

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Perception of Organization Change and Organization Commitment: In Airport and Aviation Industry in Sri Lanka

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Air travel remains a large and growing industry by accelerating economic growth, world trade, international investment and tourism and is therefore central to the globalization-taking place in many other countries. The aviation industry plays a significant role in the development process in each and every country. Most airlines have been struggling to cope up with the competition that is generated in the Airline Industry. As a solution, most airlines have chosen organization change. In addition, the airline industry in Sri Lanka has been struggling to cope up with the growing economy and competition as well. Mihin Lanka, the low cost airline in Sri Lanka ceased operations in 2016, 10 years after its commencement. SriLankan Airlines is also in negotiations with the government on restructuring and the BIA is planning for new developments.

In this stage employees have to face critical situations with organization change. The operational staff exerts an emotional labor and they also have to face unexpected situations with their customers everyday. Since airline and airport front line staff have direct contact with passengers for long periods of time, their behavior and emotional attitude toward passengers heavily shape the customers' perception of the airline's image as well as the image of the country. Due to the structural changes in the industry, cabin crew, ground handling, and airport staff experience higher levels of stress and fatigue, which can result in some negative behavioral outcomes such as lack of commitment. As the level of emotional intelligence varies across different individuals, the way they respond to organizational change may differ. Prior research has found that very few employees get adapted easily to new changes, but most of them are struggle to adapt. However, from the results of previous research, it can be seen that the level of emotional intelligence has influence on organizational outcomes.

The result of the pilot study has revealed that the lack of communication from higher management, political influences, pay-cuts and reduction of premiums as the main issues that employees experience. Moreover, supervisor and managers revealed that customer complaint, employee issues, employee's complaints to the management, absenteeism, and employee turnover are higher at Airport and Aviation Industry.

However, there has been a general lack of empirical evidence which systematically analyzes the connection between the construct of emotional intelligence, organizational change and organizational commitment and as well as the lack of research on the Sri Lankan context. Thus, the main objective of this study is to empirically examine the impact of emotional intelligence on organizational change and organizational commitment. Based upon the deductive research approach, this research tests a model to understand how emotional intelligence influences organizational commitment through perception of organization change. To attain this objective, the survey method will be used for data collection from Airport and Aviation front line staff and the sample of the study is drawn with simple random sampling. Future Research can replicate this study in different contexts and use cross-cultural data.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Emotional Labor; Organization Commitment; and Perception of Organization change

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