Layoffs Policies in Egyptian Tourism Sector: The Relation between Economic Benefit and Employees’ Loyalty
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Abstract
Tourism is one of the largest sectors uses employees in Egyptian economy. In international agencies and hotels chains there are stable rules and policies in layoffs to gain great benefits for both tourism sector and employees. Some managers decide to layoff randomly to cut or reduce costs, but on the other hand, this procedure affects the employees’ loyalty.
This study aims to show the relationship between random layoffs and employees’ loyalty in Egyptian tourism sector. So, the major hypothesis of this study supposes that there is a negative relationship which has statistically significance between layoffs and employees’ loyalty in Egyptian tourism sector.
This study is applied to agencies and hotels of Luxor, Minia, Cairo, Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh. The sample was consisted of two groups: the first consists of 110 samples of agencies and hotel employees and the second consists of 36 samples of managers of agencies and hotels. The sample was selected randomly from agencies and hotels. The researchers designed two tools for the sample: a scale to measure employees’ loyalty and a questionnaire for agencies and hotels managers to identify layoffs and their reasons. The collected data was analyzed statistically using SPSS V. 19.
- The results of the current study indicated that there is a negative relationship which is statistically significant between layoffs and employees’ loyalty. In addition, there is a negative relationship which has statistically significance between economic benefit and layoffs.

Keywords: Layoffs Policies, Economic Benefits, Cut Cost, Loyalty, Egyptian Tourism Sector, SPSS

Introduction
Job security is a vital concern for many employees. Losing a job can be financially burdensome; the loss may involve a period of unemployment while searching for work and additional expenses for job hunting and relocation (Saltzman, 2008). Layoffs are normally considered terminations based on lack of work or capital, rather than on poor employee performance. In addition, layoffs are often temporary (Billikope, 2014).
According to Oxford dictionary, “layoff” means "informal give up or stops doing something." On the other hand, business dictionary defines a layoff as "the reduction of a company’s work force in response to a temporary or long-term business strategy or economic condition." Garcia (2010) stated that "layoffs are means for an organization to cut costs. Furthermore, the cuts will affect both salaries and positions."
Ginsburg (2010) informed that the term “layoffs” is defined by the bureau of statistics as "suspensions without pay lasting or expected to last more than seven consecutive calendar days, initiated by the employer without prejudice to the employee.” But Layoff according to Cornell University Policy (2014) is "a status that results in an indefinite elimination of employment or an indefinite increase or decrease in hours of 25 percent or more or a reduction below 20 hours per work week."
Layoffs are mostly commonly triggered by periods of unwelcome financial stress and changes in a firm’s industry position, as a response to shifts in demand. On a long term scale layoffs can even be caused by inadequate job growth. The economic logic behind layoffs is that in order for a firm to make money, it should either cut costs or increase revenue. Since future costs such as the salary of an employee is more predictable than future revenue, some employers choose to layoff under economic constraints. Cascio (2002), Dickler (2008), Cornell University Policy (2014) agreed with Bernad and Galarneau (2010), Brown (2008) in that layoffs results in lack of funds or lack of work, reorganization, position redesign and specific situation of an industry. Furthermore, UC Personnel Policies for Staff Members (UC-PPSM) (2012) declared that layoff process needs the business plan which includes information to support a business need and the reason for the layoff.

Thus, when layoffs happen, the job losses that occur will often be traumatic experiences for many people since employees have no choice or voice when a firm has reached the stage of laid-off, it can make them feel depressed (Ebert, 2005). In addition, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2013) viewed that the benefits include vacation leave; bonus leave; sick leave; health insurance and discontinued service retirement.

On contrast, when employees’ layoffs on the basis of seniority can take some of the sting out of the process and provide employees with a sense of fairness. In addition, this can also drag a company’s revenue stream down and may hasten a business’s demise. On the other hand, laying employees off is not easy, but careful planning can make the process as painless as possible for both employer and his employees (Lister, 2014).

Employment Law Advisor (2008) stated that employers, managers, supervisors and business owners who are considering layoffs for any reason do the following: Firstly, before the layoffs: Document the business reasons; know the law; contact unions and industry association; decide who to layoffs; choose a time; and develop a communication plan. Secondly, during the layoffs: Be efficient but compassionate; give notice; offer severance pay; assist departing employees; conduct confidential exit interviews; and use an employment termination checklist. Thirdly, after the layoffs: Recognize the impact on those left behind; maintain employee-employer trust; and maintain employee morale.

In addition, a manager’s Guide to Conducting Layoff Meetings (2009) put some specific strategies which are required to help employees focus on the priorities at hand and to recommit themselves to the organization, some specific suggestions are as follows: hold regular meetings with staff and bring an agenda; ask how people are doing and be prepared to listen and respond empathetically; ask what “rumors” are out there and either validate or dispel; set clear, realistic, attainable short-term goals; stay focused on the work of the department; establish an open door policy; finally, let staff know that they can and should come directly to managers with questions, concerns, information. Richtel (2008) and Allyn (2009) added that the typical alternative approaches which taken by firms in a time of economic crisis to layoffs are four day workweeks, unpaid vacations, furloughs, pension cuts and other methods to attempt to both cut labor costs and maintain the labor force.

According to statistics released by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism Egyptian Tourism Sector uses 3.8 million employees, including indirectly 1.7 million. Araby Algadeed (2012) said that approximately 40% from employees work in Tourism Sector layoffs since 25 January 2011 revolutions, as equal to 1.52 million employees. In addition, layoffs are occurring for the seasonal employment or temporary, and the fixed employment operates with contracts not to be layoffs. Journal of Alborsa news (2011) stated that the most affected areas with employees
layoffs was Cairo by (30%) followed by Luxor, Aswan with the same percentage and at least damage was the Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada by 15%, in addition, the range of layoffs by hotels between 30% to 40%, versus completely stopped working in most Aswan and Luxor floating hotels, where is currently working now is about 50 floating hotels from out of 286 hotels.

**Problem of the study**
Currently, Tourism industry is facing several crises and the tourist movement is up and down during these crises, so agencies and hotels managers try to solve this problem by cutting the total costs. Random layoff procedure is the only solution in this period of crisis in Egyptian tourism sector.

The problem is the random layoffs which managers believe that they cut costs. In contrast, this will affect employees’ loyalty and their production in the work field. On the other hand, some of employees leave the work to another safe work so they put the managers in one solution which is recruitment which will cost the managers a lot of money in training, losing time and experiences. International agencies and hotel chains have stable rules and policies in layoffs. So, the employers know the periods of layoffs through the year and they have some rights through layoffs period. In Egyptian tourism sector this process take place randomly especially in low season and employees are suffering from aggressive layoffs and losing rights. Thus, the employees will have negative attitude not only toward their work but also to Egyptian tourism sector. Furthermore, employees’ production and loyalty will be down.

**Aims**
There are four aims of this study;
- Showing the reasons which agencies and hotels managers depend on when they lay off employees.
- Identify layoff policies and rules which agencies and hotels should follow.
- Evaluating layoffs policies which agencies and hotels follow.
- Knowing if Egyptian Tourism Sector (agencies and hotels) follows a rules and policies in layoffs.
- Knowing the effect of layoffs on employees’ loyalty.

**Hypotheses**
This study is based on two hypotheses;
- There is a negative relationship which has statistically significance between layoffs and employees’ loyalty.
- There is a negative relationship which has statistically significance between economic benefit and layoffs.

**Limitations**
There are two tools of this study: one of them is questionnaire for agencies and hotels managers and the other is scale for employees in these places. The sample study is applied to hotels and agencies in Luxor, Minia, Cairo, Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh.

**Methodology**
To test hypotheses, the researchers designed two tools: a scale for measure employees’ loyalty and a questionnaire for agencies and hotels managers.

A. Scale of employee’s loyalty
The researchers make a psychology scale to measure employees’ loyalty in Egyptian tourism sector. This scale is specific and it paves the way to help managers in Egyptian tourism sector to judge employees’ loyalty.

The researchers provided a description, a method of correction and the stages of this scale are as follows:

1) Primary image scale
After determining the procedural definition of loyalty and reading many studies belong loyalty, it has been developing a scale project to measure employees’ loyalty which consists of three dimensions as follows:
- The first dimension: employees' loyalty for the job.
- The second dimension: employees’ loyalty to the workplace.
- The third dimension: employees' loyalty to bosses and co-employees.

The scale project includes three dimensions in average, each dimension composed of six phrases and thus the total of the scale statements are 18 phrases.

2) Experimental image scale
The scale was displayed on a group of judges to comment and after unpacking the judges’ opinions on the primary image scale phrases, the researchers collected phrases which approved by 80% and exclude the rest. So, the total agreed phrases are 12 phrases.

It has been gradually phrases of scale for five-scaling as follows: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree which taken score in SPSS program 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 correspondingly.

3) The scale reliability
I. Judges reliability: it had been using judges’ reliability method, where the scale was distributed on a group of specialized experts in Psychology, Tourism and Archaeology in Egypt. The group numbers are 15 and they agreed that the scale is valid to recognize employees’ loyalty in Egyptian tourism sector.

II. Factor Analysis: Factor analysis method was used with the basic components (Equamax Method), where the scale is applied to 110 samples. The results' scale are summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>The first dimension</th>
<th>The second dimension</th>
<th>The third dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.597</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>0.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 above shows distribution of saturations scale samples on dimensions which exposed from factor analysis in variety degrees. To describe these dimensions, it was saturate of each in a separate table; the researchers took the principle of high saturation for phrase. The first dimension is employees' loyalty for their job; the second dimension is employees’ loyalty to the workplace and the third dimension is employees’ loyalty to bosses and co-employees.

III. Internal consistency: The researchers calculated the internal consistency of the scale through the correlation coefficients between the degrees of the three dimensions and the total scale degree.

Table 2: correlation coefficients between the sub-scales and the total scale degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The sub-scales</th>
<th>The first dimension</th>
<th>The second dimension</th>
<th>The third dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The total degree</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td>0.955</td>
<td>0.941</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

It is clear from table No. 2 above that reliability of the scale and the consistency degree in the scale are used.

4) Stability of the scale: The researchers calculated the stability of the scale by one way ANOVA test (Alpha):

Table 3 stability' scale coefficients (Alpha)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The factors</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The first dimension</td>
<td>0.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second dimension</td>
<td>0.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The third dimension</td>
<td>0.950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reliability coefficients (alpha) in the previous table, gives high confidence in using of the scale.

Figure 1: Descriptive statistics for employees’ layoffs
B. The Questionnaires
The questionnaire was distributed on 36 samples of agencies and hotels managers. It was divided into two sections: the first one included questions which were dealing with layoffs and theirs policies, and the second section was dealing with the reasons of layoffs.

Figure 2: Descriptive statistics for managers’ sample

Findings and Discussions
To test study hypotheses, the researchers used SPSS V.19. The results are as follows;
- The results of the first hypothesis state that there is a negative relationship which has statistically significant between layoffs and employees’ loyalty. To test this hypothesis, the researchers used independent sample test and the results are as follows;

Table 4: Independent Sample Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

43
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Equality of Variances</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>4.402</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>22.582</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>26.486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>5.406</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>24.160</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>28.625</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>2.683</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>20.293</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>23.418</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- For the first dimension (A): There are significant differences between the scores means of employees in Egyptian Tourism Sector (layoffs and non-layoffs) in their loyalty towards their job, where the value of T is equal (26.486) and this value is statistically significant at level (0.000).

On the other hand, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances states that there is a variance where F value was 4.402 where significance level > 0.005.

- For the second dimension (B): There are significant differences between the scores means of employees in Egyptian Tourism Sector (layoffs and non-layoffs) in their loyalty towards the workplace (agency and hotel), where the value of T is equal (28.625) and this value is statistically significant at level (0.000).

Furthermore, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances states that there is a variance where F value was 5.406 where significance level > 0.005.

- Also, for the second dimension (C): there are statistically significant differences between the scores means of employees in Egyptian Tourism Sector (layoffs and non-layoffs) in their loyalty to bosses and co-employees, where the value of T is equal (23.418) and this value is statistically significant at level (0.000).

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances states that there is a variance where F value was 2.683 where significance level > 0.005.

By testing the hypothesis of the study, it is true and there is a negative relationship between layoffs and employees’ loyalty. Thus, the researchers believe that the negative relationship between layoffs and employees’ loyalty came from some reasons: first, the employees have not obtained some financial rights during layoff periods and this lead to frustration; second, frequently random of layoff periods which came from two factors, one of them is tourism crisis takes place in Egyptian destination lately and the other factor came from the seasonality of Egyptian destination; third, agencies and hotels have not stable rules and policies in layoffs so, the laid-off employees are aggressive.

- The results of the second hypothesis, which states that there is a negative statistically significant relationship between layoffs and economic benefit as follow: by testing this hypothesis it was found that there is a negative relationship between layoffs and cut costs,
Table 5: Shows the correlations between agencies and hotels’ managers and their attitudes toward layoffs and economic benefit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>employees layoffs in low season</th>
<th>layoffs effect on reducing hotel/agency loses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>employees layoffs in low season</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>layoffs effect on reducing hotel/agency loses</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.720**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test this hypothesis, the researchers carried out Pearson Correlation where it was found that (r) is equal to (0.720) at significance level (0.000). This means that there is a strong relationship between the decisions of managers of employees’ layoffs and cut costs and increase revenue.
Table 6: Shows Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Layoffs affecting on reducing agency/hotel costs</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows that there is a negative relationship between layoffs and economic benefit where the value of the (F) equal to (1314.6); a value is statistically significant level (0.000).

Thus, the researchers can conclude that the managers of agencies and hotels laid-off employees for economic benefit or cut costs where employees’ cost in Egyptian Tourism Sector range from 30% to 70% from the total cost. This is ensuring employment in Egyptian Tourism Sector is costly. Furthermore, that costs equal direct costs plus indirect costs and in non-profit state, managers dispense net profit and part of fixed costs, but they can’t assume indirect costs as employees’ costs which change with demand.

In general, Most agencies and hotels responses (86.11% of sample) use the policy of layoffs especially in low seasons and crisis periods (97.22% of sample) and they think that the most reasons of layoffs process is economic reason (77.77% of sample) but the others see employees effectiveness is important reason in employees layoffs process (19.44% of sample).

On the other hand, agencies and hotels managers believe that the great benefit in layoffs process is decreasing loss (94.44% of sample). Moreover, questionnaire shows that most agencies and hotels have not stable rules and policies in layoffs (97.22%) and this means that employee did not obtain his rights and layoffs are randomly carried out.

The researchers see that the reasons of layoffs process occurs with one worker for any reason that usually involves job performance, unethical behavior or personality differences. Meanwhile, a layoff usually occurs with more than one worker for more impersonal reasons involving business or economic decisions. Regardless of the reason, companies must take great care in the way they conduct a layoff to avoid legal ramifications.

General results

It was seen through the research results a relationship between employees' loyalty and organization economic benefit under the layoffs processes, which are as follows:

- the managers of agencies and hotels persuaded that layoffs is the ideal option for reducing costs and losses during periods of recession and declining tourism demand. But on the other hand, repeating of layoffs process of employees lead to lower loyalty and low productivity efficiency after layoffs periods, this leads managers to apply employees' mass layoffs or other while, employees looking for a new safe working place other than tourism.

- So, layoffs process leads managers to recruitment and employs a new staff and this cost organization a significant expenditure on advertising of new jobs and training for new employees. Also, this leads to competencies and then costs which agencies and hotels afforded after repeated layoffs greater from managers' thought to reduce costs and losses through layoffs processes.

- Most agencies and Hotels especially in Luxor and Sharm El sheikh do not follow basic rules and policies in layoffs process.

- Basic salary only to employee in layoffs period.

- Layoffs percent decrease in destination which has low demand as Minia.

- Generally, Agencies and Hotels layoff less-skilled employee.
It was observed that employee loyalty decreases when layoffs is repeated. Also, in the state of repeated layoffs employee thinks about safe job rather than tourism sectors.

**Recommendations**

In the light of the study, there are some recommendations that can be presented as follows:

1. Agencies and hotels managers should follow stable rules in employees’ layoffs in Egyptian tourism sector and decide what the company will need going forward. They should figure out which departments or positions will be cut and establish the criteria for layoff decisions, make a list, check it twice, and keep enough people to do the work.
2. Agencies or hotels should consider seriously in layoffs as paid temporary layoffs.
3. The Egyptian government should legislate a law related to employees’ layoffs.
4. It may follow some policies in employees’ layoffs, these might include: a freeze on hiring, promotions, or pay raises; a freeze on filling positions left vacant when employees leave voluntarily; cutting other costs; pay cuts; asking employees to take time off or reduce their hours; reducing authorized overtime, or; providing voluntary termination incentives to allow employees to decide whether to quit in exchange for a package of benefits.
5. Agency and hotel should inform employees with regular rules and policies prior to layoffs process.
6. Managers should measure employees’ loyalty every period especially after temporary layoffs periods.

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**Appendix 1: Staff Loyalty Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I feel with safety and stability in my work in tourism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I always try to develop myself for serving my work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My morals don’t allow me to leave my work place whatever it cost a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I don’t accept work in a hotel or agency if my salary or my level position increased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I always ready to sacrifice time and extra effort to my work place in distress times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I accept working in agency or another hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I would love to do extra efforts to hotel or agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I always try to make agency or hotel which I work in a high place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Accept all decisions’ boss in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I execute all directions of my bosses with precision and sincerity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I respect all my employees and supervisors at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>All decisions are taken by my bosses in work are properly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questionnaire for managers departments’ bosses**

**First, the basic data:**
Hotel Name / Company:

**Second, the data related to the subject**
- Do you turn to layoffs manner at certain times?
  - Yes
  - No
- What are the times do you use the layoffs?
  - Low season and crisis
  - Regular times
  - Randomly
  - Other
- If yes, what are the main reasons for the layoffs?
  - Economic reasons
  - Employee effectiveness
  - Regular procedures
  - Other
- What is the interest rate that you see from your point of view in layoffs?
  - Reduces costs and loses
  - Increase profit
  - Get rid of excess labor
  - Other
- Do you have rules and fixed procedures in layoffs at different times?
  - Yes
  - No
- Are layoffs leaded to experience employment losses and appointment of new employment?
  - Yes
  - No