

INTI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Factors Affecting Academic Staff Job Satisfaction in Malaysian Private University

College

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ABSTRACT

Organization has concerned about job satisfaction of employees today due to job satisfaction have significant relationship with employees behavior. Employees with high job satisfaction are less likely to quit from their job. The purpose of this research was to determine the factors affecting academic staff job satisfaction in Malaysian private university colleges. The factors include motivation factor and hygiene factor. The motivation factor includes promotion, training, work itself while hygiene factors include supervisor, working condition and pay. Moreover, this research studied the relationship between personal demographic characteristics (gender, age, marital status) and academic staff job satisfaction. The study will focus towards the academic staff population of Malaysian private university colleges and their perception towards job satisfaction in their workplace.

This research was used quantitative methods methodologies as the main methods for investigation of academic staffs' job satisfaction in Malaysian private university colleges. In order to collect primary data, a self-completed questionnaire was designed and gave to academic staffs who are working in three private university colleges in Malaysia. The findings show that both motivation factors and hygiene factors have a significant effect on academic staffs' job satisfaction in Malaysian private university colleges. The findings also show that there is a significant relationship between personal demographic characteristics except marital status.

This study can serve as a model to be adopted for years to as decisive factors for job satisfaction of academic staff in Malaysian private university colleges.

Keywords: *Job satisfaction, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, promotion, supervision, working condition, work itself, salary, training*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Higher education institutions play a very important role for a nation in achieving higher levels of social and economic development. Higher education is constantly inducing globalization, and new technologies. (Cobus & Coenraad, 2006). There are many important changes in the Malaysian education system in order to support the educational objectives in Malaysia. One of the educational objectives is to continue to strive towards quality teaching in order to prepare more skilled human resources for the country in various development sectors. The numbers of universities in Malaysia have been increasing in recent years. Back in 1957, there was only one university in Malaysia. In year 2007, there are 20 public and 18 private universities in Malaysia and the number is still growing.

Generally, higher education institutions in Malaysia can be categorized into two: public universities and private university colleges. These higher education institutions provide undergraduate, postgraduate and diploma programs to the local and international students. Public universities are fully supported and controlled by the government.

Private university colleges are supported by government business agencies, political parties, organizations or individuals such as the National Power University of Malaysia and University Tunku Abdul Rahman. Apart from those which have been mentioned above, branch campuses of foreign universities are also visible in

Malaysia such as Monash University and Nottingham University. The private higher education institutions started in the early 1980's and the number has grown rapidly since the 1990's. In the early 1990s, there were about 200 private colleges in Malaysia. However, there were still no private universities in Malaysia at that point of time (Jalaludin, 2001). Nevertheless, there were about 535 private colleges and 26 private universities registered with the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) in year 2005 (Marzita, 2005).

With the increasing number of private university colleges, the competition within the industry of education has been elevated. The demand for academic staff for higher education has also increased. Academic staff play a very important fundamental role in higher level education. They are one of the most important factors that enable and sustain the core competency of a higher education institution. Academic staff has great influence on higher education institutions. They are the key for the institution to achieving their goals and objectives (Martin, 1999 and Oshagbemi, 2000).

Table 1.0: Number of Academics in private Institutes of Higher Learning by level of qualification

Degree/Years	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
PhD	235	767	868	1,030	1,338	1,463	1,070
Masters	2,016	3,919	4,744	5,958	5,344	6,077	6,846
Bachelor	5,108	7,231	7,030	6,753	5,887	6,601	7,754
Diploma	1,050	2,475	1,539	1,070	867	877	1,811
Total	8,409	14,392	14,181	14,811	13,436	15,018	18,081

Source: Ministry of Higher Education, 2008 (website: www.mohe.gov.my).

Table 1.0 shows the number of academics according to the level of their qualification from 2001 until 2007 in Malaysia. The table shows that there is a huge demand for academic staff, especially PhD holders. Unfortunately, the numbers of PhD holders are limited compared to the total numbers of academic staff in Malaysia.

Since the demand for academic staff in Malaysia is huge, the academic staff in private institutions has more opportunity to choose a job that fulfills their expectation. Therefore, maintaining talented staff is one of the challenges faced by private university colleges in Malaysia. Although there are many reasons affecting academic staff in their career period in institutions, job satisfaction is definitely one of the main reasons.

Many researchers have been doing research on the factors affecting job satisfaction. There are over 5,000 articles and dissertations about the topic of job satisfaction that have been examined and published. Today, researchers are starting to study employee job satisfaction in Malaysia. Dawal and Taha (2006) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and factors such as job rotation, work method, training and goal setting in two automotive industries in Malaysia. Abdullah, Uli and Parasuraman (2009) studied job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Malaysia and the study showed that secondary school teachers have lower job satisfaction depending on their salary and working condition.

With the development in industrial sectors of Malaysia and the increasing competition between private universities, many academic staff have left their jobs and moved to industry based jobs (Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education, 2006). Many left education and joined the industry or left a given educational institution due to different reasons. These reasons include personal expectation, better offers and dissatisfaction with the current position. However, according to Edward (2009) in the case study of factors influencing jobs satisfaction at two universities in

Malaysia, some academic staff left the current education institution because the higher education institution failed to manage employees' job satisfaction.

Gordon (1999) stated that when a job achieves the expectations, values and standards of an individual, then employee job satisfaction occurs. The level of employee job satisfaction is in line with the degree of the individual expectation achieved by the job. Since job satisfaction has an effect on employees' job performance according to many analysts, the employee with high satisfaction provides higher quality in service to the organization and becomes a positive contributor to the workforce. For these reasons, it seems necessary to identify factors that affect academic staff's job satisfaction in private higher education institutions.

According to Hollenbeck et. al. (2007) the nature of a job, supervisors and coworkers, pay, or the employee's own disposition may affect the employee's job satisfaction. Furthermore, personal demographic characteristics also have significant impact on employee job satisfaction. Personal demographic characteristics include gender, age, marital status, education, work experience and so on. For example, according to Greenberg and Baron (1993), it was reported that women employees have less satisfaction with their job compared to male employees. The previous research shows that age, gender, education status, hours of work and earnings are the key factors that affect job satisfaction on universities teachers (Devaney and chen, 2003; Murray and Atkinson, 1981; Syed et al, 2005; Greenberg and Baron, 1995 ;).

1.2 Problem Statement

Job satisfaction has gained lots of attention from organizations in the past few years. This factor is an important issue due to the relationship between job satisfaction and employee's behavior. Employees with high job satisfaction are

known to stay with their jobs for a longer period of time as compared to employees with less satisfaction (Clark 2001, Shields and Ward 2001). According to the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia (2006), many of the teachers in education industry have resigned from their existing jobs and moved to other industries because of the job satisfaction factor. Even though job satisfaction is the key factor, other substantial arguments such as personal reasons and other external reasons can also arise. For example, most of the teachers switch jobs to other industries mainly because of the higher pay compared to their existing jobs in the education industry. Other than that, better working condition and new work experience that add values to their career profiles are also influential. A working environment that is easy to adapt with will speed up the career change as well.

Most academic staffs in higher education institutions have a qualification ranging from Masters and above which indicates the quality and level of education. According to Polachek, S (2003), highly educated people tend to have more expectations on their jobs, as compared to those who are less educated. Thus, academic staff job satisfaction has a significant impact on academic staff work performance and organizational commitment. If the academic staff has higher satisfaction, they will prefer to work in the organization to seek for long term development than change their job.

The increasing competition in the higher education industry in Malaysia due to the increasing number of public and private higher educational institutions in Malaysia has prompted the acknowledgement of the importance of job satisfaction among academic staff in these institutions. To the knowledge of the author, no study seems to have yet been conducted on factors influencing job satisfaction of academic staff in private higher institutions in Malaysia. Hence, this study intends to examine this issue in terms of correlates of job satisfaction and the demographic factors affecting job satisfaction of this target group.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to identify the factors affecting job satisfaction of academic staff at private university colleges in Malaysia. With a good understanding of employees, the organization will be able to develop more effective Human Resource strategies to motivate employees. Therefore, the objectives of this research are formulated as follows:

- Identify key work related factors which influence academic staff job satisfaction at private university colleges in Malaysia. To evaluate the ratings of private academic staff towards different indicators of job satisfaction. A comparison is then made by the demographic characteristics of the respondents.
- To determine the overall level of academic staff job satisfaction at private university colleges in Malaysia by formulating a job satisfaction index based on ratings of all items pertaining to job satisfaction. A comparison is then made by demographic characteristics of the respondents.

1.4 Significant of Study

The scope of this research is to investigate academic staff overall job satisfaction among the Malaysian private university colleges, identify the factors affecting academic staff job satisfaction in Malaysian Private university colleges, and report the results which will contribution to the higher education industry in Malaysia for the development of their staff and employees all around making their work force highly structured and effective. This research is essential to identify the key factors which determine academic staff job satisfaction in private higher education institutions. A partial study of this research is to identify the relationship and impact

of personal demographic characteristics on academic staffs' job satisfaction at private university colleges in Malaysia.

By identifying the factors affecting job satisfaction of academic staff and the impact of personal demographic characteristics in private university colleges, the colleges can improve their human resource strategies and motivate their employees. This will help the colleges to groom talented employees and reduce employees' turnover rate.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literatures about job satisfaction to understand the factors and importance of employee satisfaction in organizations.

This chapter includes the definition of job satisfaction from various researchers. Chapter 2 also discusses different theories relating to job satisfaction, the factors affecting job satisfaction, and personal demographic characteristics affecting job satisfaction.

2.2 The definition of Job Satisfaction

There are many definitions of job satisfaction defined by various scholars. Generally, job satisfaction is simply defined as the level of individual's perception, either positive or negative, towards their job. Employees have different expectation towards their work. The degree of employees' job satisfaction could be affected when their expectations are met (Bernhardt et al., 2000; Harter et al., 2002; Koys, 2003; Tomow and Wiley, 1991; Wangenheim et al., 2007).

Gordon (1999) stated that employee job satisfaction occur when a job achieves certain expectations, values and standards of an individual. The level of employee job satisfaction is in line to the extent of expectations being met.

Robbins (1993) defined job satisfaction as when an individual feels that his or her job role allows his or her to fulfill the job value, then the pleasant emotion exists. Employee satisfaction could be different among different employees because each of them might concern about different factors. When their expectations are fulfilled, their satisfaction level could be high.

Many researches defined job satisfaction as an attitude of an individual. Generally, job satisfaction is defined as an attitudinal variable (Spector PE, 1997). Price (2001) defined job satisfaction as the affective orientation that an employee has towards his or her work. In other words, job satisfaction can be simply understood as how employees feel about their job from different aspects. It depends on the level of employees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction towards their job.

Similarly, Mullins (2002) defined that individual job satisfaction is an attitude which is related to personal feelings of achievement. In addition, Robbins and DeCenzo (2005) research agrees that job satisfaction is not related to behavior, but attitude, and it is an outcome that are concerned by many managers. However, McShane and Von Glinow (2005) stated that job satisfaction is a multi-faceted concept. Job satisfaction is made up of past and present oriented pleasurable feeling when one evaluates his or her role.

Research conducted by Cherrington (1994) showed that employees with high level of job satisfaction could have higher organization commitment. The organization commitment could add value to their job role and as well as workplace. This would encourage them to better contribute to job involvement, improve physical and mental health and quality of life.

According to Lam et al. (2001), the job satisfaction of an employee is critical especially in the service industry due to the nature of the industry. Lam et al. (2001) has suggested that an employee who achieves job satisfaction would provide better job performance. "The service-profit chain" theory suggested that superior internal working environment would cause the employees to be more satisfied and loyal to the employers. They are willing to provide better service to the organizations and achieve better job performance. This is because the employees feel that they are taken care of by the employers, thus commit to the job role efficiently. The statement of Lam et al. (2001) has been proven and it could be valid and reasonable to measure the job satisfaction of an employee by examining

should try to
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their job performance. Furthermore, each of the different employee satisfaction could be measured by using a 5-point rating scale (from 1: strongly satisfied to 5: strongly dissatisfied). The item-variables used were derived from well developed and empirically tested scales to measure employee satisfaction proposed in literature (Homburg & Stock, 2000).

The theory of Bernhardt et al. (2000), Harter et al. (2002), Koys (2003), Tornow and Wiley, (1991) and Wangenheim et al. (2007) is relevant to this research. They concluded that degree of employees' job satisfaction can be influenced when their expectations are met. The researcher proposed motivation factors (promotion, training and work itself), hygiene factors (supervisor, working condition, and pay) and demographic factors (age, gender and marital status) in this research to test which factors (for example: pay) would have impacts towards job satisfaction. Thus, the researcher could conclude that the degree of job satisfaction could be higher if the salary requirement of an employee and other correlates of job satisfaction are met. This leads to the following section on the Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory which identifies correlates of job satisfaction

2.3 Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory

The Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory (1959) was conducted by Frederick Herzberg. The study investigates 200 accountants and engineers from nine companies and found out the factors that influence employee job satisfaction. Frederick Herzberg's two factor theory is formulated based on need fulfillment theory. The theory states that there are several motivation factors that affect job satisfaction of an individual. The motivation factors could motivate an employee to perform better. The theory has included job recognition, promotion opportunities, opportunities to measure personal growth, and achievement in the workplace. The theory also examines the aspects of the working environment including pay, company policies, supervisory practices, and other working conditions (Greenberg and Baron, 1993).