Survey of Motivation to Work Among Non-Regular Employees in the Food Services Companies: A Statistical Analysis Considering Length of Employment

Tomonori Matsuki, Shibaura Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan
Jun Nakamura, Shibaura Institute of Technology, Tokyo, Japan

ABSTRACT
Over the last few decades, the workforce in Japan has been rapidly decreasing. At the same time, the number of non-regular employees has been increasing. Under these circumstances, employee satisfaction and commitment to their organizations are important issues. The authors focused on non-regular employees in the Japanese food services industry. In this industry, the proportion of non-regular employees is high, raising their motivation and stabilizing the workforce is a big management task. The authors studied satisfaction and commitment among employees of three major companies using a questionnaire. Factors associated with employee satisfaction were shown to vary significantly by length of employment. Additionally, three patterns of factors associated with employee satisfaction were identified.

KEYWORDS
Duration of employment, Employee satisfaction, ES factors, Motivation

INTRODUCTION
The workforce in Japan has been decreasing rapidly since the 1990s due to the declining birthrate. Moreover, the workforce (i.e., the total number of employed individuals) will continue to decrease in the future. The rate of decline is particularly remarkable when compared with other developed countries (Figure 1).

Although the workforce is shrinking, the number of non-regular employees, who are mainly involved in short-term or temporary work, has grown since the mid-1990s (MHLW, 2016). These workers cannot accumulate job experience or sufficient vocational proficiency over the long term. Consequently, there is a gap in wages between non-regular and regular employees (METI, 2010).

In the past, non-regular employees helped businesses transition operations between the on and off seasons. However, more recently, it has become very important for food service companies to maintain non-regular employees and prevent them from leaving jobs. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the length of employment for non-regular employees has gradually increased over time as in Figure 2.
The authors of the present study are interested in how the motivation of non-regular employees can be enhanced to retain them within the workforce; businesses cannot grow without a secure workforce. Therefore, factors leading to employee satisfaction (hereinafter referred to as “ES factors”) are the focus of this paper, particularly for non-regular employees working in food services, such as restaurant workers. Securing an adequate workforce within the food services industry is a serious problem because the work is labor-intensive and there is a large difference between busy and quiet periods. The food services industry is supported by a workforce comprised of non-regular employees. Therefore, the scope of this study encompassed non-regular employees in the food services industry. However, some findings in this paper would probably be useful other industry (in Japan and other countries). Because many companies suffering from lack of personnel resources regardless of industrial structure, they have a strong interest in how to motivate employees and strengthen employees’ royalties to the organization.

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the trend of motivation factors of non-regular employees and the results and discussions in the paper will be a reference for store management. In this paper, three major companies in the food service industry were examined. These companies were chosen because they are famous national chain stores with over 50 restaurants in Japan. Moreover, the organization structures of these companies are similar, and the proportion of non-regular employees in all employees is from 18% to 19%. National chain stores have a general personnel system and headquarters, and many tasks are delegated to non-regular employees by standardizing the service process. These companies were chosen for their similarities, which makes it easier to perform research when using multiple companies.

Although it is not possible to fully explain trends in the service industry using the three companies included in this study, the results may explain trends in similar companies. Therefore, I believe that this paper will serve as a reference for the management of service-based companies with non-regular employees.
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