The Effect of Job Characteristics and Job Organizational Factors on Job Satisfaction in Automotive Industries

S.Z. Dawal, Z. Taha, and H. R. Zadry

Department of Engineering Design and Manufacture
University of Malaya
Kuala Lumpur, 50603, Malaysia
Corresponding author’s e-mail: sitizawiahmd@um.edu.my

Abstract: The present study examined the relation between job characteristic and job organization factors with job satisfaction in automotive industries. A survey was conducted to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and the above factors that affect work design in two automobiles manufacturing companies in Malaysia. One hundred and seventy male subjects between the ages of 18 to 40 years with the mean age of 26.8 and standard deviation (SD) of 5.3 years and mean work experience of 6.5 and SD of 4.9 years took part in the study. Five job organizational factors were tested in the study; job rotation, work method, training, problem solving and goal setting. In addition, five job characteristics were also tested; skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. The methodology was also developed to diagnose the factors which include questionnaire, observation, measurements, data collection and statistical analysis. A set of multiple choices questionnaires was developed and data were collected by interviewing the employees at the production plant. The results support previous findings and showed that job characteristics and job organization factors were significantly related to job satisfaction.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, job organization factors, job characteristics factors, survey, automotive industries.

1. INTRODUCTION

Industrial work design is defined as the specification of work content, method and relationships to satisfy the requirement of the worker and the system (Das, 1999). A major impetus to the study of industrial work design came from Wobbe and Brodner (1990), who pointed out that industrial work design must be developed as an integrated whole, taking into consideration the inter-dependencies among skills, organization and technology. In addition, Rohmert and Raab (1995) have also developed a model of stress and strain which adopt the human centered concept. The concept of job satisfaction is typically defined as an individual’s attitude about work roles and the relationship to worker motivation.

The most important evidence that indicated the worsening conditions of an organization was the low rate of job satisfaction (Kaya, 1995). Thus job satisfaction is the key to establishing a healthy organization. Nonetheless, factors related to job satisfaction were relevant in the prevention of employee frustration and low job satisfaction because employee would work harder and perform better if they are satisfied with their jobs. Factors affecting job satisfaction have been discussed by many researchers (Hackman and Oldham, 1974). In short, factors affecting job satisfaction in work design can be divided into psychological factors, social factors, physiological factors, organizational factors, technological factors and economical factors (Das, 1999). The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between job characteristics and job organizational factors that affect job satisfaction.

2. METHODOLOGY

The job diagnostic survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1974), was used as a tool to diagnose job characteristics and job organizational factors in the survey. The JDS was translated to Malay language to suit the Malaysian population. The questionnaires consisted of a set of Likert-type scales multiple-choice items (Rodeghier, 1996). In order to identify the relationship between job satisfaction and the tested factors, the data were analyzed using statistical methods to determine the means and correlations.
2.1. The Participants

The questionnaires were distributed to 2 automotive manufacturing industries that will be called Auto 1 and Auto 2. The analysis of data revealed that out of the 170 male participants interviewed, 80% possessed Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) which is equivalent to the Cambridge “O” levels, in both companies while others possessed SPM certificates with other skill certificates. 69% of participants in Auto1 were married and 31% were single. On the other hand, 87% of the participants in Auto2 were single and 13% were married. The subjects were between the ages of 18 to 40 years with the mean age of 26.8 ± 5.3 years and mean work experience of 6.5 ± 4.9 years.

The age factor was normally distributed but work experience was not. Work experience for Auto 1 was negatively skewed while work experience for Auto 2 was positively skewed. The responses indicated that 83% of the workers in Auto 1 were 26 years and above, while 90% of the workers in Auto 2 were below 26 years. Only 17% of workers in Auto 1 were 25 years and below while 9% of the workers in Auto 2 were 26 years and above. As for work experience, 90% of the workers in Auto 1 had worked for more than five years. Another 10% had work experience less than five years. Conversely, 90% of the workers in Auto 2 had work experience of 4 years and below. Only 10% had work experience of 5-8 years. Respondents in Auto 2 were younger and less experienced than respondents in Auto 1.

2.2. The Questionnaires

The questionnaires were designed in three sequential sections covering:

a) General background data i.e. age, gender, years of employment, marital status and education levels.

b) Job factors i.e. skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback from the work.

c) Job organizational factors i.e. job rotation, work method, training, problem solving, and goal setting.

2.3. The analysis

The data were analyzed for correlations using Spearman’s rank order correlations technique. Reliability tests were obtained for all factors tested in the survey using Cronbach’s α.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Job Factors and Job Satisfaction

The results of the study showed there were significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and job factors. This is in agreement with empirical studies by Hackman and Oldham (1974). The correlations between job satisfaction and job factors were higher in Auto 1 than Auto 2. One possible explanation is that the older, married, and more experienced workers in Auto 1 were highly satisfied with their job compare to the younger, single, and less experienced workers in Auto 2. Age was one of the factors affecting job satisfaction. Studies in five different countries proved that elder workers were more satisfied than their younger counterparts (Kaya, 1995). The results also supported findings by McCaslin and Mwangi (1994), who found that older employees have higher job satisfaction. The lack of job satisfaction amongst younger workers might be caused them to be more mobile and seek greener pastures elsewhere. Work experience is only one of the many aspects related to length of employment that can be correlated with perceived job satisfaction. Research done by Bowen et al. (1994) found that overall job satisfaction increased as the years of experience increased.

3.2. Job Organizational Factors and Job Satisfaction

The results indicated that there was significant positive correlation between job rotation and work method with job satisfaction. The results also showed that training opportunity led to higher job satisfaction. This is also consistent with the findings by Gazioglu and Tansel (2002), who found that job satisfaction, was significant and
positively correlated to training opportunity. There were positive significant correlations between job satisfaction and goal setting in both companies. The survey showed that more than 90% of the workers were satisfied with their companies’ goal set. These finding indicated that it is important for the management to consider the characteristics of individual subordinates before setting up goal. This includes workers capability and limitation. Fifty percent of the respondents in Auto 2 felt that management was serious in encouraging them to be involved in problem solving. The results support the findings by Ugboro and Obeng (2000) that involving workers in problem solving will improve or increase job satisfaction.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the result survey has shown that there was a strong correlation between job factors and job satisfaction which is influenced by age, work experience, and marital status. Then, job organizational factors, i.e. job rotation, work method, training, goal setting and problem solving have an effect on job satisfaction. Implicitly automotive industries may benefit from the methodology as it can diagnose job satisfaction to maintain performance and productivity.

5. REFERENCES


