

The Satisfaction Level of Penang Private Colleges Lecturers

H.K. Ch'ng, W.K. Chong and Nakesvari

Abstract—The private education undoubtedly contributes to the nation's future development by developing a pool of professionally educated and trained employees. Therefore, in general it's undeniable that the role of teachers is really essential in generating a quality graduate who will in turn brings up the nation ahead since the educated graduates are the assets of one country. Thus, this research was mainly undertaken to investigate on the significance of factors such as management support, salary and promotion opportunities in affecting the job satisfaction and further to explore on the moderating effect of age, gender, and length of working on the relationships between management support, salary and promotion opportunities and job satisfaction of private college lecturers in Penang. The result from this research showed that management support, salary and promotion opportunities are significant in determining the job satisfaction. It was also discovered that there is significant effect of length of working in moderating the relationship between management support and job satisfaction. of selected private college lecturers in Penang.

Index Terms— Education, Job satisfaction, Penang.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Sub-Prime lending crisis that hit the Wall Street and spread across the United States has also spin off the effect through the stock markets across the world. As a result, many parties including investment banks, industrial based companies and export companies have been affected since they are much more aligned to US market. For instance, the retrenchment has been taken place in the Industrial based companies whereby many small firms and even many assembly facilities have been closed down as part of a worldwide plan to synchronize manufacturing capacity to current market condition. The consequence from this phenomenon, many well educated and experienced staffs have lost their jobs and also undergoing the Voluntarily Separation Scheme (VSS), Mutual Separation Scheme (MSS) and pay cut. As a result, some of them have lost their direction in continuing a journey in their career. Even though, one door has closed yet another door especially in private education sector is always welcome a well educated and experienced staffs to share their knowledge in producing more professionals and well educated graduates to equip with the market needs. The statistical figures indicate that there is

a positive correlation between the numbers of unemployment rate and employment rate in education industry from 4th Quarter 2008 to 2009. The unemployed rate in the 4th quarter 2008 was 3.1% and it went up to 4% in 1st quarter 2009.

In this challenging economic landscape, the private colleges strived to be more competitive in offering various values for money courses with good quality tailored to the market needs while trying to reduce the running costs in order to survive in a highly competitive private education market with the many counterpart players. Thus, the lecturers might be loaded with high number of lecturing hours by the college management to boost the productivity while reducing operational costs to facilitate survival of the college.

A significant question may arise when the economy starts to recover, will they return to their previous field or will they retain in this industry to produce more and more professionals if they are not comfortable in lecturing? There is no absolute answers will be found to answer this question but we can certainly state that if the private colleges' employers are capable to satisfy their employees' needs and provided that the employees are satisfied then the number of turnover in this education sector can be minimized. Thus, the satisfaction level is essential in maintaining the job sustainability in one sector.

A. The Problem Statement

This study is concerned with the job satisfaction of private college lecturers in Penang, Malaysia. Although job satisfaction has been a popular research topic in the past, there has never been any published researched study specifically on the job satisfaction of academics in the private education sector in Penang. In particular, the nature of job satisfaction of Private college lecturers and its relationships with management support, salary and promotion opportunities still remain ambiguous and need to be investigated further.

B. The Significance of the Research

This research on the job satisfaction of lecturers will certainly be beneficial to the management of private colleges in Penang, Malaysia as well as countries have been impacted by the subprime crisis. It provides a basis which helps to resolve the common problems of dissatisfaction among the lecturers such as high turnover, absenteeism, poor morale etc., and to further improve the job satisfaction of lecturers for better quality of teaching. An understanding of the job satisfaction of lecturers is important since the dissatisfaction among the lecturers will hinder their performance and ability to deliver quality education to deliver quality education to students and this will in turn affect the image and the

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competitiveness of the college concerned in the private education market.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study on the job satisfaction has been one of the most popular fields of organizational behavior because job satisfaction has been closely linked with many organizational phenomena such as motivation, performance, leadership, morale etc. In spite of the extensive researches and studies conducted on the topic of job satisfaction in the past, the research on the job satisfaction of private college academics seems to be rather inadequate.

In general term, job satisfaction has been referred to as the feeling that a worker has about his job or a general attitude towards work or a job and it is influenced by the perception of one's job [9]. Another definition of job satisfaction by Wanous and Lawler [21] is that it is the sum of job facet satisfaction across all facets of a job.

Abraham Maslow [7] highlighted the satisfaction of human needs. His hierarchy of needs theory was originally not intended to apply to the work situation but it still remains as one of the pioneer theory that highlighted the satisfaction of human needs. He proposed a hierarchy of five needs that are satisfied sequentially in hierarchical manner, from physiological needs, proceeding to safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and the self-actualization needs at the top of the hierarchy. He further classified the physiological and safety needs as lower order needs which are satisfied externally and social, esteem and self-actualization as higher-order needs which are internal to a person.

Salary was found to be the prime factor for the motivation and job satisfaction of salaried employees of the automobile industry from the results of the survey by Kathawala, Moore and Elmuti [5]. The survey tried to assess the various job characteristics and the way the employees ranked them as motivators and satisfiers. The results showed that compensation was ranked as the number one job element for job satisfaction and increase in salary for performance was ranked as the number one job element for motivation.

Politis [16] has examined the roles played by leadership in the process of knowledge acquisition and a survey was carried out on 227 persons who have been engaged in knowledge acquisition activities to examine the relationship between leadership styles and knowledge acquisition attributes. The results showed that the leadership styles that involve human interaction and encourage participative decision-making are related positively to the skills essential knowledge acquisition.

Some studies found that higher position or rank made possible through promotion influence the job satisfaction in the academic environment. Titus Oshagbemi [12] investigated the job satisfaction of university academics and their managers and examined if those academics in higher managerial positions are more satisfied with their jobs than academics that do not hold similar administrative posts. Using a statistical test of differences, it was found that academics and their managers differ significantly on their levels of job satisfaction. Thus, the management position is

characterized by seniority in age, rank and length of service, affect the job satisfaction level of the university teachers positively. In addition, Mehmet and Hale [8] studies have found that administration encouraged teachers in a positive way and in turn the teachers were dedicated to the institutions. It was also found that age, educational background and teaching level are not significant factor affecting level of motivation and committing to organization.

Meanwhile, a study was carried out by Titus Oshagbemi [13] to differentiate between the length of service in higher education as a whole and length of service in present university as to separate academics who remain in one university since employment from those who switch jobs from one higher education to another. The result indicated that the job satisfaction of the university teacher is significant correlated with the length of service in present university. However, no significant correlation was found between the job satisfaction and length of service in the higher education as a whole.

Furthermore, the current study done by Sharma and Jyoti [19] have revealed that there is a positive relationship between job elements, management, colleague's attitude, growth opportunities, recognition, student's positive response and monetary value against the job satisfaction. Further, it was also found that the contribution of working condition, age of employees and length of employment is insignificant

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Three independent variables of management support, salary and promotion opportunities have been selected to view their effect on the job satisfaction of private college lecturers.

According to Painter [15] salary was identified as an important predictor of the level of job satisfaction, however Herzberg [3] supported that salary will not create job satisfaction as it was the extrinsic factor of a job. Thus, the inclusion of salary as an independent variable in this study will provide more insights into its impact on the job satisfaction of the private college lecturers.

According to the study conducted by Friedlander and Margulies [2], it was discovered that management & friendly staff relationships contribute to the level of job satisfaction. However, this result contradicts with view of Herzberg [3] who supported the view that supervision is irrelevant to the level of job satisfaction.

Next, promotion opportunities have been identified as an intrinsic reward and a motivator for higher efforts and generate commitments from employees. It is also a form of recognition by the management that will eventually satisfy the needs for status, esteem and self actualization [7] as the overall employees will appreciate the praise for their work well done by Locke [6].

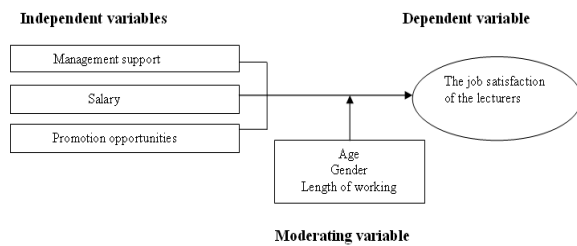


Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework

A. Justification of Variables

Psychologists believe that job satisfaction is affected by age and the research done by Sharma and Jyoti [19] has revealed that the relationship between age and job satisfaction has a curvilinear pattern while a study by Hickson and Oshagbemi [4] suggested that the age is different in its impact on the satisfaction of academic teaching staff and academic research staff. Other research results suggested that the influence of age on job satisfaction is not universal and very much dependent on the individual differences [20] Thus, this study will intend to explore more on the moderating effect of age on job satisfaction of academics.

As far as length of working and job satisfaction is concern, the research studies carried out by Sharma and Jyoti [19] disclosed that a non-linear relation exists between the length of working and job satisfaction. Besides that, Titus Oshagbemi [14] indicated that it is significant to job satisfaction in the academic environment in the UK. Arguably, it is expected that people will lose their enthusiasm on their job when their aspirations conflicted with realities of the real working life and they will experience decreased level of job satisfaction with the job tenure. Hence, the influence of length of working will be studied further in the academic environment of Penang, Malaysia.

Lastly, research has also indicated that male and female employees are different in the manner to have their needs satisfied from the job [1]. Thus, the effect of gender on the job satisfaction should be taken into consideration as well in the study of academic's job satisfaction, in view of the fact that a total of 54% of the respondents in this study consists of female.

IV. FINDINGS

There are a total of 19 private colleges of various sizes in Penang; we have chosen three established, reputable and sizeable colleges, namely the KDU College, the PTPL College and SEGI Colleges' lecturers as a target population. They are chosen for this study is due to these three colleges are recognized by the Ministry of Education of Malaysia Government and furthermore they have been operating for more than 10 years with the minimum size of 300 students and 40 full time lecturers. Besides that, they are typical private college of higher education which are currently undergoing tremendous expansion and have outperformed the other smaller colleges in terms of student enrolment number in every new intake over the past number of years.

A. Rate of Response

A total of 180 questionnaires were distributed to the

lecturers of three colleges, with 60 questionnaires respectively. The examination of the completed and returned questionnaires indicated that out of the 135 questionnaires collected back, the useable number is reduced to 124 (69%) questionnaires since 11 questionnaires were unusable due to omission and errors such as duplicate answers. The information gathered through the questionnaires will be analyzed by using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis, standard deviation, and mean, simple and multiple regression and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

B. Results

As illustrated from the Table 2, the job satisfaction and the three independent variables, namely management support, salary and promotion opportunities were found to be significantly correlated with positive relationship. This Pearson correlation value shows 0.612, 0.514 and 0.606 at $p = 0.000$ respectively. It means that the hypothesis : The more the support being provided by the management, more salary received by the lecturers and better the promotion opportunities, the higher will be the job satisfaction of the lecturers is accepted. The findings are consistent with the results of studies carried out on the influence of above said variables on job satisfaction [10].

The ANOVA results exhibit from the Table 3 showed that there is no significant effect of age and gender in moderating the relationship between management support and job satisfaction meanwhile result indicates that there is a significant effect of length of working in moderating the relationship between management support and job satisfaction, this is proven where the F-value is 1.967 at $p < 0.05$.

Further test is done to investigate the effect of age, gender and length of working in moderating the relationship between salary and job satisfaction and the results were found that there is no significant effect of those variables in moderating the relationship between salary and job satisfaction since the P value showed more than 0.05. (See Table 4)

Finally, the examination is proceeded to test the effect of age and gender in moderating the relationship between promotion opportunities and job satisfaction. It was found that, there is no significant of both variables in moderating the relationship between promotion opportunities and job satisfaction since again the P value found is to be more than 0.05. These results can be seen from the Table 5.

TABLE 1: THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	57	46
	Female	67	54
Age	< 30 years	32	25.8
	30 - 40 years	57	46
	40 - 50 years	31	25
	> 50 years	4	3.2
	< 5 years	43	34.7

Length of	5 - 10 years	60	48.4
Working	> 10 years	21	16.9

Gender as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	0.862	0.539
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TABLE 2: CORRELATION BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT, SALARY AND PROMOTION OPPORTUNITY

	Job Satisfaction	
	Correlation	Significant
MS	0.612	0
Salary	0.514	0
Promotion Opportunity	0.606	0

*MS refers to management support, MV refers to moderating variable and JS refers to job satisfaction

TABLE 3: AGE, GENDER AND LENGTH OF WORKING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND JOB SATISFACTION.

Source of Variable	F value	Sig.
MS	4.975	0
Age	2.027	0.117
Age as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	0.881	0.618
MS	4.443	0
Gender	1.069	0.304
Gender as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	0.3	0.991
Management Support	4.969	0
Length of Working	6.668	0.002
Length of working as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	1.967	0.024

TABLE 4: AGE, GENDER AND LENGTH OF WORKING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALARY AND JOB SATISFACTION.

Source of Variable	F value	Sig.
Salary	3.757	0
Age	0.844	0.473
Age as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	0.807	0.668
Salary	6.54	0
Gender	3.541	0.063
Gender as MV on the relationship between MS and JS	1.976	0.057
Salary	4.205	0
Length of Working	1.634	0.201
Length of working as MS on the relationship between MS and JS	0.791	0.668

TABLE 5: AGE AND GENDER ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES AND JOB SATISFACTION

Source of Variable	F value	Sig.
Promotion Opportunities	5.838	0
Age	1.266	0.29
Age as MV on the relationship between MS and JB	0.508	0.915
Promotion Opportunities	7.724	0
Gender	5.433	0.022

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings show that management support, salary and promotion opportunities are significantly correlated with job satisfaction with positive relationships. This indicates that, all the three independent variables above said are significant in determining the job satisfaction of private college lecturers. It is consistent with the results of many studies carried out on the influence of above said variables on job satisfaction [19][23][24].

A possible explanation of these significant findings is that the greater the participation of employees in decision-making, the more will be the involvement of subordinates in the future direction of the organization. Therefore, the level of motivation influences commitment towards organization whereby Mehmet and Hale [8] findings revealed that those with lower level of motivation have also lower level of commitment to organization as compared to medium and high level motivation.

Next with regards to the moderating effect of the age, the research results have shown that there is no significant influence of age towards the relationship of management support, salary and promotion opportunities with job satisfaction. This is consistent with previous studies done by Sharma and Jyoti [19] which has suggested that there is exist of a non-linear relationship between age and job satisfaction of an individual, other factors remaining constant.

Meanwhile, against many other studies that have been concluded that the age is an important variable in predicting the job satisfaction since it's varying with the age of the job holder. It was also found that older employees generally experience higher job satisfaction than the young employees [17][22]. The inconsistency with the other studies is due to the difference in profession and targeted groups being studied. Many studies in the past targeted mainly on the managerial as well as technical staff but not the teaching staff in the academic or educational environment therefore it leads to a difference in their findings [4] meanwhile studies done by Sharma and Jyoti [19] is consistent with our studies since their respondents were mainly came from university's teachers. Thus, the findings from this study support the view that the age/satisfaction relationships is not universal and it is very much dependent on the individual differences and situational factors [20].

The result from the study also shows that there is no significant influence of gender towards the relationship of management support, salary and promotion opportunities with job satisfaction. This result is reasonable as there were mixed results of many empirical studies conducted and these studies did not uniformly draw a conclusive evidence as to how gender differences will impact on the job satisfaction [14], although evidence was produced to support the fact that women and men are different in their ways to satisfy their needs for affiliation, power, self actualization and achievement [11] and women generally show greater interest than men in career options that offer slow career advancement opportunities [1].

Besides that, the result from the study also indicates no significant influence of length of working towards the relationship of salary and promotion opportunities with job satisfaction. This can be partly explained by the nature of academic environment in Malaysia where promotion opportunities and incentive systems are rather limited. Furthermore, job satisfaction of the lecturers is derived from other factors such as the academic achievements, student progress and relationship with students etc. and not solely from monetary rewards and power status. As such, the length of working may not be significant to influence the overall job satisfaction of the lecturers in relation to salary or promotion opportunities. The result from this study is reasonable as the empirical results reported from the earlier studies were mixed and showed no uniformity in their findings with regard to the influence of job tenure on job satisfaction [9][19].

On the other hand, the result from the study has indicated a significant influence of length of working towards the relationship of management support with job satisfaction. This result can be rationalized as due to more years of working in a college, long servicing lecturers may have learnt more about their tasks and responsibility, solidify their attitudes towards their jobs and organizations and tend to be more independent as compared to those junior lecturers. As such, the senior lecturers may have developed coping mechanism to deal with difficult tasks independently as compared to the junior lecturers who may require more support from the management to pull them through. This finding is reasonable since leadership style was identified as an important factor that influence job satisfaction, commitment and length of working of employees [18].

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