STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER: CASE-STUDY OF A TEA MANUFACTURING COMPANY

H.Y.M. Abesinghe; H.H.D. Madhumal; W.K.N. Shashikala; K.K. Kapiyangoda

Department of Management and Organization Studies
Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Colombo
yashodhamaheshi9@gmail.com; damithmadhumal98@gmail.com;
shashi.getwin@gmail.com; kumudukapiyangoda@mos.cmb.ac.lk

ABSTRACT

This study explores the employee turnover of a tea manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. It identifies the factors that contribute to the labour turnover of MND (pseudonym used to maintain anonymity) and propose strategies to overcome the high employee turnover. Accordingly, Person Environment Fit Theory (PEFT) is incorporated as a theoretical lens to illuminate data. A qualitative case study approach is adopted for this study and seventeen employees attached to MND were interviewed. The factors which affect labour turnover at MND were identified as: heavy work load and high work pressure, low wage rate, long working hours, unclear job roles, less appealing work environment, lack of opportunity for career development, lack of fringe benefits, weak relationship with supervisors and weak relationship with peers. From these factors the working environment; relationships with supervisors and team members did not have a major impact on triggering employee turnover. This study also proposes the strategies to overcome the high employee turnover: easing off the pressure put on employees to reach targets by hiring the required number of employees; paying an industry par wage rate; giving appropriate breaks for employees to ensure that they are not over worked; and offering a job roles for employees specifying the tasks expected by them. To strengthen employees' attachment to organization, MND could improve the work environment, provide opportunities for employees to develop their career and provide more fringe benefits. However, our study identified that person team fit and person supervisor fit did not have a significant impact in the increase of labour turnover at MND.

Key Words: *Employee turnover; Tea manufacturing company; Tea industry; Person Environment Fit Theory; Case study*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Organizations often consider about gaining competitive advantage over the rivals (Liyanage & Galhena, 2014) through physical capital resources, organizational capital resources and human capital (Liyanage & Galhena, 2014). Under this context, human resources are considered to be amongst the most important asset of every organization which determines organizational success, productivity and performance (Amarathunga, 2016).

Employee turnover is a serious problem which directly affects retaining highly talented and valued people in the organization (Lee et al., 2006) which negatively affect smooth flow of day to day operations (Amarathunge, 2016) and productivity (Rajapakshe, 2018). Therefore the managers should control employee turnover for the benefit of the organizational success. Most of the manufacturing industries mainly depend on their workforce for their production though some firms utilize latest technology for automation (Ramlall, 2003 as cited in Umamaheswari & Krishnan, 2015, p. 260). Tea is among the most labour intensive plantation crops which possesses both agricultural and manufacturing dimensions (Sivaram, 1996).

Under the above backdrop, this study aims to identify the factors which affect high operational level employee turnover of a tea manufacturing company (i.e. MND) and propose strategies to overcome this issue. Tea industry has been strengthening the Sri Lankan economy for more than a century. However, looking at the statistics few years ago, its contribution towards the economy is declining as a result of the low planting rate, low productivity, reduction in tea growing land and labour shortage (Thushara, 2015).

1.2 Research problem

MND (hypothetical name is used since the real name of the company cannot be divulged) is a renowned tea manufacturing company in Sri Lanka. To carry out manufacturing activities the organization requires a large number of operational level employees. The organization possesses 80 operational level employees and recruits them as permanent employees. However as per the internal records of MND, it suffers 20%-25% employee turnover rate each year which is higher than the manufacturing industrial average. Accordingly, this study aims to identify the factors which affect

high operational level employee turnover of MND and proposes strategies to overcome this issue in light of Person Environment Fit Theory (PEFT).

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To identify the factors which contribute to the labour turnover at MND.
2. To propose strategies that can be used to overcome the high labour turnover at MND through PEFT.

1.4 Significance and Contributions of the study

This study brings together two strands of literature: employee turnover and PEFT. And provides insights on how employee turnover could be controlled in the tea industry at large. Eventhough prior studies have focused on employee turnover, there is dearth of research done in the area of tea manufacturing industry. Therefore this research aims to fill this lacuna in research through exploring the tea manufacturing company's labour turnover.

This research also contributes to practicing managers in tea manufacturing companies. It illustrates how managers can manage labour turnover issues while providing strategies to minimize high labour turnover. Accordingly this study provides practical solutions and strategies which could be useful for practicing managers in reducing the labour turnover.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Labour Turnover

Labour turnover can be defined as the ratio of the number of members who left the organization during the period, divided by the average number of employees in the organization during the period (Iqubal, 2010). The issue of labour turnover has triggered instability in organizations which has become more significant when key talented employees depart, especially during heightened competition (Elanain, 2014; Kotze & Roodt, 2005; Truss et al., 2012 as cited in Bester et al., 2015, p. 4).

2.2 Factors affecting employee turnover

Studies have identified that employee turnover increases in a situation where physical working conditions are poor. As an example, disturbing environmental

conditions (Rizwan et al., 2013) such as poor illumination, temperature, unpleasant noise and ventilation will lead to higher turnover rates (Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017; Hope & Mackin, 2016).

Furthermore, labour turnover increases due to people related factors. As an example, relatively poor relationship between employees and managers lead to high labour turnover (Ugoani, 2016). In addition, lack of managerial capabilities to fulfil the needs of the employees in an office environment lead to employee turnover. As an example instability in the management, inability to facilitate proper working environment, inability to provide safety equipments while discharging hazardous duties (Mamun & Hasan, 2017) and inability to pay wages on a regular basis (Rizwan et al., 2013) lead to high labour turnover (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). However, talented employees are willing to continue work in organizations if the management implements an appreciative learning and working climate (Govaerts et al., 2011 as cited in Gamage, 2014, p. 21).

Researchers have showed that role ambiguity creates unclear job responsibilities and increase tension which augments turnover intention of employees (Chena et al., 2011; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984). Furthermore, higher repetitive, routine work dissatisfy employees which could lead to negative behaviour such as absenteeism and labour turnover (Mishra et al., 2015). On a related note, studies have illuminated that employees' lack of perceived support for participation in human resource development practices (Fulmore et al., 2022) and lack of talent management practices (Kumar, 2021) influence employee turnover intent. Similarly, Kengatharan (2020) illuminated that there is a significant negative relationship between perceived over-qualification and job satisfaction which could ultimately lead to employee turnover.

Number of personal factors also lead to employee turnover. Accordingly, personal fulfilment and travel requirements (Hope & Mackin, 2007), lack of training and employment security (Siva & Krishnan, 2015; Gialuisi & Coetzar, 2013), lack of potential to career development (Boudreau, 1998 as cited in Chin, 2018, p.59; Chin, 2018), lack of salary increments (Gialuisi & Coetzar, 2013) and inability to maintain work life balance (Siva & Krishnan, 2015) also lead to high labour turnover.

3. Theoretical Background
3.1. Overview of person-environment fit theory
PEFT illuminates the compatibility between an individual and the work

environment. Four types of fits have been identified in line with this theory: person organization fit; person group fit; person job fit; and person supervisor fit (Bam et al., 2019). It is expected that when person environment fit is high, employee's job attitudes and performance increase (Zacher et al., 2014).

Person–organization fit identifies "the compatibility between people and organizations when one entity provides what the other needs or they share fundamental characteristics" (Kristof, 1996 as cited in Bam et al., 2019, p. 766). Person organization fit is focused at the organizational level and concerns the match between the worker, organizational culture and organizational socialization processes (Chatman, 1989 as cited in Werbel & Johnson, 2001). Person–job fit identifies the fit between the demands of a job and the abilities of an individual (Chuang et al., 2016 as cited in Bam et al., 2019). Person job fit is the relationship between employee characteristics and job characteristics. When the job fit increases, job satisfaction and organizational commitment increases while reducing turnover intention.

Group fit considers the interpersonal compatibility between individuals and their work groups (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The work group includes the immediate co-workers or colleagues within any sub-unit of the organization (Kristof, 1996 as cited in Bam et al., 2019, p. 766). Person– supervisor fit considers the match between an employee and a supervisor in terms of value congruence, personality similarity, goal congruence etc. (Kristof, 1996 as cited in Bam et al., 2019, p. 766).

3.2 Person-environment fit theory in prior research

PEFT has been incorporated popularly in the management and human resource research arena. Studies have incorporated this theory to illuminate how employee age affects occupational strain and wellbeing (Zacher et al., 2014), developing a conceptual model for team creativity (Bam et al., 2019), recruiting right staff to fit the job (Makkonen, 2015), employee knowledge sharing (Min, 2017), matching employee skills and knowledge with the suited jobs (Choi et al., 2020) and matching attitudes and behaviour of employees with rewards (Jiang & Gu, 2015).

3.3 Person Environment Fit theory, employee retention and employee turnover

Studies have incorporated PEFT in illuminating employee retention and employee turnover. Researchers have illuminated that the fit between the person and

the environment is an important predictor of work-related outcomes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Cable et al., 1996 as cited in Ahmad, 2012). In this relation Vogel and Felman (2009) suggested that person environment fit is a predictor of staff turnover intention (as cited in Ahmad, 2012, p. 66).

3.3.1 Person organization fit

With an emphasis on person organization fit, researchers have illuminated that organizational culture must be aimed at improving overall person-environment fit which would lead to reduce the turnover intension of employees (Ahmad, 2012). When the job allows promotion and development to employees, the employees get more favourable to the job (Yang et al., 2008) which would increase the job satisfaction, motivation, job performance and reduce the absenteeism (Loher et al., 1985 as cited in Yang et al., 2008). Furthermore with these factors, when an employee's actual career advancement is close to the employee preferred level, employee turnover intention will reduce (Yang et al., 2008; Tremblay & Roger, 1993 as cited in Yang et al., 2008).

3.3.2 Person – supervisor fit and person- team fit

High quality relationships in the organizations also assist for employees to gain more social support from supervisors and co-workers to accomplish tasks and cope with negative emotions, which will help increase job satisfaction and well-being and decrease turnover intention (Ensel et al., 1981 as cited in Yang et al., 2008). In addition, Lyons and Brien (2006) suggest that the person-supervisor fit and person- team fit reduce the stress level of employees at work. Yang et al. (2008) illustrated that relationships at work and how well people get along with one another at workplace influence employees' well-being and job satisfaction.

In order to develop effective interpersonal interactions, it is important for team members to share certain beliefs and values within the group. When shared, these beliefs and values become critical group norms. Research demonstrates that those who accept group norms are likely to express more favourable positive work attitudes than those who do not accept the group norms (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Complementary person-group fit occurs when newcomers have distinctive qualities or characteristics that complement or support the characteristics of the other group members (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Accordingly, group performance is

enhanced when the deficiencies of one team member are complemented by the strengths of another team member.

3.3.4 Person job fit

Iqubal (2016) showed that person-job fit is highly associated with job satisfaction. If employees do not have insufficient abilities and skills to fulfil job requirements, they become dissatisfied leading to employee turnover. And also, when employees feel that their needs, demands are fulfilled, then their job satisfaction will be high. Person job fit has a positive relationship with performance and commitment of employees, but it has negative relationship with turnover intentions of workers (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012).

4. Research Design

4.1 Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative methodology represents the subjectivity of the researcher. In qualitative methodology, objectives and values of the research and how these affect the research project is reflected by researchers (Ratner, 2002).

Qualitative research gives priority to in depth and rich data. Qualitative researches are interested in nonnumeric expressions of data. Through qualitative research, we can get an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. Interview is a most important method of collecting data in qualitative research (Anyan, 2013). Qualitative research methodology mostly focusses on exploring "How" and "Why" research questions. Similarly, in our study, we used "Why" research questions.

4.2 Case Study Approach

Case study research allows exploration and understanding of complex issues while allowing to go in depth of the research context. It can be considered a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in depth investigation is required (Yin, 2018). In our research study, we use a single site case study because it allows us to go in depth the research site and gather in depth evidence to explore the reasons for high employee turnover at MND and to propose strategies to control its employee turnover.

4.3 Research Site - MND Company

MND is a tea manufacturing organization which was established in 1982, situated in the Mathara district. MND only engages with the tea manufacturing activities and does not deal with the tea planting activities. The tea planting companies supply their raw

tea leaves to MND. Thereafter, the raw tea leaves are transferred into the manufacturing process. MND only buys tea leaves from selected organizations with whom they have built strong relationships. Mainly, the organization buys raw tea leaves from 10 suppliers and those suppliers supply quality raw tea leaves for the production of the MND. It has four major customers and does not engage with the export activities. Eventhough the company has been reaping profits throughout the years, its employee turnover rate among the operational level employees is 20-25% which is high.

4.4 Data collection methods

4.4.1. Interviews

The main method of data collection for this study is interviews. Its objective is to find out the factors of labour turnover and propose strategies to reduce the labour turnover. To achieve these objectives, we used semi-structured interviews guided by an interview guide. For collecting data, we focused on managers, employees and trade union members of MND.

Interviews can be used to explore how individuals make sense of their personal and social worlds and the meanings that particular experiences hold for them. Through semi-structured interviews, we were able to understand better interviewees' realities focusing individual situations and contexts (Raigangar & Hawamdeh, 2014). To make the interviewee feel relaxed and unassessed most of the data were gathered by informal conversation (Qu & Dumay, 2011)

4.4.2 Documentary Analysis

Documentary analysis includes observation of institutional memorandum, reports, census publications and other written, visual and pictorial sources (Ahamed, 2010). Documents assist to construct a particular view of reality, justify a position or present an image (Irvine & Gaffikin, 2006). In addition, Vaivio (2008) elaborated that documentary evidence can be used to facilitate data triangulation while ensuring validity and reliability. In our research we used documents to collect secondary data from MND in order to get idea about company's environment that relate to labour turnover. Accordingly, the company labour turnover rate was identified through the internal reports of MND.

4.5 Main study

Through main study, we collected rich data. Interviewees were selected through purposive sampling which allowed us to select the most suitable employees to provide us with evidence. Table I illustrates the designations and the time spent on the interviews at MND. These interviews were conducted face to face within the context of MND (Interview guide is provided in Appendix 1).

Table 1: Details of Interviewees

Designation of the Interviewee	Duration of the Interview
General Manager of MND company	35 minutes
Human Resource Manager of MND company	45 minutes
Operational Manager of MND company	30 minutes
Production Supervisor of MND company	40 minutes
Financial Manager of MND company	30 minutes
Five Assistant Managers	40 minutes each
Five Operational level employees in MND company	40 minutes each
Two trade union members of MND company	40 minutes each

4.6. Data analysis

This research adopts a thematic analysis in order to analyse data. First, the data was familiarised through reading the transcribed data several times. Next the initial codes were generated relating to the PEFT. These codes were generated based on the ideas which emerged from reading the transcripts (Salleh at el., 2017). Then the coded data were reviewed to identify themes and subthemes to locate unifying features, so that they reflect and describe a coherent and meaningful pattern of data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Subsequently, these themes were refined. Finally, the discovered themes were written elaborating on each and finalizing analysis.

5.   Data Presentation

5.1 Factors affecting high labour turnover of MND in light of PEFT

As per the internal records of MND, it is suffering from high labour turnover (20%-25% employee turnover rate each year). In this section, we present the factors that affect this high labour turnover of MND in light of the four elements identified under the PEFT. Accordingly, nine factors under the four categories were identified as factors which cause high labour turnover of MND.

5.1.1 Data in light of person job fit

5.1.1.1 High workload and work pressure put on employees

It was noted that employees of MND are having a huge work stress due to the bulk orders. Currently, MND is having a higher employee turnover which in return puts extra burden on the existing employees.

> "When the company has large orders, we have to complete those orders very quickly and some members resigned from the organization recently. Therefore we faced a high pressure during this time" (Employee - MND).
> "Sometimes we have to do more work. In such time we don't even have time to get our lunch. We have to cover the orders very quickly in that time and supervisors also have high pressure to cover those orders" (Employee- MND).

According to the supervisors, employees of MND have to work for targets which puts more pressure on them that ultimately leads to higher employee turnover rates.

> "Unlike other tea factories, we work for targets. Therefore we have to work more efficiently and as supervisors we have to be strict to get more production from the employees. This could sometimes increase pressure upon existing employees resulting them to leave the institution." (Supervisor-MND).

5.1.1.2 Low wage rate

The employees of MND are not satisfied with their salary. They are expecting overtime payments for the extra working hours. Sometimes they have to work more without getting leave. They face many difficulties when they need to get sick leave or any other necessary leave.

> "With overtime payments, salary is average. But if we get leave for sick or any other reason, we get low salary" (Employee-MND).
> "Salary………… we can get lunch and tea for free. But the salary is very low. Therefore we need to work more to get more overtime payments. When we get less amount of overtime, salary gets lower. In some months we don't get overtime payment, in those months we face many difficulties. When compared with the current situation of the country our salary is very low, but we have to work" (Employee-MND).

5.1.1.3 Long working hours

The employees of the MND noted that they did not have any free time to get rest in some working days. And also due to the inadequate number of employees in the organization, the employees have to work more hours to complete orders.

"Yes, we are very busy with the work. We have no free time for us in some days" (Employee-MND).

"If the number of members get fewer in a section, we have to cover for them and we have to work more hours. We get fed up of working for long hours. This was the main reason for some of the employees to leave the organization" (Employee-MND).

According to the management of MND, in some days employees work till night to complete their orders.

5.1.1.4 Unclear job role

Some employees of MND noted that they did not have any specified tasks during the production process, and they are engaged in work assigned by the supervisor. Due to the high labour turnover, the company did not have adequate employees for the production process and therefore the employees are engaged in number of works in addition to the original tasks assigned for them. This lack of clarity in the job role has made operational level employees to resign from the organization.

"Normally we do our work according to the supervisor's orders. I have only six months experience here. Therefore, these tasks are difficult for me. I have no any special task to do, according to the supervisor's orders I do my work" (Employee-MND).

"Some well-trained employees resign from the company as they are not assigned with proper jobs. Therefore, we have to do the all the works and supervisors load us with many jobs. That is the only stress for us. And also, sometimes we have to help drivers to load products for distribution which is not part of our job" (Employee-MND).

5.1.2 Person organization fit
5.1.2.1 Work environment

According to the trade union members and staff, MND does not possess a very pleasant working environment:

"Work is not too hard but there is no flexibility in terms of work. Furthermore, the job environment and the organizational environment is not much appealing to carry

on the day to day activities. However we somehow bear with it. Now we have got used to it." (Union member-MND).

These ideas suggest that even though the employees are dissatisfied with their working environment, it does not act as a critical factor leading them to leave the organization.

5.1.2.2 Lack of career development opportunities

According to the employees in MND, career development opportunities in the company is not up to a satisfactory level which has intensified turnover intention of employees.

"No special reason to stay in this organization. I have 08 years of experience, still I did not get any promotion. Normally employees did not work here for long time period. But I have more experience when compared to others. Therefore, I hope to get promotion from here. At least I want to be a supervisor or I need salary increments. If not, there is no point in working for this company. Many senior employees are also having the same feeling as they stagnate in the same position for a longer period" (Employee-MND).

5.1.2.3 Lack of fringe benefit and employee satisfaction

MND provides overtime payments for their employees, supply transport services, supply lunch and tea free of charge and provide stationeries for some identified employee's children. However, the employees do not seem to be happy and satisfied about the benefits received when compared to the other tea manufacturing companies. MND employees noted that they have intention to leave from the organization if they find another job with higher benefits.

"If I found a better place, I opt to choose it because I want more money to support my children's education. There are many other companies which treat their employees better by providing more benefits such as insurance and other allowances" (Assistant Manager-MND).

"Sometimes we have to do more work. But we do not get any additional benefit by doing so. We are not satisfied by the additional benefits provided by the company" (Assistant Manager-MND).

5.1.3 Person team fit

5.2.3.1 Relationship with peers and team members

According to the finance manager of MND the employee issues are common in every organization. The management nor the employees specially mentioned about the employee problems with respect to their team members. However, there were insignificant issues raised which were mostly solved by the intervention of the supervisors.

"There were some problems raised between employees. But employee problems are normal in every organization. And also, the supervisors can control those problems" (Finance manager-MND).

Accordingly, the problems among peers and team members does not seem to be significantly influencing employee turnover.

5.2.4 Person supervisor fit

5.2.4.1 Relationship with supervisor and managers

The MND employees noted that the company's supervisors have higher stress level for completing large orders which in turn intensifies the pressure put upon other employees who are working under them.

"The supervisors are not bad… they work with us. There are some problems when they have high quantity orders. They have high pressure. We can understand their pressure, but we also have a capacity. We can't work beyond the capacity" (Employee-MND).

The management of MND noted that they mainly focused on targets and when the company have many orders to complete the management and supervisors did not focus on the employees.

"Actually, we are friendly with employees in free times. But when we have large orders to complete, there is no time to work friendly with employees. And also, the supervisors are working with employees strictly in such time. When we strictly work with them, we can cover our target production capacity easily. When we get friendlier with the employees they do not work very well" (Operations Manager-MND).

"This relationship must be there in any institution. Without this connection we cannot continue our work. As the HR manager, I tend to be more employee-oriented than supervisors. I try to be friendly with workers. Supervisors are strict with employees. " (HR manager-MND).

Accordingly, it was observed that even though issues prevail between supervisors and subordinates, these issues are not so significant to cause high employee turnover at MND. Below Figure I illustrates the above findings related to employee turnover of MND in light of PEFT.
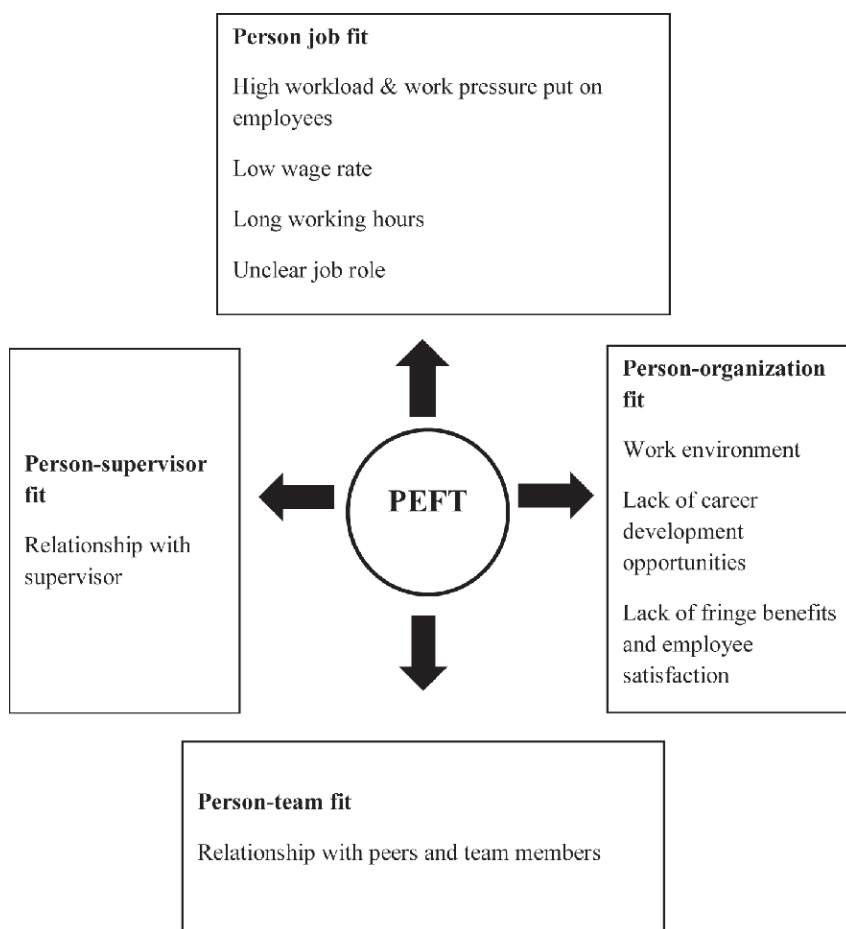

Figure I: Theoretical Model: Person Environment Fit Theory
Source: Author constructed

6.   Data Analysis and Conclusion

6.1 Data Analysis

The study of Mishra et al. (2015) has shown that higher repetitive, routine work dissatisfy employees which could lead to negative behaviour such as absenteeism. Perumal et al. (2018) have explained that stress at work is being one of the major reasons for labour turnover. At present there is high competition in the manufacturing sector which has triggered this work related stress specifically in the manufacturing industry. Similarly, our research study based on MND also illustrates that workload and work pressure causes labour turnover at workplace.

As the past studies suggest employee turnover is specially related with salaries and wages. As researchers suggest employees get lower satisfaction from lower salary payment which triggers employee turnover (Mbah & Ikemefuna, 2012). On a similar note, Gialuisi and Coetzar (2013) and Rizwan et al. (2013) illustrated that salary increments and non-financial incentives are popular retention methods in small business. At MND also, employees directly pay attention to their salary for making the decision of remaining within the organization or leaving and it was revealed that wage rate is highly affected on labour turnover. At MND, employees have to work overtime to fulfil their daily expenses because their salary alone is not enough. Accordingly, it was observed that employees of MND were not satisfied with their salary level which lead to high labour turnover.

According to Siva and Krishnan (2015) long working hours influence labour turnover. Job sharing, part time working, occasionally working at home and leave are affected on work life balance of the employees which ultimately determine employee retention. Similarly, our study also describes the way working hours influence employee satisfaction and labour turnover. The employees of the MND noted that they did not have any free time to get rest in some working days. And also due to the lesser number of employees in the organization, they have to work more hours to complete orders which creates stress among employees resulting them to leave the organization. Past researchers have discussed about job ambiguity and how it affects labour turnover. According to Perumal et al. (2018) and Jayaratne and Chess (1984) role ambiguity and role conflict widely affect labour turnover. Chena et al. (2011) reported that role ambiguity occurs when job role has not been clearly defined to employees and when individuals lack a clear definition of the expectations of their roles and the required methods to carry out their job duties. Similarly, our study also noted that

unclear job role affects employees' actions on their job, which leads labour turnover. Employees of MND do not have any special tasks during the production process and they perform duties assigned by the supervisors. Due to the high labour turnover, the company did not have adequate employees for the production process and therefore the employees had to do number of tasks beyond their basic job role. This has created dissatisfaction among the employees resulting labour turnover.

As literature suggests, employee turnover increases when the physical working conditions are poor and when distractions such as poor illumination, high temperature and unpleasant noise and ventilation prevails (Ugoani, 2016). According to Mamun and Hasan (2017) if working environment is not appealing as above, the workers would have a higher tendency to leave the organization. However, different to these findings our research reveals that working environment is not a significant or a crucial factor which determines labour turnover. At MND even though the working conditions are poor, the employees do not perceive it as a significant factor to quit the job. This might be due to the reason that most of the employees of this organization has got used to working in such non-appealing working conditions for a long time and that they consider their monthly salary over all the other factors when considering in remaining in their job.

In line with PEFT, Ahmad (2012) reported that the training and reward system can improve overall person-environment fit which would in turn lead to reduce staff turnover intentions. According to Yang et al. (2008) the jobs which facilitate promotion and development opportunities for its employees would have less tendency for labour turnover. Furthermore, employee growth opportunities increase the job satisfaction, motivation and job performance while reducing absenteeism (Yang et al., 2008). According to Siva and Krishnan (2015) training is the highest concern of employees' retention decision. Training and career development are observed to have a positive association with intention to work for an organization (Chin, 2018). Similarly our study based on MND also illuminates that the lack of opportunity for career progression is a leading factor which has increased its labour turnover rate.

Mamun and Hasan (2017) noted that a fringe benefits affect performance and employee retention of organizations. On a similar vein Uppal (2005) noted that fringe benefits contribute to the higher level of satisfaction of employees which in turn

ensures employee retention. Accordingly attractive fringe benefits package is considered as a part of corporate strategy to reduce turnover and save time and money (Saranya & Phil, 2017). Similarly, our research also found the inverse relationship between fringe benefits and labour turnover. Accordingly it was identified that lack of fringe benefits at MND has triggered its labour turnover.

Under the person environment fit theory, Yang et al. (2008) illustrated how employee relationship at work influence their well-being and job satisfaction while decreasing labour turnover. Good relationships at work can fulfil employees' need for affiliation. According to Werbel and Johnson (2001) person group fit is the match between the newly hired personnels and the immediate workgroup and co-workers. Quality interpersonal interactions with work groups are important to improve the performance of other group members while reducing labour turnover of employees. Different to these findings, our study reveals that positive relationships with the team members do not strongly affect in retaining its employees in a context of a tea manufacturing company.

Yang et al. (2008) under the PEFT illustrate that quality relationship between supervisors and employees are important to gain more social support and social resources to employees. As they illuminate it will help to increase the job satisfaction and well- being of employees while decreasing their turnover intention. Furthermore, Ugoani (2016) illustrated that the employees who feel that their manager is unfair or unfriendly will always feel like quitting the job because it increases their stress. However, our study illuminated that lack of mutual understanding, close bond and lack of good relationship with the supervisors create job related stress and dissatisfaction. But the employees of MND did not reveal that this dissatisfaction is significant for them to quit their job. Therefore our study does not necessarily conclude that there is a direct relationship between employee turnover and employee-supervisor relationship.

6.2. Proposed strategies to minimize high labour turnover at MND

As this study reveals, MND suffers from very high levels of employee turnover throughout the past years. In light of PEFT, our study proposes strategies as follows to minimise and control its labour turnover. In relation to PEFT we illuminated the research context of MND and its labour turnover under four dimensions: person

organization fit; person job fit; person group fit; and person supervisor fit (Bam et al., 2019). As our study illustrates, among the above four dimensions person organization fit and person job fit were considered as most significant in affecting labour turnover. MND should put more effort in strengthening the person job fit through implementing strategies such as easing off the pressure put on employees to reach targets by hiring the required number of employees to perform specific jobs; paying an industry par wage rate to employees; giving appropriate breaks for employees in order to ensure that they are not over worked; and offering each and every employee a job role or a job description specifying the tasks expected by them and advising supervisors not to overload employees with non-related work. Under person organization fit, MND could implement strategies to improve the work environment. Eventhough this was not highlighted by many employees as a factor which affect turnover intention, it could improve the satisfaction of workers. Furthermore, MND could provide opportunities for their employees to develop their career. Accordingly, training programmes can be organized to polish their skills and opportunities can be provided for operational staff to become higher graded staff through providing career development opportunities. Furthermore, more fringe benefits such as insurance schemes, medical schemes, improved transport facilities, incentives and appropriate salary increments can be provided in order to motivate the employees to retain within the organization. However, our study identified that person team fit and person supervisor fit did not have a significant impact in the increase of labour turnover at MND. But in order to make the working environment more pleasant the relationships among the peers and supervisors and other employees could be tightened through arranging day outs, fun activities, staff trips and also through opening up a platform and encouraging employees to bring their suggestions for improvement.

6.3 Conclusion of the study
The main research objectives of this study are 1) To identify the factors which contribute to the labour turnover at MND 2) To propose strategies that can be used to overcome the high labour turnover at MND through PEFT.

Firstly, this study identified the factors which triggered employee turnover at MND through PEFT. These factors could be identified as: heavy work load and high work pressure put on employees, low wage rate, long working hours, unclear job roles, less appealing work environment, lack of opportunity for career development, lack of

fringe benefits and lack of employee satisfaction, weak relationship with supervisors and weak relationship with peers and team members. From these factors the working environment; relationships with supervisors and team members did not have a major impact on triggering employee turnover. Secondly this study illuminates the strategies that can be used to overcome the high employee turnover through PEFT. Above section 6.2 elaborates these strategies relating them to the PEFT.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This study explores the employee turnover of a tea manufacturing company in Sri Lanka adopting PEFT. Another researcher could incorporate different theories in illuminating the factors affecting labour turnover. Furthermore this study adopts a qualitative approach and incorporated interviews in exploring the factors affecting labour turnover. On the other hand another researcher could adopt a quantitative approach and incorporate questionnaires in collecting data. Furthermore, in contrast to the single site case study adopted in this study, in future, researchers could incorporate comparative case studies including more than one site to explore the labour turnover issues.

References:

Ahamed, J. U. (2010). Documentary research method: new dimension. Indus Journal of Management & Social Sciences, 4(1), 1-14.

Ahmad, K. Z. (2012). The mediating effect of person–environment fit on the relationship between organizational culture and staff turnover: Asian social science. International Journal of Psychological Studies, 8(2), 62-71.

Al-Omari, K., & Okasheh, H. (2017). The influence of work environment on job performance: a case study of engineering company in Jordan. International Journal of Applied Engineering Research, 12(24), 15544-15550.

Amarathunge, B. B. (2016). Determinants of intention to leave among operational level employees: A study at a leading apparel manufacturing company in Sri Lanka, 3(1), 2420- 7608.

Anyan, F. (2013). The Influence of Power Shifts in Data Collection and Analysis Stages: A Focus on Qualitative Research Interview, 18, 1-9.

Bam, L., Stobbeleir, K, D., & Vlok, P. J. (2019). Outcomes of team creativity: A person environment fit perspective. 3rd International HR Conference, Department of Human Resource Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 42(6), 760-774.

Bester, j., Stander, M. W., & Vanzyl, L.E. (2015). Leadership empowering behaviour, psychological empowerment, organizational citizenship behaviours and turnover intention in a manufacturing division. SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 41(1), 1-14.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. American Psychological Association, 2, 57-71.

Bryman, A., Becker, S., & Sempik, J. (2008). Quality Criteria for Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research: A View from Social Policy. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 11(4), 261–276.

Chena, M. F., Linb, C.P., & Lien, G.N. (2011). Modelling job stress as a mediating role in Predicting turnover intention, The Service Industries Journal, 31(8), 1327–1345.

Chin, L.C. (2018). The influence of job satisfaction on employee turnover intention in the manufacturing industry of Malaysia, 1(2), 53-63.

Choi, W., Noe, R., & Cho, Y. (2020). What is responsible for the psychological capital Job performance relationship: An examination of the role of informal learning and person environment fit. Journal of managerial psychology, 35(1), 28-41.

Elanain, H. M. A. (2014). Leader-member exchange and intent to turnover. Management Research Review, 37(2), 110-129.

Gamage, S. A. (2014). Employee Turnover in Manufacturing SMEs in Japan: An Analysis of the link with HRM practices. Sabaragamuwa University Journal, 13(1), 17-31.

Gialuisi, O., & Coetzer, A. (2013). An exploratory investigation into voluntary employee turnover and retention in small business. Small Enterprise Research, 20(1), 55-68.

Hope, J. B., & Mackin, P. C. (2016). Employee turnover and productivity among small business entities in Nigeria. Independent Journal of Management & Production, 7(4), 1063-1082.

Iqbal, A. (2010) Employee turnover: causes, consequences and retention strategies in the Saudi organizations. The Business Review, Cambridge, 16(2), 275-281.

Iqbal, Q. (2016). Job-Crafting and Organizational Commitment: Person-Job Fit as Moderator in Banking Sector of Pakistan. International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics, 3(12), 837-851.

Irvine, H., & Gaffikin, M. (2006). Getting in, getting on and getting out: Reflections of a Qualitative research project. Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal, 19(1), 115-145.

Jayaratne, S., & Chess, W.A. (1984). Job Satisfaction, Burnout, and Turnover: A National Study. National Association of Social Workers, 29(5), 448-453.

Jiang, W., & Gu, Q. (2015). A moderated mediation examination of proactive personality On employee creativity a person-environment fit perspective. Journal of Organizational Change Management, 28(3), 393-410.

Kotzé, K., & Roodt, G. (2005). Factors that affect the retention of managerial and specialist staff: An exploratory study of an employee commitment model. SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 3(2), 48-55.

Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: a meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person group, and person-supervisor fit. Personal Psychology, 58(2), 281-342.

Lee, C. H., Hsu, M. L., & Lien, N. H. (2006). The impact of benefit plans on employee turnover: a firm level analysis approach on Taiwanese manufacturing industry. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 17(11), 151-1975.

Liyanage, D., & Galhena, B. (2014). Determinants of Turnover Intention of Sewing Machine Operators: Case from leading Apparel Company. Kelaniya Journal of Management, 1(2), 107–123.

Lyons, H. Z., & Brien, K. M. (2006). The role of person- environment fit in the job satisfaction and tenure intentions of African American employees. Journal of counselling psychology, 53(4), 387-396.

Makkonen, P. (2015). Employer perceptions of self-initiated expatriate employability in China a person-environment fit perspective. Journal of Global Mobility, 3(3), 303-330.

Mamun, C. A. A., & Hasan, M. N. (2017). Factors affecting employee turnover and sound retention strategies in business organization: a conceptual view. Problems and Perspectives in Management. Journal of Problems and Perspectives in Management, 15(1), 63-71.

Mbah, S. E., & Ikemefuna, C.O. (2012). Job satisfaction and employees' turnover intentions in total Nigeria Plc., in Lagos State. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2(14).

Min, L. G. P. J. (2017). Employees' online knowledge sharing: the effects of person environment fit. Journal of Knowledge Management, 21(2), 432-453.

Mishra, A. K., Mishra, K. E., & Grubb, W. L. (2015). Reducing turnover in Franchise based small business organizations: the role of trust, justice and commitment. Small Business Institute Journal, 11(1), 6-23.

Muchinsky, P. M., & Monahan, C. J. (1987). What Is Person-Environment Congruence? Supplementary versus Complementary Models of Fit. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 31, 268-277.

Olsen, H.D. (2006). Wages, fringe benefits and worker turnover. Labour Economics, 13(1), 87–105.

Ongori, H. (2007). A review of literature on employee turnover. African Journal of Business Management. 49-54.

Ostroff, C & Kozlowski, S. W. J. (1992). Organizational socialization as a learning process: the role of information acquisition. Personal Psychology, 45(4), 849-874.

Perumal, G., Sinniah, S., Mohamed, R.K.M.H., Mun, K.P., & Murth, U. (2018). Turnover intention among manufacturing industry employees in Malaysia: an analysis using structural equation modelling. Journal of Social Science and Humanities, 15(4), 13-24.

Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interviews. Qualitative Research In Accounting& Management, 8(3), 238-264.

Raigangar, V., & Hawamdeh, S. (2014). Qualitative interviewing: Methodological challenges in Arab settings, 21(3), 27-31.

Rajapakshe, W. (2018). An Analysis of Major Factors Affecting Labor Turnover in the Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka: Policy Alternations for Solving the Problem. International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences, 7(3), 214-231.

Ratner, C. (2002). Subjectivity and objectivity in qualitative methodology, Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 3(3).

Rizwan, M., Jaskani, J. H., Ameen, H., Hussain, S., Farooq, R.U. & Omair, M. (2013). Antecedents of employee satisfaction and its impact on job turnover. International Journal of Management Sciences and Business Research, 2(1).

Salleh, I. S., Ali, N. S. M., Mohd-Yusof, K., & Jamaluddin, H. (2017). Analysing Qualitative Data Systematically using Thematic Analysis for Deodoriser Troubleshooting in Palm Oil Refining. Chemical Engineering Transactions, 56, 1315-1320.

Saranya, R., & Phil, M. (2017). Impact assessment of fringe benefits in job satisfaction and employees' attitude. International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering, 7(6), 150-161.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). Research method for business students - chapter 4: understanding research philosophy and approaches to theory development. (8th ed., pp. 128-170). Pearson Professional Limited. https://www.researchgate.net.publication/330760964.

Seong, J. Y., & Kristof-Brown, A. L. (2012). Testing multidimensional models of Person-group fit. Journal of Managerial Psychology, 27(6), 536 – 556.

Siva, S. U., & Krishnan, J. (2015). Retention factors and their relative significance in ceramic manufacturing industries in India. Asian Social Science: Canadian Center of Science and Education Publication, 11(13), 260-268.

Sivaram, B. (1996). Productivity improvement and labor relations in the tea industry in South Asia. ILO Working Papers 993193663402676, International Labour Organization.

Ugoni, J. N. N. (2016). Employee turnover and productivity among small business entities in Nigeria. Journal Independent of Management & Production, 7(4), 1063-   1082.

Umamaheswari, S., & Krishnan, J. (2015). Retention Factors and Their Relative Significance in Ceramic Manufacturing Industries in India. Asian Social Science: Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education, 11(13), 260-268.

Uppal, S. (2005). Workplace characteristics and job satisfaction. International Journal of Manpower, 26(4), 336-49.

Vaivio, J. (2008). Qualitative management accounting research: Rationale, pitfalls and potential. Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management, 5(1), 64-86.

Werbel, J. D., & Johnson, D. J. (2001). The use of person–group fit for employment Selection: a missing link in person–environment fit. Human Resource Management, 40(3), 227–240.

Yang, L., Che, H., & Spector, P. E. (2008). Job stress and well- being: An examination from the view of person- environment fit. Journal of occupational and organizational psychology, 81, 567-587.

Zacher, H., Feldman, D, C., & Schulz, H. (2014). Age, occupational strain, and well-being: a person environment fit perspective: The role of demographics in occupational stress and wellbeing research in occupational stress and wellbeing, 12, 83-111.

Zaidah, Z. (2007). Case study as a research method, Journal Kemanusiaan. bil.9, Jun 2007.