

**The Influence of Performance improvement and Job Satisfaction among Employees at
RISDA Office, Kuching, Sarawak**

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Abstract

The improvement on employee's performance benefits forms a clear understanding on the factors that causes actual results. This study employs Gilbert's (1978) Behaviour Engineer Model in investigating the impact on environmental and human factors on employees' job satisfaction at RISDA Office, in Kuching, Sarawak. The instrument used for this study is adapted from Performance Analysis Worksheet and Updated Behaviour Engineering PROBE Questions which measuring the level of importance on environmental and human factors towards employees' performance at RISDA Office in Kuching, Sarawak. The sample of this study comprises of employees of RISDA Office located in Kuching, Sarawak. The questionnaire was distributed among the employees by applying purposive sampling. To determine the strength of association for the environmental and human factors on job satisfaction of the employees, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient is used. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide a win-win situation between the management and the employees in ensuring that the employees are happy with their workplace and at the same time will increase the productivity of the organization.

Keywords: *performance improvement, data, instrument, incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of environmental and human behavior factors is regarded as cost effective ways to satisfy employees with their job (Gilbert, 1978). Each factor consists of three components. For environmental factors, this made up of data, instruments, and incentives. Data is emphasized from frequent feedback of performance appraisal on the employees' performance expectations and also provide relevant guides to describe work processes. An instrument is viewed as a resource which includes physical and psychological work environment, work processes and procedures. In addition, incentives concentrate on financial and non-financial aspects which can reinforce positive performance among employees. The three components in human behavior factors encompass knowledge, capacity and motives. Knowledge emphasizes on the necessary information, experiences, skills and systematic training to perform the desired behaviors. Meanwhile, capacity stresses on the capacity to learn and do what is needed and this includes emotional and mental capabilities or aptitude to perform a particular job successfully. Motives on the other hand concentrate on the attitude to one's job and factors made up of employee satisfaction. In view of the relevance of the improvement performance and job satisfaction, this paper conceptually discusses the existing relationships between variable and job satisfaction.

1.2 Problem statement

Ones cannot argue that environmental factors have a greater impact on the job satisfaction through incentives (Huang and Hsueh, 2014). A numerous researchers have attested that the environmental factors have a positive impact on the job satisfaction of employees which lead to better performance (Deepa, 2016; Oni-ojo et al. 2015; Afandi, 2014; Kaymaz, 2011). The majority of the literature reviews verified that the most of the studies on performed

improvement are done in foreign countries such as India, Afghanistan, China and United States which focus on employees at private sectors. Yet, the evidence for the environmental and human behavior factors associated with job satisfaction still at its infancy for Malaysian setting, particularly at the public sectors. Apart from that, out of the six factors: data, instruments, incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives, minimal studies are done on capacity which associated with job satisfaction. Therefore, this study intends to investigate in depth the influence of improvement performance in association with job satisfaction especially in Malaysia, targeting on the employees working at RISDA Office in Kuching, Sarawak.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURES

2.1 Data

Studies done by Deneire et al.(2014) by involving secondary school teachers in Flanders Belgium, found that performance appraisal has a positive impact towards job satisfaction among teachers through fair assessment. This study shows that performance appraisal that provides employees with valuable feedback can create a positive effect on future performance. To statistically prove that data contributes toward job satisfaction, Asumeng (2013) did his studies with some organizations in Ghana, and confirmed that data does has a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. By giving adequacy feedback to the employees, it can lead to performance improvement. As mentioned by Kaymaz (2011), he confirms that by developing performance feedback, it can provide the measurement of goals and direct process of change which will increase in job performance. By giving feedback periodically within three or sixth monthly can satisfy the employees to perform better in their work in an organization. The result of these studies specify that employees perform better once they are satisfied with the data in terms of feedback given to them.

Detailed examination of data by Joshi and Adholiya (2014) in Udaipur Bank found that there is a positive correlation between data and job satisfaction. The employees are satisfied with the performance appraisal system being practiced within that organization. The accurate appraisal system, which includes periodic feedback and fair communication, can provide a basis for factual feedback for the future development of the employees. It shows that employees perform better when they are satisfied with the accurate data in terms of accurate and supportive appraisal system being provided.

According to Mathur and Mehta (2015), based on a study done in both public and private higher educational institutions in Rajasthan, they found that data is one of the factors that affect job satisfaction among the employees of higher education. Data which includes performance appraisal was a positive indicator of job satisfaction. It can determine the employee's rewards, other advantages and surely motivate the employees to update their knowledge and skills. Therefore, it shows that data greatly influence job satisfaction among employees through performance appraisal system. Deepa, Palaniswamy, and Kuppusamy (2014), discovered that, once the employees are satisfied with their job, it will influence performance and increase the productivity.

2.2 Instrument

A study done by Waqas et al., (2014) which was conducted at Macrothink Insitute in Pakistan, reveals the positive relationship between workplace environment and job satisfaction. They found that an appropriate lighting, noise, thermal environment and ergonomic design of office workplaces increase the organization performance. It can be concluded that employee can perform better once they are satisfied with the appropriate instruments given to them. A significant analysis and discussion on the instruments was presented by Lacey, Teasley, Olney, Kramer, and Schmalenberg (2011) in nursing administration in some hospitals in America. The result shows that instruments are positively correlated with job satisfaction

among the nurses. Instrument which includes the cleanliness of the hospital or unit enables clinical nurses to meet higher-level needs in performing their work. This finding indicates that work environment which is clean and organized contributes to performance improvement.

2.3 Incentives

According to Oni-Ojo et al., (2015), based on their findings in a study involving workers in Nigerian Manufacturing Industries, monetary incentives are associated with job satisfaction. Monetary incentives which include salary, profit sharing, bonuses, and fringe benefits often improve employees' performances and lead to job satisfaction. They found that by making employees feel that they are valued by the organization, monetary incentives can satisfy and encourage the employee to perform better internally and externally.

In a randomised controlled study of incentives in Indonesian University among the non-academic staff, Atya et al., (2013) also agreed that incentives have a positive impact on employee's satisfaction which reinforces positive performance. Employees tend to perform better once incentives were offered to them which directly influence their job satisfaction. Through the existence of both incentives within an organization, it can reinforce positive performance of employee which can result in job satisfaction. As discovered by Waqas et al., (2014) in Macrothink Institute in Pakistan, they found that reward and recognition were the first major factors that affect job satisfaction among the employees. This finding confirms that recognition of excellence on related effort by employees can directly increase the satisfaction by awarding recognition to the employees. Thus, by developing a reward system based on individual performance, it can motivate employees to perform their job better.

Another study done by Huang and Hsueh (2014), involving Hotel's IT staffs in Taiwan, shows that incentive and job satisfaction have a significant positive relationship and also have a direct impact on job performance. They found that financial incentives which include bonuses relatively satisfy the employees. In another major study involving employees of Jordanian Travel and Tourism Institutions, Alfandi and Alkawsaneh (2014) also discovered that incentives could be considered as one of the most effective tools in encouraging the employees into working sincerely. Incentives which includes knowing the results of the individual's effort gives the individual a feeling of pride and excellence and it is considered as valuable incentive for the employees to improve their performance.

In another major study, carried out in the Arab region among the employees in Lebanese firms, Ismail and Nakkache (2014) found that financial incentives have a more grounded association with job satisfaction compared to non-financial incentives. They indicated that financial incentives such as pay, job security and working conditions are more closely linked to job satisfaction.

2.4. Knowledge

Knowledge emphasizes on the necessary information, experiences, skills and systematic training to achieve the desired behaviours. According to Enkuzena (2011), based on a study conducted in retail store chains in Latvia, training is an effective medium in reinforcing positive performance among the employees. Training can provide the employees with better knowledge and skills. Through training, the employees will understand how to perform particular job based on skill needed. According to Tabvuma, Georgellis and Lange (2015), based on information obtained from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), there are various types of job training impact upon employee's job satisfaction. They found that orientation training exerts a significant positive effect on newcomer male employee's job satisfaction in both the private and public sectors. Orientation training can help in facilitating the workplace socialization of new employees by reducing the uncertainty about aspects of the job. Once the employees understand their role in a particular job, it can lead to positive performance and job satisfaction.

In a randomized controlled study of knowledge in the Edmundston region, a small city situated in north-western region of the province of New Brunswick in Canada, Ouedraogo and Leclerc (2013) reported that training and information influence the job satisfaction of employees. This study confirms that the link between training and information and job satisfaction are positively correlated. Training and information provides the employees with better knowledge and skill needed to perform required job have an influence on job performance. In a study which sets out to determine knowledge in public universities in Malaysia, Alshery, Ahmad and Al-Swidi (2015) found that training have a positive impact on job performance among the workers. They suggested that training is an organized way to enhance employee's knowledge, competency, and skill which are important to accomplish some particular employment errand. Once the employees are upbeat with the knowledge and skill gained during training, it can lead to performance improvement and job satisfaction.

Rahman (2014), in his study involving commercial banks in Bangladesh, indicated that training and development and job satisfaction are the most important components of organizational effectiveness. They identified that training and development program is the core tool of human resource practices in commercial bank in order to have satisfied, loyal, and efficient employees in commercial bank operation. In a randomized controlled study of knowledge, using information collected from three different banks in Pakistan, Sattar, Ahmad, and Hassan (2015) found that human resource practices are significantly related with employees work performance and satisfaction. Human resource practices which include adequate training and empowerment are the important practices in enhancing work performance and satisfaction of workers.

2.5 Capacity

Capacity stresses on the capacity to learn and do what is needed to perform successfully. According to Das and Ali (2014), they discovered that emotional intelligence have a positive relationship toward job satisfaction of banking employees in Varanasi District. Emotional intelligence which includes employee's ability to use his emotion in handling the work environment can direct them towards constructive activities and personal performance. This study shows that the employee who is highly proficient in this dimension would be able to encourage him or her to do better continuously and be able to convert emotions in encouraging and fecund directions.

2.6 Motives

Motives concentrate on whether the employees are aligned with the work and the work environment and as well as with employees desire to perform the required jobs. In an investigation into motives in Uttar Pradesh, Argawal and Dewan (2016), found that there is a positive relationship between motives and job satisfaction. The result from this study shows that employee is more enthusiastic about the organization's policy in terms of sufficient incentives provided to the employees. According to Neuman (2014), in a study examining the job satisfaction of workers in the United States and China utilizing data set from a regional manufacturing firm found that workers in China have a strong negative reaction to feeling adequately trained as opposed to positive feelings in the United States. This study shows that workers in United States are more concerned about the adequate training provided by the management. The findings indicates that motive in terms of training provided in an organization, can influence the employee towards job satisfaction.

Another study done by Young, Beckman and Baker (2012) within physician organizations in New York, found that financial incentives are associated with performance improvement in professional organizations. The evidence from this study indicates that financial incentives were the main tool to promote the performance of professionals. Thus, professionals demonstrate greater responsiveness once incentive-related performance is introduced.

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 1.1 presents environmental and human behavior factors as independent variable and job satisfaction as the dependent variable. This study will investigate the relationship between data, instruments, incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives by adopting Behavior Engineering Model (Gilbert, 1978).

3. INSTRUMENT

The instrument used for this research is adapted from Performance Analysis Worksheet and Updated Behaviour Engineering PROBE Questions (Chevalier, 2006). Section A of the questionnaire comprises of demographic data based on age, gender, marital status and educational background. Meanwhile, Section B consists of statement regarding independents variable which comprise of six factors; data, instruments, incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives. Then, Section C represents statement related to dependent variable which is job satisfaction. The response choice for this questionnaire is based on 5-point Likert scale measuring the level of importance which is; 1= not at all important, 2= slightly important, 3= neutral, 4= very important, and 5= extremely important.

4. METHODOLOGY

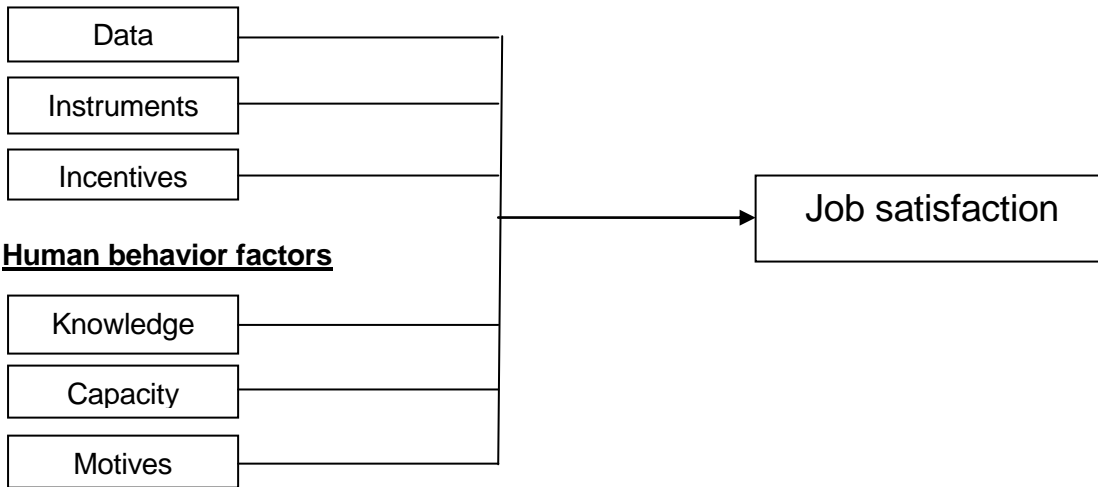
Checking the normality of the data is essential in order to choose an appropriate and accurate statistical technique. Normality of the data can be assessed to some extent by observing the value of kurtosis and skewness. Besides determining the normality of the data, the reliability of the items used in the questionnaire is also important to check. This is to ensure that items in the questionnaire are reliable and they measure what the researcher intends to measure. The reliability of the items is determined by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value where if the value is above 0.7, the items are considered reliable and acceptable.

Once the normality of the data is obtained and questionnaire is attested to be reliable, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient or parametric technique is selected to investigate the association between the environment and human factors and job satisfaction among RISDA employees. However, before further analysis is done, several assumptions need to be fulfilled to ensure no violation is done. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is chosen since this research is exploring the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables and the strength of the relationship is determined by the size of the value of Pearson correlation. The value of Pearson correlation will show the strength, the direction and significance level of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to achieve the objective of this research in detecting the relationship between environmental and human factors towards job satisfaction, the following conceptual framework is developed. Figure 1.1 displays the conceptual framework by adapting Behavior Engineering Model (Gilbert, 1978).

Environmental factors



INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (Behavior Engineering Model, Gilbert, 1978)

6. CONCLUSIONS

The paper discusses conceptually the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Several studies have examined the relationship empirically and as shown in the literature review, improvement performance and job satisfaction positively influence on employee job satisfaction directly. However, out of the six factors data, instruments, incentives, knowledge, capacity and motives, there is a dearth of existing study on the capacity that are associated with the job satisfaction. So far, five factors have been identified as being potentially important: data, instruments, incentives, knowledge and motives. Therefore, this study intends to investigate in depth the relationship between improvement performance in association with job satisfaction especially in Malaysia, focusing the employees at RISDA Office in Kuching, Sarawak. Investigating these relationship would help supplement means of improving employee job satisfaction in practical terms.

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