

BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

Module: Research Methods for Business (LCLM6004)

Assignment Title:

Component 1 – Business Research Proposal

Student Name: Alina Nutu

Student ID: 2241692

Lecturer(s): Dr Dingning Liu

Research and proposal.....	3
Introduction and identification of the business problem.....	3
Research aim and objectives.....	4
Critical Literature Review.....	5
Research Methodology and Design.....	6
Business Relevance and Practical Implications.....	7
Reference List.....	9

Research Proposal on Amazon

Introduction and Identification of the Business Problem

In today's dynamic and highly competitive business environment, organisations must continuously adapt to changing market conditions, rapid technological advancements, and evolving consumer expectations. Companies operating within the global e-commerce industry face increasing pressure to deliver products quickly, maintain operational efficiency, and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction (Christopher, 2016). One organisation that has successfully achieved global dominance within the e-commerce sector is Amazon. Founded in 1994 by Jeff Bezos, Amazon has developed into one of the world's largest online retailers and technology companies, offering a vast range of products and digital services while operating extensive logistics and distribution networks across multiple countries (Stone, 2013; Dastin, 2020).

Amazon's success has largely been driven by its strong focus on innovation, operational efficiency, and customer-centric strategies. The company's business model relies heavily on highly efficient supply chain systems and fulfilment centres that enable fast and reliable delivery services (Christopher, 2016). However, despite its impressive growth and technological leadership, Amazon faces a number of complex organisational challenges that may influence its long-term performance and sustainability. One of the most widely discussed issues relates to employee turnover within Amazon's warehouse operations (Soper, 2021).

Warehouse and fulfilment centres represent a critical component of Amazon's logistics infrastructure. These facilities are responsible for receiving, sorting, packaging, and dispatching millions of products each day. In order to maintain rapid delivery speeds and high levels of customer satisfaction, Amazon relies on a large workforce of warehouse employees who perform physically demanding tasks under strict operational deadlines (Delfanti, 2021). However, various reports suggest that Amazon experiences unusually high levels of employee turnover within these facilities. According to reports published by *The Independent* (2022), the company's annual warehouse turnover rate has been estimated to exceed 150 percent, indicating that the workforce may be replaced more than once within a single year.

High employee turnover presents several organisational challenges. Firstly, the process of recruiting and training new employees requires significant financial investment and managerial resources (Armstrong and Taylor, 2020). Secondly, frequent staff turnover may lead to disruptions in operational efficiency, reduced productivity, and lower levels of organisational knowledge

retention (Dessler, 2020). Thirdly, high turnover rates may indicate deeper issues related to job satisfaction, workplace conditions, and organisational culture (Delfanti, 2021).

In addition to workforce challenges, Amazon has increasingly invested in automation technologies within its warehouse operations. Automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence systems are used to improve efficiency, streamline logistics processes, and reduce operational costs (Wurman, D'Andrea and Mountz, 2008). Reports suggest that Amazon has deployed over one million robots across its global fulfilment centres, with many warehouse processes now supported by automated systems (*Wall Street Journal*, 2025). While automation can significantly enhance productivity and operational performance, it may also influence employee experiences and perceptions of job security (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2014).

The interaction between workforce management and automation adoption creates a complex organisational issue involving multiple overlapping factors. On one hand, automation may reduce the physical workload placed on employees and improve operational efficiency. On the other hand, technological change may create uncertainty among workers or alter the nature of their job roles (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2014). These dynamics illustrate a “messy” business problem that requires systematic investigation in order to understand its implications for organisational performance and workforce sustainability.

This research proposal therefore seeks to explore the relationship between employee turnover, workplace conditions, and automation strategies within Amazon’s warehouse operations. By examining these interconnected factors, the study aims to provide evidence-based insights that could support managerial decision-making and contribute to the development of more sustainable workforce management practices.

Research Aim, Objectives and Questions

The aim of this research is to investigate how employee turnover and automation within Amazon’s warehouse operations influence organisational performance and workforce sustainability.

To achieve this aim, several research objectives have been identified. The first objective is to examine the organisational and workplace factors that contribute to employee turnover within Amazon’s fulfilment centers. The second objective is to evaluate the role of automation technologies in supporting Amazon’s logistics and operational strategies. The third objective is to analyse the relationship between employee working conditions, job satisfaction, and retention levels. The final objective is to assess how workforce management practices and technological innovation influence overall organisational performance.

The research will address several key research questions. The first research question seeks to identify the main factors contributing to high employee turnover in Amazon's warehouse operations. The second research question explores how automation technologies affect workforce management and operational efficiency. The third research question examines the relationship between employee working conditions and job satisfaction. Finally, the research will investigate how Amazon can balance technological innovation with employee wellbeing to improve organisational outcomes and maintain long-term sustainability.

Critical Literature Review

Employee turnover has been widely studied within the fields of human resource management and organisational behaviour. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), employee turnover refers to the rate at which employees leave an organisation and are replaced by new staff members. While some level of turnover is considered normal within organisations, excessively high turnover can negatively affect productivity, increase recruitment costs, and weaken organisational stability.

One theoretical framework frequently used to explain employee turnover is Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Herzberg (1959) suggests that employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two separate sets of factors. Motivation factors such as recognition, achievement, and career advancement contribute to job satisfaction, while hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, and organisational policies influence dissatisfaction. When hygiene factors are inadequate, employees may experience dissatisfaction and ultimately leave the organisation.

Another relevant theoretical framework is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that employee wellbeing is influenced by the balance between job demands and available resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job demands such as workload, time pressure, and physical effort can lead to stress and burnout if they are not balanced by sufficient resources such as support, training, and autonomy. Within warehouse environments, high job demands combined with limited resources may contribute to employee dissatisfaction and increased turnover.

Several studies have highlighted concerns about working conditions within Amazon warehouses. Investigations reported by The Independent (2022) suggest that strict productivity targets and constant monitoring systems may create high levels of pressure among warehouse employees. Workers are often required to meet demanding performance quotas while performing repetitive physical tasks for extended periods of time. These conditions may contribute to physical fatigue, stress, and job dissatisfaction.

In addition, reports have indicated that injury rates within Amazon warehouses may be higher than industry averages. Forbes (2022) argues that workplace injuries and high levels of employee stress may contribute to the company's high attrition rates. High turnover not only increases operational costs but may also affect the company's public reputation and relationships with employees.

At the same time, automation has become an increasingly important component of Amazon's operational strategy. Automation technologies, including robotics and artificial intelligence systems, are used to enhance productivity and improve supply chain efficiency. According to the Wall Street Journal (2025), Amazon has significantly expanded the use of robotic systems within its fulfilment centers in order to support warehouse operations.

The adoption of automation technologies can be examined through the Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis (1989). This model suggests that individuals' acceptance of new technologies depends on their perceived usefulness and ease of use. Within organisational settings, employees are more likely to support technological innovation when they believe it will improve their work performance and reduce workload.

Despite extensive discussion regarding Amazon's labour practices and automation strategies, many studies examine these topics separately. Limited research has explored the combined impact of automation and workforce management on employee turnover and organisational performance. As a result, there is a gap in the literature regarding how technological innovation within logistics operations interacts with workforce sustainability.

This research aims to address this gap by examining how automation technologies and workplace conditions influence employee turnover within Amazon's warehouse operations. By analysing both technological and human resource factors simultaneously, the study will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of organisational performance within modern e-commerce companies.

Research Methodology and Design

This research will adopt a mixed-methods approach in order to provide both quantitative and qualitative insights into the research problem. Mixed-methods research combines numerical data with descriptive analysis, allowing researchers to explore complex organisational issues from multiple perspectives. This approach is particularly appropriate for investigating workforce challenges and technological innovation within large organisations.

The study will utilise a case study research design focusing on Amazon's warehouse operations. Case study research allows researchers to investigate real-world organisational issues

in depth while considering contextual factors that influence business performance. By focusing on a specific organisation, the research will be able to examine how workforce management practices and automation strategies interact within a complex operational environment.

Data for this research will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data will include academic journal articles, industry reports, company publications, and credible media sources that provide information about Amazon's workforce practices and automation strategies. These sources will help establish the broader organisational context and provide background information for the research.

Primary data will be collected through the use of surveys and semi-structured interviews. A structured questionnaire will be distributed to individuals who have experience working in logistics, supply chain management, or warehouse environments. The survey will collect quantitative data regarding job satisfaction, workplace conditions, employee retention factors, and perceptions of automation technologies in the workplace. This data will help identify patterns and trends related to employee experiences and organisational practices.

Semi-structured interviews will also be conducted with logistics professionals or individuals with experience working in warehouse operations. These interviews will provide qualitative insights into workforce challenges, organisational culture, and the impact of automation on employees' job roles. The use of interviews will allow participants to express their views in greater detail, providing a deeper understanding of the factors influencing employee turnover.

The research will employ purposive sampling to select participants who have relevant knowledge or experience related to the research topic. This sampling method ensures that participants are able to provide meaningful insights into warehouse working conditions and logistics operations.

Quantitative survey data will be analysed using descriptive statistical techniques in order to identify trends and relationships between variables such as job satisfaction, workload, and employee retention. Qualitative data obtained from interviews will be analysed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying recurring themes and patterns within participants' responses.

Ethical considerations will play an important role throughout the research process. Participation in the study will be voluntary, and all participants will provide informed consent before taking part in the research. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be protected, and personal information will not be disclosed in the final research report. Ensuring ethical research practices is essential for maintaining the reliability and credibility of the study.

Business Relevance and Practical Implications

This research has significant practical implications for business decision-making within Amazon and other organisations operating within the logistics and e-commerce sectors. By examining the relationship between employee turnover, workplace conditions, and automation technologies, the study will provide valuable insights into how organisations can improve workforce management and operational efficiency.

One potential contribution of the research is the identification of key workplace factors that contribute to high employee turnover within warehouse environments. Understanding these factors may help organisations develop strategies that improve employee satisfaction, reduce attrition rates, and create more sustainable working conditions.

In addition, the research may provide insights into how automation technologies influence workforce dynamics and organisational performance. As more companies adopt robotics and artificial intelligence systems, it is essential to ensure that technological innovation is implemented in ways that support employees rather than create additional challenges.

The findings of this study may also support the development of strategic recommendations related to workforce planning, employee training, and technology integration. For example, organisations may consider introducing improved employee development programmes, enhancing workplace safety measures, or redesigning operational processes to reduce stress and physical strain.

Overall, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how organisations can balance technological innovation with effective human resource management to achieve long-term organisational success.

Reference List

Armstrong, M. and Taylor, S. (2020) *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. 15th edn. London: Kogan Page.

Bakker, A.B. and Demerouti, E. (2007) 'The Job Demands–Resources model: State of the art', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), pp. 309–328.

Brynjolfsson, E. and McAfee, A. (2014) *The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Christopher, M. (2016) *Logistics and Supply Chain Management*. 5th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Dastin, J. (2020) 'Amazon's logistics network expansion', *Reuters*. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com> (Accessed: 15 March 2026).

Davis, F.D. (1989) 'Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology', *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), pp. 319–340.

Delfanti, A. (2021) *The Warehouse: Workers and Robots at Amazon*. London: Pluto Press.

Dessler, G. (2020) *Human Resource Management*. 16th edn. Harlow: Pearson.

Forbes (2022) 'Amazon's high attrition could cost \$8 billion annually'. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com> (Accessed: 15 March 2026).

Herzberg, F. (1959) *The Motivation to Work*. New York: Wiley.

Soper, S. (2021) 'Amazon's employee turnover challenge', *Bloomberg Businessweek*.

Stone, B. (2013) *The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon*. London: Bantam Press.

The Independent (2022) 'Staff turnover at Amazon warehouses is staggeringly high'. Available at: <https://www.the-independent.com> (Accessed: 15 March 2026).

Wall Street Journal (2025) 'Amazon is on the cusp of using more robots than humans in its warehouses'. Available at: <https://www.wsj.com> (Accessed: 15 March 2026).

Wall Street Journal (2025) 'Amazon surpasses one million warehouse robots worldwide'.

Wurman, P.R., D'Andrea, R. and Mountz, M. (2008) 'Coordinating hundreds of cooperative autonomous vehicles in warehouses', *AI Magazine*, 29(1), pp. 9–20.