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Reasons for high employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms

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Reasons For High Employee Turnover Rate In Chinese Public Accounting Firms

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates nonmaterial reasons of high employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms. To be more specific, work pressure and work engagement are the main reasons that emphasized by this research. Survey method is used by the author to collect data from Chinese accounting staff. The survey is designed into three parts to collect general information of respondents, and it measures the role of work pressure and the degree of work engagement. The results indicate that high work pressure and low work engagement level are significant reasons for high turnover intention in this area. This paper can partly fill the gap that less attention has been paid to nonmaterial turnover reasons in Chinese accounting staff. Moreover, managers or leaders of public accounting professionals could become more informed about the importance of nonmaterial reasons for turnover intention.

Keywords: high turnover, nonmaterial reasons, Chinese public accounting employees.

Data Availability: The data are publicly available from the sources identified in the paper.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, one of the most challenging issues that many public accounting firms facing is the high employee turnover rate. While public accounting professionals are still attractive to many new workers applying for accounting or auditing jobs, they are not good at keeping their workers for a relatively long time. According to Johnson and Pike (2018), the turnover rate in large public accounting firms (with revenues more than \$75 million per year) is about 17%, and about one-sixths firms show annual employee turnover rate of 20% or greater. This is obviously a large number since there are usually thousands of or even tens of thousands of employees in a relatively big CPA firm. Overall, increasingly number of employees tend to leave these large public accounting firms, especially for big 4 (KPMG, PwC, DTT and E&Y), and look for a new working environment.

Moreover, the employee turnover rate is also related to various reasons. For instance, the gender. According to Gentry (2016), another important feature facing public accounting firms is high turnover rate among women. Since women is less likely to reach the level of partner, which is usually the top level in an accounting firm, they tend to leave accounting firms at much greater rate compared with men (Gentry 2016). Other factors like job title, salary, working environment, company culture also play significant roles in affecting employee's engagement in CPA firms, thus directly or indirectly cause high turnover rate among them. When employee feel dissatisfied, they may choose to leave.

There are already lots of previous papers related to this area, and they vary from each other in many aspects. For instance, the research paper by Gentry (2016) focuses on analysis of demographics of the employees who leaves the public accounting firms, and then it tries to explore the effects of the turnover on the US industry. When talking about the reasons for high employee turnover rate in public accounting firms, previous researches mention factors like job titles (status), salaries, gender, age, firm size and so on. However, different from these physical reasons, there may also exist nonmaterial reasons that affect employees' turnover intention. This research aims to investigate nonmaterial reasons of high employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms.

Different from previous researches, this paper is designed to explore the nonmaterial factors that cause employees tend to leave public accounting firms in Chinese accounting firms. To be more specific, factors like work engagement and work pressure (stress) are considered to be the possibility of high turnover rate among employees. While work pressure and work engagement had been suggested to be relevant to turnover intention in the US by Johnson and Pike (2018); Carrillo et al. (2017); Noor and Maad (2008), less attention has been paid to Chinese accounting firms. This paper is important to partly fill this gap.

The lack of sufficient attention to Chinese accounting staff is a noneligible reason for the purpose of this paper. Moreover, the institutional differences between China and western countries is influential as well. The use of Chinese CAS is different from that of US GAAP and IFRS, and the accounting practice also varies. According to Li (2017), there are many diverge in China and western countries' accounting practice due to historical, social, political, and economic reasons. Therefore, the previous results in the US cannot be directly applied to China.

Survey method is used to collect data from Chinese public accounting employees. It is a 13-question survey to test many aspects including basic information, work pressure and work engagement. The results indicate that most of respondents are younger than 30 years old and all with related work experience. According to them, work pressure from heavy work and long busy season are most significant factors for

high turnover intention. The overall work engagement level of the respondents is similar to previous researches.

This paper is meaningful to investigate the importance of nonmaterial factors such as work pressure and work engagement that influence the employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms. Since less attention has been paid in this area, this paper can provide more information.

After this part, previous literature is reviewed by the author to present more background information. Then the author clarifies the research methodology and analyze the results in detail as discussion. After the discussion part, conclusion is made by the author.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress and Pressure

When it comes to talking about public accounting firms, they are mostly related to public accounting services. These services include preparing financial statements, filing tax returns, and providing consulting services (Gentry 2016). While the work they do is truly important to governmental agencies, creditors, and investors, the repetitive tasks employees in CPA firms do can cause stress or pressure. According to Sanders et al. (1995), majority of CPAs agree on the claim that working in public accounting is a high-stress job. In order to know how exactly stress influence in public accounting, they conducted a mail survey containing a number of AICPAs working in public accounting. The respondents included both male and female with different staff level and from different departments. The results showed that 71% of respondents tend to “keep it inside” when they are under high level of stress. When they feel stressful, 6.7% of respondents tend to smoke one half or more packs of cigarettes in an average day, 20.4% tend to consume some forms of medication or chemical substance for and average work, and 37.4% tend to eat more. The study also points out eight work-related sources of stress as Overload—Quantitative, Overload—Qualitative, Career Progress, Responsibility for People, Time Pressures, Job Scope, Role Ambiguity, and Role Conflict (Sanders et al. 1995).

Moreover, the stress that employees in public accounting experience is also closely related to busy season and frequent outing time for various purpose. As mentioned before, the study conducted by Sanders et al. (1995) has shown certain information relating to this area. Among the replies from 570 accountants, the average working hour per week during busy season was 59 hours, which was much higher than 40 hours. At the same time, they worked outside at an average of 43 hours during busy season (Sanders et al. 1995). Since the data comes from 1995, it can be predicted that the number of working and outing hour will be even longer per week during accounting busy seasons. According to another paper by Vollmer and Tysiac (2017), a tax accountant may feel his busy season never ends. While he works really harder and longer than normal season, some tasks will still be left undone since he has to wait someone to finish the part in the workflow. Since the technology doubles the amount of information assembled about every 13 months nowadays, the busy season seems to have no end for public accounting (Vollmer and Tysiac 2017). When busy season become longer, the employees are more easily get stressed. And when they are under more pressure, more of them may choose to leave.

Stress and Turnover Intention

According to Noor and Maad (2008), work-life conflict and stress are related to employee intentions. They looked through lots of previous papers and found out positive relationship as 0.742 between work stress and turnover intentions through Pearson correlation test and regression analysis (Noor and Maad 2008). Since the working environment is dynamic and changes for many reasons, especially for business area, stress may easily raise due to unpredictable changes. Based on this, if the state of employees keeps stressful, they may not gain enough job satisfaction in their position. While the intention of turnover is positively affected by increasing stress or work pressure, it is reasonable that the rate goes up.

Work Engagement

Another significant factor called work engagement (also called employee engagement) also plays a non-negligible role in employee turnover rate among CPA firms. What is employee engagement? According to Johnson and Pike (2018), employee engagement has a number of definitions within the academic literature. One of the most common one describes it as an individual's sense of purpose and focused energy, which pay more attention of one's "state of mind" during the workplace. Different from the meaning of employee satisfaction, employee engagement is more complexed and should be measured by multiple questions. It concerns some other factors like one's enthusiasm, pride, focus, and energy for his job (Johnson and Pike 2018). According to the paper, researches reflect an obvious relationship between employee engagement and beneficial outcomes within organizations. To be more specific, higher employee engagement is able to reduce employee turnover in public accounting (Johnson and Pike 2018). On the contrary, when employees experience low engagement, the turnover rate goes up.

A survey was conducted by the authors to evaluate the level of employee engagement in public accounting firms. The results show that about 45.8% of the surveyed employees across five accounting firms are considered to be highly engaged. Based on the engagement level, recommendations could be suggested to improve employee engagement and make better employee retention (Johnson and Pike 2018).

Work Engagement and Emotions

There is another research concerning this case. Based on the report by Carrillo et al. (2017), engaged employees tend to be strongly committed to their work and the organization since they are excited and enthusiastic with their work. In contrast, employees without engagement just show up and finish their work, which seems to be hard to meet the requirements of customers and step further in their work environment (Carrillo et al. 2017). Moreover, engagement has been pointed out as motivation to lower turnover rate. While the authors found little research concerning engagement levels among accountants within public accounting firms, they conducted a survey to explore the levels of engagement among these firms. Overall engagement was shown as 50.1%; When only 39% of the younger group (under 30 years old) are considered to be engaged, 55% of older respondents are engaged (Carrillo et al. 2017). This result partly explains why people tend to leave in a short time period after they came into the

public accounting firms. Besides, the level of engagement is also related to variable factors such as time pressure (especially busy season) and emotions (Carrillo et al. 2017).

According to previous literature, employees among public accounting firms tend to feel stressful in their workplace, especially in the busy season. As an indicator, time pressure along with workplace pressure is an important factor to rise employee turnover rate. Work engagement, as another common measurement of employee' state of mind, is already proved to be useful in reducing turnover rate in public accounting. In other words, low work engagement, which sounds more and more common in this work area, plays a significant role in high employee turnover rate.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Previous research has proved that work pressure and work engagement have certain effects on the turnover intentions of accounting staff. From the perspective of the adequacy of the data, these studies have adequately reflected the importance of these two factors in the United States and some western countries. However, from the regional perspective of the data, these reports did not conduct sufficient research on the intention of employee turnover in Chinese accounting industry. This study surveys Chinese accounting firm employees and analyzes relevant results.

Due to time and data collection constraints, this study uses survey method to collect samples. The reason for this approach is that work pressure is a relatively abstract concept and cannot be measured with specific numerical indicators in a short period of time. At the same time, the five-point or seven-point Likert scale is a widely used survey method that reflects the attitudes of respondents.

A 13-question-survey was sent to employees in public accounting firms to collect data. The survey first asks about their basic information such as gender and age group. After that, a question asks whether the respondents are currently an accounting company or department employee or have related work experience. Then their job position is investigated based on the previous question. In addition to these basic questions, the survey focuses on the following aspects as well:

1. The reasons for high turnover rate
2. Sources of work pressure
3. The degree of work engagement

The reasons for high turnover rate and sources of work pressure are designed into multiple answer questions to investigate more clear attitudes of respondents. The author lists as many factors as possible for the respondents to choose.

Work Engagement Measurement

According to Johnson and Pike (2018), work engagement (employee engagement) is an important factor to measure employees' state in mind, and their degree of integration with work roles. They used several 7-point Likert scale questions to measure the degree of work engagement of their participants.

The author uses three 5-point Likert scale questions to roughly measure the degree of work engagement in this survey. The form of these three questions is quite

similar to that of Johnson and Pike (2018). However, due to time and content limit, only three questions with 5-point scale form are used in this part.

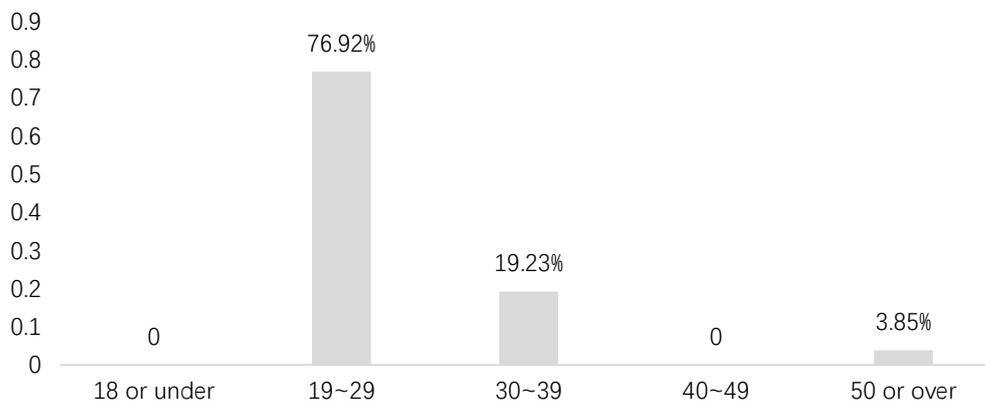
The survey was sent through social media, and the respondents could have enough time to finish their survey since the state of this survey had been kept as open. Moreover, all the respondents were required to finish completely without missing any questions. Therefore, the author is able to collect more accurate data.

IV. RESULTS

As mentioned earlier, the author hopes that this questionnaire can collect as many samples as possible in order to improve the accuracy of the data. In fact, the survey eventually collected only 26 samples. During the data collection process, many problems were identified. First, because it is necessary to ensure the relevance of the surveyed person to the accounting industry, the author cannot obtain more data samples by sending the survey to his classmates. In contrast, the author's means of transmitting surveys through relevant accounting staff did not guarantee a sufficient sample size. In addition, as the survey was sent close to the busy season of the accounting / audit department, many employees did not have time to answer. Therefore, the author has to analyze on the basis of 26 samples.

The ratio of men and women in this survey is basically balanced, with males accounting for 46.15% and females accounting for 53.85%. When asked about work, they said that they all worked in related positions or had related work experience. However, it is interesting to note that the age distribution of the respondents has a very

FIGURE 1
The age distribution of respondents



obvious concentration distribution. From Figure 1, we can see that the vast majority of the respondents are 19 to 29 years old, accounting for 76.92%, which can be said as very young. 19.23% of the respondents are between 30 and 39 years old, and 3.85% as 50 and over. The proportion of respondents under the age of 18 and between 40 and 49 is 0.

Accounting companies with a certain size, such as the Big Four, have a clear employee hierarchy. From first year associate to partner and even top managers. In this survey, the majority of the respondents' current positions are associate and senior, accounting for 30.77% and 38.46% respectively. A small number of respondents are

managers, while only 3.85% work as partners. In addition, 7.69% of participants indicated that they are no longer working in relevant positions. It is worth mentioning that since they have previous experience in accounting positions, they have also participated in the survey. The author also conducts a cross-over analysis to identify the gender difference about this part. As shown in table 1, Although the total number of male respondents is slightly lower than that of females, the proportion of male employees in manager and partner positions is still higher than that of female respondents.

TABLE 1
The cross-over analysis about gender and work position

X/Y %	Associate	Senior	Manager	Partner	Director	Others	Leave	Total
Male	33.33	16.67	25	8.33			16.67	100
Female	28.57	57.14	14.29					100

In this survey, most of the respondents agreed with the view that the employee turnover rate of accounting companies or firms has been relatively high in recent years, accounting for 88.46%. When asked about the types of companies with high employee turnover, the respondents' responses were mainly concentrated in large companies (such as the Big Four) and no regularity, accounting for 34.62% and 30.77% respectively. Moreover, 23.08% of them choose not clear yet concerning this case. In addition, the survey also asked employees where they might go after leaving. On this issue, other fields or industries (34.62%) and all are likely (38.46%) take up relatively significant proportion.

There are two multiple answer questions regarding this survey, which are more important to test the attitudes. Since the paper is aimed to find the significant role of pressure on employee turnover rate. The survey questions about the reasons for high turnover rate and the sources of pressure during work. The author used multiple answer analysis in SPSS and found results for each question. As illustrated by table 2, heavy

TABLE 2
Reasons for high turnover rate

Option	Response rate	Penetration (N=26)
Underpaid	11.4%	38.5%
Corporate environment	1.1%	3.8%
Company awareness difference	6.8%	23.1%
Time pressure in busy season	23.9%	80.8%
Heavy pressure of work	28.4%	96.2%
Mood swing	10.2%	34.6%
Personal value realization	13.6%	46.2%
Others	4.5%	15.4%
Total	100%	338.5%

pressure of work and time pressure in busy season accounts for the largest proportion as 96.2% and 80.8% respectively. What is more, personal value realization (46.2%), underpaid (38.5%), mood swing (34.6%), and company awareness difference (23.1%) are also influential in this part.

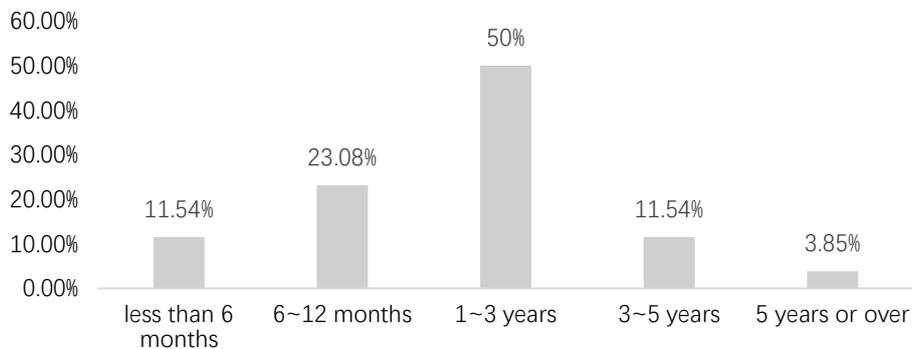
Similarly, the table 3 demonstrates that long busy season and heavy tasks take up the first and second significant position for sources of pressure during work, accounting for 92.3% and 84.6%. High repetition of work also occupies an important proportion as 38.5%. Work environment and others also take up 23.1% and 19.2% in this area.

TABLE 3
Sources of pressure during work

Option	Response rate	Penetration (N=26)
Heavy tasks	31.9%	84.6%
Long busy season	34.8%	92.3%
Frequent business trips	2.9%	7.7%
High repetition of work	14.5%	38.5%
Work environment	8.7%	23.1%
Others	7.2%	19.2%
Total	100%	265.4%

The employment time in the current position can partly reflect the situation of employee turnover from the side. There is a question in the survey designed to find how long the respondents have worked in their current job. As displayed by figure 2, half of the respondents have worked for 1~3 years in their current job. While people worked for 6~12 months take up 23.08%, people worked for 5 years or above are much fewer as 3.85%.

FIGURE 2
The length of work in current job



As mentioned before, the author also used three Likert scale questions to roughly measure the degree of work engagement among the respondents. These questions, with special designed form, can reflect respondents' attitude in a more detailed way. The description function in SPSS is used to reflect the detailed information about the data collected for these three questions. It illustrates related data such as sample size, minimum number, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and median.

We can see from the table 4, the arithmetic means of these three elements are quite close and fluctuate from 3.38 to 3.46. Moreover, the standard deviation of each is also similar, showing no outliers appear in the data. The table 4 contains Cronbach reliability analysis (trust level analysis) as well, which is used to test the reliability of Likert scale

questions. The whole Cronbach alpha coefficient is 0.663 of the three questions as a whole, with each CITC and deleted alpha coefficients listed as reference.

TABLE 4

Questions	Description of work engagement questions					
	Sample Size	Min. Num	Max. Num	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median
Q1	26	2	5	3.38	0.752	3
Q2	26	2	5	3.46	0.706	3
Q3	26	2	5	3.38	0.804	3

Cronbach reliability analysis			
	Corrected Item Total Correlation (CITC)	Deleted alpha coefficients	Cronbach α coefficient
Q1	0.545	0.469	
Q2	0.414	0.641	0.663
Q3	0.470	0.576	

Q1: I feel energetic at work; Q2: I am very passionate about my work; Q3: Even if the work is not going well, I will not be discouraged and can be persistent

The relation analysis is an important way to explore if there is a positive or negative relationship between the variables or research questions. If a significant relationship is found by relation analysis (correlation coefficient is close to 1), it means that one factor has influential affect on another. The author also conducted a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis for the survey questions. While almost all questions in the survey are qualitative questions, not quantitative ones, the correlation is not quite significant. Since the correlation coefficient is not close enough to 1, there is no strong relationship between the variables. The results are illustrated by table 5.

TABLE 5

Pearson correlation test								
	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	1.538	0.508	1					
2. Age group	2.308	0.679	-0.383	1				
3. Work Position	2.346	1.599	-0.337	0.598*	1			
4. Leave Concentration	3.654	0.977	0.390	-0.014	0.029	1		
5. Leave Flow	3.885	1.243	0.039	-0.288	-0.301	0.097	1	
6. Work Length	2.731	0.962	-0.019	0.193	0.167	0.025	0.006	1

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

V. DISCUSSION

The survey design is based on the author's research purpose. Since work pressure is a very abstract indicator, it cannot be accurately measured. At least during this very limited time of data collection, the author did not have enough time to measure it. Therefore, the form of this survey is a set of questions to investigate the attitudes of respondents based on their work experience. Previous research has shown that there is a close relationship between work pressure and employee turnover. And this connection is reflected in multiple industries. Similarly, work engagement has proven to be of significant significance in reducing employee turnover in accounting firms. At the same time, employees who show lower work engagement are not be able to meet their work and personal value needs and may choose to leave.

Although the concept of work engagement is not rare in the United States, it is relatively new to Chinese accounting firms and employees. As mentioned before, many people may confuse it with job satisfaction. Therefore, this survey may be helpful in filling the missing concept of Chinese accounting staff. At the same time, due to differences in accounting systems and employment environments, what is currently known in the United States or Western countries cannot be directly applied to Chinese accounting company employees.

The main purpose of this survey is not to demonstrate a clear difference in turnover between male and female employees. However, the data can also indicate some obvious differences. First of all, the proportion of men and women in the survey was roughly balanced, which is common for accounting companies. However, according to the results of cross-over analysis, the distribution of men and women in positions is significantly different. While there are more woman senior accountants, the number of females in manager and partner position is much lower. Compared with male staff's condition, the absence of female staff in higher-level accounting positions has exacerbated the gender imbalance in the turnover rate.

The age distribution of the respondents actually indicates a very interesting trend. As shown in results, the proportion of 19~29 years old is 76.92%, while 30~39 years old accounts for 19.23%. This very strong concentration is also a bit surprising, even unexpected. The author defines the age group of 19 to 29 as very young, because this is the frequent stage when people leave school and enter the workplace. When most employees in an accounting company are in this age group, it means that the employee turnover rate is indeed very high. Frequent inflows and outflows of young people are the main reason for this result. The total proportion of people over 30 years of age is even less than 25%, indicating obvious difference. Actually, this question can be put together with the length of stay in current job. While 50% of the respondents have work in their current job for 1~3 years, people who work for 6~12 months also take up 23.08%. Therefore, it can be said that most of the respondents have been engaged in their current jobs for less than three years. The reason behind this result is similar. High turnover leads to shorter average years of work. On this issue, the rise of positions also has a certain impact on the respondents' choices.

Multiple answer question is an effective way to measure the attitudes of

respondents. Because they can choose more than one option, the options related to the question are likely to be selected, and those that they think are irrelevant are therefore ignored. The gap can be said at a glance. There are two multiple answer questions in this survey. One is about the reasons for high turnover rate, and the other is used to find out sources of work pressure. For the reasons of high turnover rate, heavy work pressure and time pressure in busy season are the first and second reason, accounting for 96.2% and 80.8% penetration rate respectively. Though the author has paid much attention to these two options, the results are even higher than expectation. Moreover, personal value realization (46.2%), Underpaid (38.5%), mood swing (34.6%), and company awareness difference (23.1%) also reflect certain significance in this part. What is also worth mentioned is that the total penetration rate is 338.5%. This number means that the average number of choices of all respondents is 3.38 for this question, which indicates sufficient participation.

Similarly, when asked about sources of work pressure, long busy season (92.3%) and heavy tasks (84.6%) take up most influential position in this question. This trend is consistent with the expectation of the author. Based on the short time work experience in one of the big 4, the author made these two factors as important. Besides, high repetition of work (38.5%), work environment (23.1%) and other reasons (19.2%) indicate common factors as sources. The total 265.4% penetration reflects the average number of choices for respondents is 2.65.

The last three questions are designed to roughly measure the work engagement of the respondents. To obtain clear attitude difference among participants, the author used five-point Likert scale questions. The questions are analyzed by description test and Cronbach reliability analysis (trust level analysis) through SPSS. As shown in results, the mean, median, and standard deviation are quite clear. Moreover, the total Cronbach α coefficient is 0.663, which means the trust level of these Likert scale questions is acceptable.

Reliability and Validity

The respondents are from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, and mostly Zhejiang Province. Though the author can not make sure if they had made their choices carefully enough, they are all related to accounting jobs. Even if some of them are not working in accounting positions currently, they have work experience before. Therefore, the answers of respondent are helpful to be used as a reference.

According to Gentry (2016), the gender difference for employee leaving accounting firms is obvious. Since the number of women who finally go up to a partner position is only 21%, it is an important factor that women are leaving at a much higher rate (Gentry 2016). Though not investigated on purpose, this survey also indicates similar trend. While the percentage of female manager is lower than that of males, there is no woman partner in this survey. Moreover, Johnson and Pike (2018) used seven-point Likert scale with seven questions to measure the degree of work engagement. They defined the employee with 5.5 or higher engagement score as highly engaged. The result was 45.8%. They also indicated that partners showed much higher engagement level than common staff or seniors (Johnson and Pike 2018). Based on their percentage, the author calculated the highly engaged level as 3.93 or higher, which is roughly 4. Therefore, the average highly engaged level of the respondents is slightly

higher than 41.02%, which is close to the previous research.

Another research conducted by Carrillo et al. (2017) also focused on work engagement level with 12 engagement questions. They indicated that the overall engaged level is 50.1%. Moreover, the younger group (age 30 or under) only showed 39% engaged level compared with 55% of older group (Carrillo et al. 2017). Since most of the respondents of the survey is between 19~29 years old. The age group of this research is quite similar to their younger group. What is more, the overall engaged level as 41.02% is close to that of 39%. While the criteria of highly engaged and engaged may not be the same, it is at least a good example of contrast.

Limitations

The limitation of this research is inevitably obvious as well. Due to time and communication constraints, the survey only collected 26 samples. This number is not enough to reflect the breadth and randomness of the survey. Therefore, the data collected in this survey may not be representative enough. Similarly, due to time limit, this survey may not be sufficiently targeted by design. Some questions may appear too general and not specific enough. From a metrological point of view, the data reflected by the five-point Likert scale is certainly not as fine as the seven-point Likert scale. In addition, the questionnaire method itself has limitations. There is no guarantee that if the respondents answer the questionnaire carefully. Moreover, it cannot reflect dynamic trends of collected data. For instance, in this area, since the partner's work engagement has been proven to be much higher, an employee might reflect higher engagement level after he reach the position as a partner. These are all clear shortcomings of surveys.

Theoretical Contribution

This paper is meaningful to investigate the importance of nonmaterial factors that influence the employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms. While many previous researches focus on methods or suggestions to reduce employee turnover intentions, they pay little attention to this area. Therefore, this paper can partly fill this gap by analyzing some nonmaterial factors such as work pressure and employee engagement that should be taken into consideration. Managers or leaders of public accounting professionals could become more informed about their importance since increasingly number of researches concerning this area will come out in the future.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper is designed to find out some nonmaterial reasons that cause high employee turnover rate in Chinese public accounting firms. To be more specific, work pressure and work engagement are the main factors according to the author's research. While lots of previous papers have talked about these areas among the United States and some western counties, less attention has been paid into Chinese public accounting employees. Moreover, since the Chinese accounting standard and environment are quite different from that of the US, this research is needed to investigate the importance of similar factors in Chinese accounting background.

To collect enough data, a 13-question-survey including multiple answer questions and Likert scale questions is used to analyze attitudes and work engagement level of the respondents. Though the data collection process was not easy, the survey eventually collected 26 samples through social media. The results indicate that most of respondents are between 19~29 years old with related work experience. More than half of them have worked in their current position for less than 3 years. As for multiple answer questions, heavy pressure of work and time pressure in busy season are the two most significant reasons for high turnover rate according to the respondents. Moreover, long busy season and heavy tasks constitute two most common sources of work pressure. In addition, the overall engaged level of the respondents is slightly over 41.02%, which is close to the previous researches.

The study also exists several limitations. First of all, the sample size is too small to accurately reflect the actual turnover conditions of Chinese public accounting staffs as a whole. Since the author only collected 26 samples, this number is not convincing enough. As mentioned in discussion, the method of survey or questionnaire cannot reflect dynamic trends of certain problems. For instance, when one's job position changes, his state of engagement and pressure may also change. Interestingly, when the survey was completed designed, the busy season of accounting staffs was also approaching.

There will emerge more researches related to this area since more importance of nonmaterial factors of turnover intention will be demonstrated. Further research is needed to collect more data samples with more well-designed questions if survey method is necessary to be applied. It is also better to get exact turnover rate in order to explore further relationships.

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