontline employees. Until the 1990s, there was no extensive use of employee empowerment programs. However today different industries are using these approaches such as food and hospitality, nursing, education, and government.

To check the effectiveness of this approach, there is the use of a theoretical model. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can be used to check the effectiveness of employee empowerment over job satisfaction. SDT theorizes about an innate tendency of people towards their growth and progress. This intrinsic motivation requires relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Organizational then use different policies, supervisory styles as well as other managerial interventions to satisfy the needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy.

Moreover, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test this model. The variables in this analysis include employee empowerment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. The required data for this has been taken from the U.S. Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted this survey including 540,727 federal government employees. The results of the study are showing positive effects of employee empowerment on turnover intention.

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