

FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION AT A&M-COMMERCE

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ABSTRACT

This project study focused on establishing if predictor variables exist for job satisfaction among staff members at A&M-Commerce. The problem is different perceptions of morale level and the lack of knowledge concerning the relationship between demographic factors and job satisfaction. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Short Form), a job satisfaction survey, was used to understand the relationship between the predictor variables of gender, education level, length of employment, ethnicity, age, and income level and job satisfaction. Using a non-experimental, quantitative, correlational study, the researcher explored whether a relationship exists between the predictor variables and job satisfaction. Results of the study showed that none of the demographic factors had any significant effect on job satisfaction as predictor variables. Because of this study, administration could engage in conversations within their organization about establishing or expanding targeted morale boosters within their specific levels of the organization or as a University through a holistic approach targeting the greatest contributors to job dissatisfaction on campus.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Job Dissatisfaction, Motivation*

1. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction describes the level of contentment an individual experiences through their job or employment. Because jobs used to be predetermined by an individual's family or class, job satisfaction is a fairly recent phenomena to study, only dating back a few decades. There are a variety of factors that can influence a person's level of job satisfaction. Some of these factors include the level of pay and benefits, the opportunity for advancement within a company, the quality of the working conditions, leadership and social relationships, the job itself (the variety of tasks involved, the opportunity to flex creative and leadership skills, the interest and challenge the job generates, and the clarity of the job description/requirements). The happier people are within their job, the more likely they are to stay with the organization, contribute to the organization, and be productive for the organization. Other influences on satisfaction include the management style and culture, employee involvement, empowerment and autonomy. Job satisfaction is a very important attribute that is frequently measured by organizations. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Short Form), a job satisfaction survey, was used to understand the relationship between the predictor variables of gender, education level, length of employment, ethnicity, age, and income level and job satisfaction. There are twenty different factors this survey measures and all of them use a Likert scale, ranging from five (Very Satisfied) to one (Very Dissatisfied).

1.1 Background of the study

How an organization manages and relates to its principal asset (people) is a key factor in the success of internal processes. A well-managed business organization normally considers the average employees as the primary source of productivity gains. These organizations consider employees rather than capital as the core foundation of the business and contributors to firm development. To ensure the achievement of organizational goals, an atmosphere of commitment and cooperation for its employees can be created through policies that facilitate employee satisfaction. Motivated employees then develop loyalty or commitment to the organization resulting in greater productivity and lower turnover rates, which reduces overhead and onboarding costs.

However, even with the almost universal recognition of the importance of job satisfaction and facilitating organizational commitment, there are varying methods for doing this. The earliest strategy is to use raises and monetary incentives to link job satisfaction and motivation to organizational commitment (Darma & Supriyanto, 2017). With the recognition that this is not enough to bring about motivation expressed in job satisfaction, other perspectives emerged giving particular importance to the training and skills development of employees (Woodruffe, 2000) applied through the underlying principle of continuous organizational learning. Since this covers only pieces of the puzzle that makes up an individual's job satisfaction, a holistic approach emerged that targets the development of a certain quality of employment life that covers fair wages, benefits, other employment conditions, and career development to support the increase in job satisfaction that can positively contribute to organizational commitment.

1.2 Objective of the study

The objective of the study is as follows:

- To assess the satisfaction level of employees at A&M-Commerce
- To identify the factors which influence the job satisfaction of employees
- To identify the factor which improves the satisfaction level of employees

1.3 Scope of the study

This study emphasis in the following scope:

- To identify the employees level of satisfaction
- This study is helpful to the University for conducting further research.
- This study is helpful to the University for identifying the areas of dissatisfaction for the employees.
- This study helps to managers to make future decisions with some insight and data.

1.4 Limitation of the study

- Because the sampling method used was a convenience sample, the generalization attributes to a larger population will be limited (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013).
- The use of a correlational research design also presents limitations concerning generalization and participant behavior. The ability to generalize each person's behavior in this study is difficult to attribute to the larger population. The purpose of the study was

to determine a relationship between variables, not attribute behavior, but the limitation of the correlational design is inherently present.

- Finally, the participants respond to the survey questions based on their paradigm and perspective. Although one of the assumptions of the study is that respondents were truthful, each respondent may lack the experience or introspection to address each question or instance adequately, and thus, bias the responses (Simon & Goes, 2013).

1.5 Methodology

This study used a correlational design in order to investigate the possible relationship between the variables. The researcher proposed to examine to what extent, if any, a relationship exists between multiple variables; thus, a quantitative study is the most appropriate for measuring the existence and the level of relationship between the variables (Bryman, 2012). The research design uses descriptive statistics to determine if a relationship exists between the independent variables and the dependent variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

The analysis of the responses to the survey will use descriptive and inferential statistics because the results of the quantitative study will be numerical data. Since the design is organized to determine the existence of a relationship rather than the existence of a causal relationship, the validity of causal ties between variables is not a concern (Nimon & Oswald, 2013). Correlational statistical studies are valid methods to determine the relationship between variables in the natural environment and are not manipulated by the researcher (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

The MSQ is being utilized because it is consistently validated (Dhammika, Ahmad, & Sam, 2012) and has been compared to similar heterogeneous job satisfaction surveys, such as the Andrew and Withey Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Rentsch & Steel, 1992), the Job Diagnostic Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), the Work Role Inventory (Miller & Carey, 1993), and the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997), and found to have a high internal reliability (Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen, 2003). The internal validity of a survey instrument relies on the ability of the questions to explain the results, or outcome, of the study. The confirmation of the capacity for the product of the MSQ to predict job satisfaction is referred to as its internal validity. The performance of the MSQ in previous studies, or the construct validity, proved this is the appropriate instrument to use to measure job satisfaction (Aburge, 2014) (Gundogdu, Yucel, Kucuk, & Karatas, 2012) (Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen, 2003).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Job Satisfaction

There are many different theories revolving around job satisfaction and what may contribute to it. Job satisfaction and workplace compatibility can be divided into three segments: person-job fit, person-organization fit, and person-environment fit.

Person-job fit. Person-job fit theory is also useful in analyzing the individual's specific skill set prepares them or fits within the context of a particular position or job (Khanin, 2013). This theory presupposes that based on an employee's attributes they are better suited (or not) for certain types of jobs (Thompson, Sikora, Perrewe, & Ferris, 2015). The theory could also predict the likelihood of whether an employee is considering or not considering leaving their current job,

based on job satisfaction, for another position for which they feel better suited to perform (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Work engagement by the employer has been shown to increase the satisfaction of the employee and create or increase the person-job fit impression of the employee (Lu, Wang, Du, & Bakker, 2014).

Person-organization fit. The predictive nature of personality traits of individuals placed into specific situations only arises when known, and quantifiable models are used to apply the assumptions. One of the primary precepts of the person-organization fit model is that it deemphasizes either the person or the situation to emphasize the effect the person has on the situation (Chatman, 1989). The relative fit, or oneness an employee feels with an organization, is most often perceived at a single point in time (Swider, Zimmerman, & Barrick, 2015). These perceptions guide how an employee feels their goals, values, and ambitions align with those of an organization. The more closely those valuations align, the more satisfied an employee will feel (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Person-organization fit is defined by how much an employee has personally invested in seeing the organization succeed because their goals and values are interconnected.

Person-environment fit. As implied, the implication of a person-environment fit is the correlation between the individual characteristics of an individual and the environment in which they work. This is the combination of the person-job fit and the person-organization fit for an overall view of a person in the workplace, in regards to both task and corporate culture (Lu et al., 2014). A decrease in the person-environment fit can cause an increase in stress and a decrease in job satisfaction. The lack of alignment between the characteristics of the person, such as abilities and values, and the environment can generate varying degrees of psychological, physiological, and behavioral complications that can not only decrease an employee's satisfaction with their job but increase morbidity and mortality (Edwards & Cooper, 2013)

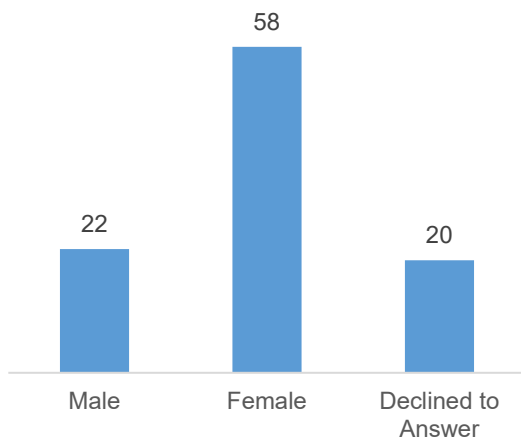
3. MAKEUP OF THE SAMPLE

Texas A&M University-Commerce has 525 full-time employees working as staff members supporting the education of our students. While the staff members in this category were the primary targets of this study, several faculty members participated as well. With the 363 full-time faculty members included in the population, our sample size of 100 respondents represents 11.3% of the population.

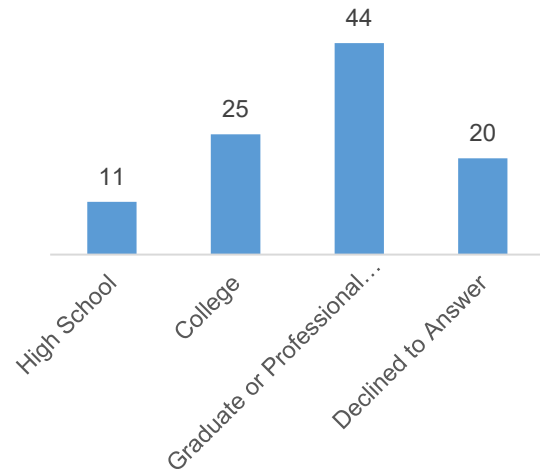
Since the purpose of this study was not only to measure job satisfaction across campus, but also was to see if there were any demographic contributors that influences job satisfaction, we asked respondents six different demographic questions and two qualitative open-ended questions. Information was collected on gender, education level, length of employment, ethnicity, age, and income levels.

The following charts show the number of respondents who identified with their corresponding categories for each demographic question:

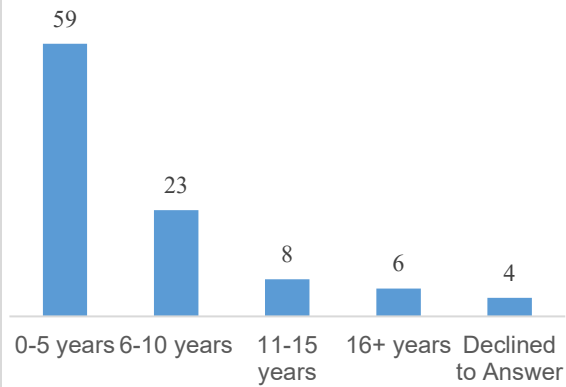
Gender of Respondents



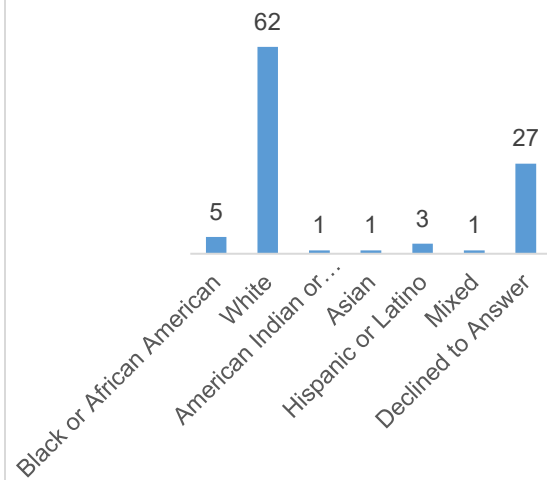
Education of Respondents



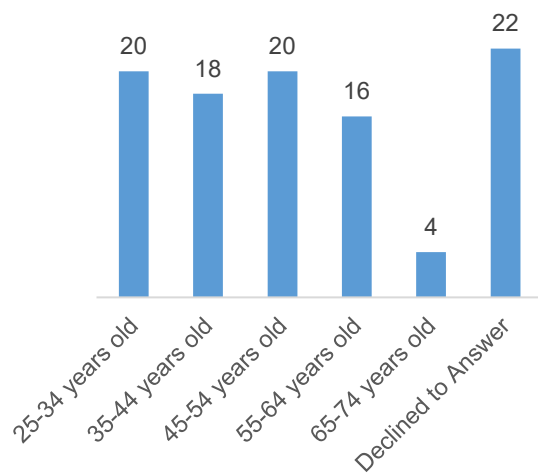
Length of Employment of Respondents



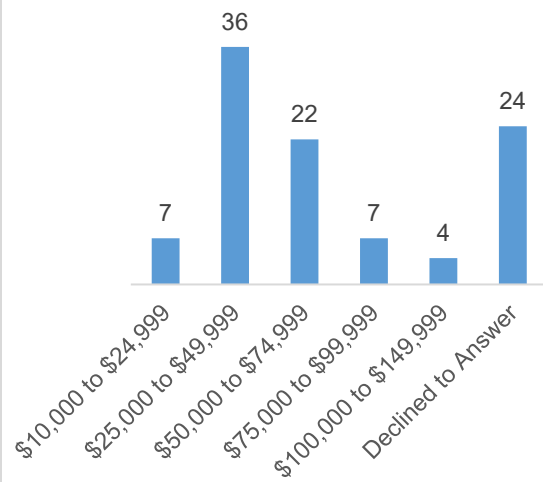
Ethnicity of Respondents



Age of Respondents



Income of Respondents



4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Technically speaking, processing implies editing, coding, classification and tabulation of collected data so that they are amenable to analysis. The term analysis refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for pattern groups. Thus in the process of analysis, relationship or difference should be subjected to statistical tests of significance to determine with what validity data can be said to indicate any conclusions.

The survey was posted to the University's event calendar as an announcement that was left open until at least 100 respondents (greater than 10% of the population) completed the survey.

4.1 Findings

The average job satisfaction score (from 1 to 5) was 3.81 across the campus (min 1.35, max 4.90). This average score is above "neutral" and just below "satisfied" on the five-point scale presented to the sample. The MSQ (Short Form) is made up of twenty individual factors that contribute to job satisfaction. The individual contributing factors, ranked in order of satisfaction for this survey, are listed below.

Score	Category
4.56	The way my job provides for steady employment
4.17	The chance to do things for other people
4.14	Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience
4.11	The chance to work alone on the job
4.08	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job
4.07	The freedom to use my own judgement
4.01	The chance to do different things from time to time
3.99	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities
3.99	Being able to keep busy all the time
3.97	The way my coworkers get along with each other
3.95	The working conditions
3.95	The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job
3.87	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions
3.85	The way my boss handles his her workers
3.68	The praise I get for doing a good job
3.50	The chance to be somebody in the community
3.35	The chance to tell people what to do
3.04	The way university policies are put into place
3.00	My pay and the amount of work I do
2.87	The chances for advancement on this job

4.2 Employees Job Satisfaction at A&M-Commerce

It does not appear that any of the demographic variables contribute in a statistically significant way to the employee's responses to the job satisfaction survey. The correlation coefficient for gender ($r = 0.079$), level of education ($r = -0.085$), length of employment ($r = 0.108$), ethnicity (r

= -0.059), age ($r = 0.193$), or income ($r = 0.234$) would indicate no statistically significant correlation between the independent demographic variable and the dependent satisfaction variable.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

In order to utilize the data and resulting information effectively, it is helpful to understand what is contributing to the high job satisfaction scores in some areas and high job dissatisfaction in others. In the next sections, the top three contributors to both will be examined.

4.3.1 Steady Employment

The average score for “The way my job provides for steady employment” was 4.56 and was the greatest categorical contributor to job satisfaction of those surveyed on campus. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 66 of them responded with “Very Satisfied” and 29 responded as “Satisfied”. Only four individuals responded as “Neutral” and one each for “Dissatisfied” and “Very Dissatisfied”. There is a positive correlation between job security and job satisfaction and the relatively high score on this campus contributes to potential gains in productivity and retention (Imram, Majeed, & Ayub, 2015) (Artz & Kaya, 2014).

4.3.2 Do Things for Other People

The average score for “The chance to do things for other people” was 4.17 and was the second greatest categorical contributor to job satisfaction of those surveyed on campus. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 44 of them responded with “Very Satisfied” and 38 responded as “Satisfied”. Meanwhile, 13 individuals responded as “Neutral” with one for “Dissatisfied” and four responded with “Very Dissatisfied”.

4.3.3 Do Things that Do Not Go Against Conscience

The average score for “Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience” was 4.14 and was the third greatest categorical contributor to job satisfaction of those surveyed on campus. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 43 of them responded with “Very Satisfied” and 38 responded as “Satisfied”. Meanwhile, 10 individuals responded as “Neutral” with eight for “Dissatisfied” and one responded with “Very Dissatisfied”.

4.3.4 The Way University Policies Are Put Into Place

The average score for “The way university policies are put into place” was 3.04 and was the third greatest categorical contributor to job dissatisfaction of those surveyed on campus. A score of “3” would mean “Neutral” and could mean this neither contributes to satisfaction or dissatisfaction since it is in the middle of the scale. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 8 of them responded with “Very Satisfied” and 30 responded as “Satisfied”. Meanwhile, 28 individuals responded as “Neutral” with 26 for “Dissatisfied” and 8 responded with “Very Dissatisfied”.

4.3.4 My Pay and the Amount of Work I Do

The average score for “My pay and the amount of work I do” was 3.00 and was the second greatest categorical contributor to job dissatisfaction of those surveyed on campus. A score of “3” would mean “Neutral” and could mean this neither contributes to satisfaction or dissatisfaction since it is in the middle of the scale. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 8 of them

responded with “Very Satisfied” and 32 responded as “Satisfied”. Meanwhile, 24 individuals responded as “Neutral” with 24 for “Dissatisfied” and 12 responded with “Very Dissatisfied”.

4.3.5 The Chances for Advancement

The average score for “The chances for advancement on this job” was 2.87 and was the greatest categorical contributor to job dissatisfaction of those surveyed on campus. Of the 100 individuals surveyed, 6 of them responded with “Very Satisfied” and 27 responded as “Satisfied”. Meanwhile, 31 individuals responded as “Neutral” with 20 for “Dissatisfied” and 16 responded with “Very Dissatisfied”.

4.4 Conclusion

While the campus average job satisfaction score hovers just below satisfied, the opportunity to look at the twenty contributing factors and rank them according to how they affect the employees on this campus gives us an opportunity to examine what is working in our advantage and identify some areas that we can improve services or communication to bolster morale. From this study, we can also conclude that the morale and job satisfaction is felt by different demographic groups and any efforts to improve morale do not need to be targeted, but can be overarching or holistic improvements for everyone on campus. The key areas for improvement are communication on how university policies are put into place, equitable pay for the work being performed, and career advancement.

4.5 Recommendation

Opportunities for future study have emerged as a result of this study. In addition to overcoming the limitations of data gathering, additional research is needed to observe the relationships between job satisfaction and work conditions, division or department, pay and promotion, fairness, job security, relationship with supervisor and co-workers. As a result of this study, we can make the following recommendations.

- 1) Create favorable work conditions for the University by guiding employees through formal communication on the channels available to them for expressing concerns and how to do so respectfully and with possible solutions.
- 2) Begin a comprehensive equity review for the lowest paid full-time employees to ensure they are being fairly paid for the work being performed.
- 3) Ensure a rightsizing strategy within University departments to evaluate where there is a shortage of employees and train them up appropriately for future positions.
- 4) Evaluate the process for communicating and documenting new policies to ensure a communication plan is included for distribution to the affected parties. Finding out about new policies that impact day to day operations through here say, rumor, and the unofficial back channels of communication has led to misinformation in the past.

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