





HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG COURIER SERVICE PROVIDER EMPLOYEES



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ABSTRACT

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This paper intends to study the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices (training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits) and job satisfaction among employees in the courier service provider. Questionnaires were distributed to employees of the courier service provider. A total of 110 useable were returned which yielding a response rate of 92 percent. Results showed that supervisory communication is significantly positively related to job satisfaction. However, there was no significant relationship found between training and job satisfaction, as well as compensation and benefits with job satisfaction. Hence, only one hypothesis out of three was supported. This study shed some lights to the supervisor to communicate effectively to their subordinates. In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing importance of the HRM practices in affecting job satisfaction among the employees of the courier service provider.

Contribution/ Originality: This study contributes by the existing literature by estimating the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices (training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits) and job satisfaction among employees in the courier service provider.

1. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction of employees can be referred to the attitude of people feel about their jobs and the organizations (Locke, 1976). It is an important component that should not be ignored in human resource management (HRM) as it is found to have a significant impact on absenteeism, turnover, job performance, and psychological distress (Andrisani, 1978; Chen, Yang, Shiau, & Wang, 2006; Spector, 1997). Several variables that support job satisfaction have been found in previous studies which are including salaries, benefits, accomplishment, autonomy, recognition, communication, working conditions, peers, importance of the job, degree of professionalism, organizational environment, interpersonal relationships, supervisory support, career advancement opportunities, leadership style, and workplace flexibility (Kline & Boyd, 1991; Pearson & Seiler, 1983; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Testa, 1999). Moreover, Zheng and Siu (2009) found that the significant drivers of job satisfaction not only consisted of salaries and benefits but also training opportunities and support from colleagues as well as supervisors.

In the past, HRM was not prioritized by organizations but focus mostly on work productivity (Osman, Ho, & Galang, 2011). However, organizations began to reassess their corporate philosophy by referring the people as assets instead of costs (Rowley & Abdul-Rahman, 2007). This big step forward of HRM practices has caused huge attention among management researchers to do in-depth research to HRM practices including training and development, performance appraisal management, career planning, compensation, and communication that may lead to motivation and job satisfaction as well as effectiveness (Osman et al., 2011). According to Ting (1997) HRM practices assumed to associate closely with job satisfaction. This is further supported by few studies done on relating HRM practices which are teamwork, training, compensation, and benefits, motivation, and supervisory communication to job satisfaction (Absar, Azim, Balasundaram, & Akhter, 2010; Mullins, 1993; Petrescu & Simmons, 2008).

The courier service provider is one of the multinational companies in air freight services industry in Malaysia. As a service industry, job satisfaction of employees is crucial as it affects the service quality extended to the customers. This supported by research done by Zheng and Siu (2009) who's claimed that the mood and manner in which the service is performed in whom directly impacted by employees' job satisfaction and thus affect service quality experiences of customers. According to the internal analysis, the company's turnover over the years is at the uptrend which belief is caused by low job satisfaction led by the unchanged HRM practices. Furthermore, time to fill in the open positions is getting longer. This has impacted on the daily service productivity and resulted in bad customers' experience due to short of manpower to support the current demand. Refer to believe of the company's philosophy, if the problems persist, the company's profit may be impacted and will further treat existing employees' job satisfaction too. Hence, the problem being investigated in this study is job satisfaction level of the courier service provider employees which impacted by the HRM practices. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to understand the relationship and the impact between job satisfaction and HRM practices, namely training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits among employees in the courier service provider

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers the components of job satisfaction and HRM practices, namely training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits.

2.1. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an attitude which should differentiate the substances of cognitive evaluations like affect (emotion), beliefs, and behavior (Weiss, 2002). Job satisfaction studies were inspired by the Hawthorne Effect studies that were conveyed from 1924 to 1933 by George Alton Mayo and his associates at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company in Chicago. They found various conditions on workers' productivity which includes visible hierarchies and latent social relationships (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1949).

Besides, Mayo (1945) found that workers' productivity effects by various conditions other than pay, which are rest time, work hours, food, favorable to the work and the most importantly teamwork and cooperation. More researchers are investigated regarding the factors that influence job satisfaction. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) came out with a theory that claimed there are two variables for satisfaction which are motivation factor (intrinsic) and hygiene factor (extrinsic). Motivation factor consists of accomplishment, recognition, responsibility, the work itself, an opportunity to growth and progression while hygiene factor consists of compensation and benefits, empowerment, security, policy and administration of company, supervision, working conditions, and interpersonal relationship (Herzberg., 1987).

Other studies found various factors that derived employee job satisfaction including salaries, benefits, accomplishments, autonomy, recognition, communication, working conditions, peers, importance of the job, degree of professionalism, organizational environment, interpersonal relationships, supervisory support, career

advancement opportunities, leadership style, and workplace flexibility (Kline & Boyd, 1991; Pearson & Seiler, 1983; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Testa, 1999). There were extended by Zheng and Siu (2009) with the findings of the significant drivers of job satisfaction included training opportunities, salaries, and benefits, as well as support from colleagues and superiors. The importance of job satisfaction for organizational performance success has been proved by several studies. Findings claimed that job satisfaction is an immediate predecessor of the intention to leave the workplace and turnover (Martin, 1990). People with high job satisfaction are more productive and will stay on the job (Irvine & Evans, 1995; McNeese-Smith, 1997).

2.2. Human Resource Management Practices

Human resource management (HRM) is the dominant business concern which shapes the behavior, attitudes, and performance of the employees (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhard, & Wright, 2008). Meanwhile, HRM practices refer to the activities of determination of needs of human resources, recruitment, screening, training, rewarding, appraising and also attending to labor relations, health, and safety as well as justice concerns (Dessler, 2008; Kramar, Bartram, De Cieri, Gerhart, & Hollenbeck, 2014). Lee and Heard (2000) claimed that HRM practices play a role in impacting attitudes and behavior of employees (intent to leave, levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment). The study conducted by Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, and Kalleberg (2000). Furthermore, support this argument by concluding that many scholars and practitioners believe HRM had a positive effect on job satisfaction and eventually improve organizational performance. Edgar and Geare (2005) study human resource practices in the context of New Zealand found that it had significantly affect job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational fairness. Furthermore, Stavrou-Costea (2005) conceptualized that the main factor for a firm success can be due to the implementation of effective HRM.

2.2.1. Training

Training is an important element in HRM practices as it enables to boost up productivity and balance the benefits of productivity against the training cost (Mudor, 2011). According to Harel and Tzafrir (1999) training increases employees' satisfaction with their current jobs and workplace. Lee, Nam, Park, and Lee (2006) then confirmed there was a positive relationship between training and service workers' job satisfaction. Likewise, a study conducted on Macao Casino employees evidenced the impact of training of employees' job satisfaction (Zheng & Siu, 2009). As explained by Bradley, Petrescu, and Simmons (2004) on-going learning or training in the workplace is high correlates on job satisfaction as employees' motivation and commitment being satisfied when working completely with the appropriate skills.

2.2.2. Supervisory Communication

The initial concept of supervisory communication was inspired base on role theory (Katz & Khan, 1978). Huseman, Hatfield, Boulton, and Gatewood (1980) then tested and explained supervisory communication in four dimensions, including positive relationship communication, upward openness communication, negative relationship communication, and job-relevant communication. Positive relationship communication refers to the supervisor allowed the subordinate to speak out their thoughts, upward openness communication focuses on supervisors' instruction, negative relationship communication is practiced where supervisors tend to tease and criticizing subordinates in front of others while job-relevant communication deals with supervisor's feedback regarding on performance, rules and policies, job instructions, work assignments, and schedule as well as goals (Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996). These four dimensions of communication enable members of the organization exchange information effectively to progress their task and achieve organizational goals. Besides, it is also enabled to enhance relationships between members of the organization, and therefore information flows smoothly from top to bottom to work towards organization's goal (Bakar & Mohamad, 2004). It is believed that without communication, the

organization may fail to continue their operations (Hickson, Stacks, & Greely, 1998). These four dimensions of communications also have shown to predict job satisfaction significantly whereby relationships between a member of an organization being enhances (Miles et al., 1996).

Several studies have discovered supervisory communication as a variable that has a positive impact on job satisfaction. The study from Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (1976) found that employees who observed greater support attention and sensitivity from their head are more possible to involve in decision making, less experience in work problem and relatively higher job satisfaction which in turn will lead to satisfaction in their relationship. This has further supported by Thobega (2007) study, where a positive correlation found between supervision and job satisfaction in the agricultural education teachers. Likewise, among Macau Casino's employees' satisfaction had shown correlate with communication and relationship with supervisory or management (Zheng & Siu, 2009).

2.2.3. Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits refer to payment plans which included monetary and non-monetary components to recognize and reward people for their contributions in the organization (Noe et al., 2008). Compensation and benefits play a role in rewarding the people to retain the high performance of work (Mudor, 2011).

According to Ting (1997) there is a significant relationship between compensation and benefits with job satisfaction. This argument supported by the distinct study conducted by Steijn (2002) which the entire Dutch public workers' job satisfaction which has shown a positive relationship with the service rewards (Lee et al., 2006; Zheng & Siu, 2009). According to Zheng and Siu (2009) the model "salary and benefits" is the most important satisfaction driver which proven by the positive coefficient.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of this study on HRM practices that consisted of the following components, namely training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits; toward job satisfaction.

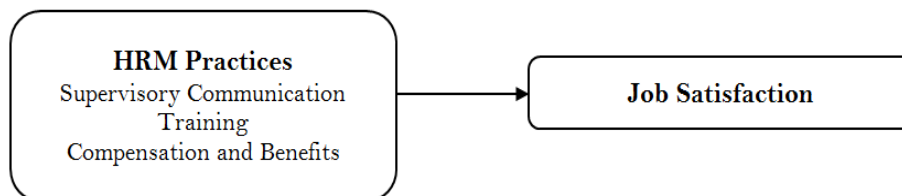


Figure-1. Conceptual framework.

3.1. Hypotheses

Based on the above conceptual framework, listed below are the developed hypotheses:

- H₁: Supervisory communication of HRM practices has an impact on job satisfaction.
- H₂: Training of HRM practices has an impact on job satisfaction.
- H₃: Compensation and benefits of HRM practices have an impact on job satisfaction.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology covers the respondents and method, the instrument used, and data collection of the study.

4.1. Respondents and Method

The respondents of this paper are employees of a courier service provider based in Penang. Moreover, this paper used the questionnaire as the data collection instrument.

4.2. Instrument

The questionnaire consists of five parts. Section A is a self-developed question to gather the respondents' information concerning their demographic profiles. Moreover, this section captures information regarding gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, education level, job category, job function, income period at the current position, and tenure at the organization.

HRM practices measurement is divided into three parts, namely Section B, C, D, and E. Firstly, Section B measures on the training of HRM practices based on the adapted and adopted measurement by Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhard, and Wright (2000). The tool uses Likert-scale questions where the scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Secondly, Section C measures on the supervisory communication of HRM practices based on the adapted and adopted measurement by Huseman et al. (1980). The tool uses Likert-scale questions where the scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Thirdly, Section D measures the compensation and benefits of HRM practices based on the adapted and adopted measurement by Noe et al. (2000). The tool uses Likert-scale questions where the scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied). Finally, Section E measures on job satisfaction based on the adapted and adopted measurement Minnesota Satisfaction Scale (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1977). The tool uses Likert-scale questions where the scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied).

4.3. Data Collection

A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed to the courier service provider employees in Penang by job categories which are management, professional, clerical and administration, operations, and air operations. One hundred and ten useable questionnaires were returned which yielding a response rate of 92%.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis are conducted based on the 92% response rate from the courier service providers employees on their demographic analysis, reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

5.1. Demographic Analysis

Table 1 depicts the demographic analysis of gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, education level, income per month, job category, job function, and tenure at the organization.

Majority of the employees in the courier services provider were male (n=98, 89.1%) as compared to female employees of 12 (10.9%). Age of employees, 44 employees were 30 to 40 years old (40.0%). This was followed by 37 (33.6%) employees with age that less than 30 years old, 34 (21.8%) employees were in the age 41 to 50 years old, and 5 (4.5%) employees who were aged above 50.

Majority of the courier services provider were married (n=72, 65.5%) as compared to single employees (n=38, 34.5%). Ethnicity, Malay employees were 54 (49.1%); followed by Indian (n=32, 29.1%), Chinese (n=23, 20.9%), and others (n=1, 0.9%). Academically, majority of the employees were secondary certificate holders (n=75, 68.2%); followed by diploma (n=13, 11.8%), degree (n=12, 10.9%), other qualifications (n=9, 8.2%), and master (n=1, 0.9%). Moreover, majority of the employees were getting RM1,500 to RM3,000 per month (n=80, 72.7%). These were followed by employees who are getting less than RM1,500 per month (n=13, 11.8%), employee getting RM,3001 to RM5,000 (n=9, 8.2%), and monthly income above RM5,000 (n=8, 7.3).

The employees were also asked about their job category. Majority of them were in the operations (n=91, 82.7%). This was followed by employees in management and professional with 6 employees (5.5%), respectively. Four (3.6%) employees were in the clerical and administration. Finally, three (2.7%) employees were in air operations. When asked about their job functions, the majority of the courier services provider was in district operations (n=99, 90.0%). These were followed by sales (n=7, 6.4%), field line maintenance (n=3, 2.7%), and finance (n=1, 0.9%).

Majority of the employees had been with the courier services provider for more than 9 years (n=32, 29.1%). These were followed by those who are 4 to 6 years (n=25, 22.7%), 1 to 3 years (n=22, 20.0%), less than 1 year (n=18, 16.4%), and 7 to 9 years (n=13, 11.8%).

Table-1. Demographic analysis.

Item	n	%
Gender		
• Male	98	89.1
• Female	12	10.9
Age (years old)		
• <30	37	33.6
• 30-40	44	40.0
• 41-50	24	21.8
• >50	5	4.5
Marital Status		
• Single	38	34.5
• Married	72	65.5
Ethnicity		
• Malay	54	49.1
• Chinese	23	20.9
• Indian	32	29.1
• Others	1	0.9
Education Level		
• Secondary	75	68.2
• Diploma	13	11.8
• Degree	12	10.9
• Master	1	0.9
• Others	9	8.2
Income (RM/month)		
• <1,500	13	11.8
• 1,500-3,000	80	72.7
• 3,001-5,000	9	8.2
• >5,000	8	7.3
Job Category		
• Management	6	5.5
• Professional	6	5.5
• Clerical and Administration	4	3.6
• Operations	91	82.7
• Air Operations	3	2.7
Job Function		
• District Operations	99	90.0
• Sales	7	6.4
• Field Line Maintenance	3	2.7
• Finance	1	0.9
Tenure at the Organization (years)		
• <1	18	16.4
• 1-3	22	20.0
• 4-6	25	22.7
• 7-9	13	11.8
• >9	32	29.1

5.2. Reliability Analysis

Table 2 depicts the reliability analysis of HRM practices, namely supervisory communication, training, and compensation and benefits; and job satisfaction. All components of HRM practices had a good reliability value where supervisory communication with an alpha of 0.91 after 2 items being deducted; followed by training with an alpha of 0.80 and compensation, and benefits with an alpha of 0.73 after 2 items being deducted. Meanwhile, job satisfaction had an alpha of 0.86 after 7 items being deducted. Thus, all variables were considered reliable.

Table-2. Reliability analysis.

Variables	Number of items			Cronbach's Alpha
	Original	Deducted	Used	
Supervisory Communication	6	2	4	0.91
Training	6	0	6	0.80
Compensation and Benefits	6	2	4	0.73
Job Satisfaction	20	7	13	0.86

5.3. Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 depicts the descriptive analysis of HRM practices and job satisfaction. The component of HRM practices, supervisory communication had the highest mean (4.22) and followed by training (4.16). Unfortunately, compensation and benefits (2.52) had the mean below than 3.00. On the other hand, job satisfaction had a mean of 3.66.

Table-3. Descriptive analysis.

Variables	Mean	SD
Supervisory Communication	4.22	0.62
Training	4.16	0.61
Compensation and Benefits	2.52	0.76
Job Satisfaction	3.66	0.53

5.4. Correlations Analysis

Table 4 depicts the correlations analysis between components of HRM practices, namely supervisory communication, training, and compensation and benefits against job satisfaction. Pearson's correlations analysis was used to test the relationship between HRM practices and job satisfaction. Interestingly, employees indicated their job satisfaction has a high relationship with supervisory communication ($r=0.53$) and a moderate relationship with training ($r=0.31$). On the other hand, employees indicated their HRM practices, namely compensation and benefits, has no relationship with job satisfaction.

Table-4. Correlation analysis.

Variables	1	2	3
1. Supervisory Communication	1		
2. Training	0.46**	1	
3. Compensation and Benefits	-0.10	0.22*	1
4. Job Satisfaction	0.53**	0.31**	-0.60

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.5. Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5 depicts the multiple regression analysis between HRM practices, namely supervisory communication, training, and compensation and benefits toward job satisfaction. Courier service provider employees indicated the R^2 value showed 30% for the job satisfaction which was explained by HRM practices. This meant that 70% of the variance for job satisfaction, which was explained by other unknown additional variables that have not been

explored. The regression model ($F=15.02$, $p<0.00$) was proven to be a significant model due to the F ratio being significant in predicting job satisfaction. Overall, the F ratio result presented that only supervisory communication of HRM practices was a good fit in predicting job satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 indicated support to the courier service provider employees on their HRM practices and job satisfaction. Unfortunately, hypothesis H_2 and H_3 were not supported toward the courier service provider employees on their HRM practices and job satisfaction.

Table-5. Multiple regression analysis.

HRM practices	Job satisfaction
	β
Supervisory Communication	0.50*
Training	0.09
Compensation and Benefits	-0.07
R^2	0.30
Adjusted R^2	0.28
F -Change	15.02

Note: * $p<0.01$.

6. DISCUSSION

Discussion is elaborated on job satisfaction as being influenced by HRM practices, namely training, supervisory communication, and compensation and benefits.

6.1. The Influence of Training on Job Satisfaction

The result does not support the hypothesis of training positively related to job satisfaction. However, based on the descriptive statistics, it is revealed that the company practising the appropriate training for the employees with a high mean score of 4.16. Therefore, the employees were suits to the training practices and the training provided does not affect their job satisfaction. The previous study done by Heyes and Stuart (1994) claimed that training likely to the positive effect on employees' satisfaction where formal, structured training will link skill formation to job tenure, career progression, recognition, and reward. Based on the finding of this study, there is a significant positive relationship between training and compensation and benefits ($r=0.46$, $p<0.01$). However, the descriptive statistics have shown that a moderate low mean score value at 2.52 for compensation and benefits. This showed that respondents do not satisfy with the current compensation and benefits program with the satisfy training given. This circumstance revealed that employees feel they are not well compensated based on the improvement of their skills through the series of a training program. Hence, employees satisfied with the training package does not directly impact on their job satisfaction.

6.2. The Influence of Supervisory Communication on Job Satisfaction

This study revealed that supervisory communications significantly positively related to job satisfaction which is consistent with previous research conducted by Huseman et al. (1980). They found that employees who observed greater support attention and sensitivity from their supervisor will relatively feel better on their job. The high mean score of 4.22 showed that the majority of employees in the courier service provider are satisfied with supervisory communication in their company. Another possible explanation is the fact that most of the respondents were work at their position and organization for more than 9 years. Previous researchers suggested that employees' attitude including job satisfaction and intent to stay are established through good interaction and communication with others such as supervisor within the work environment (Naumann, 1993; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In this study, the job satisfaction and loyalty of the courier service provider employees are influenced by the good supervisory communication practices that developed loyalty to supervisory. This supports the study conducted by Chen. (2001) that found loyalty to the supervisor will influence employees' job satisfaction. Thus, it's compounded

to the fact that supervisory communication has a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction which consistently shown in this study.

6.3. The Influence of Compensation and Benefits on Job Satisfaction

The result of this study does not support the hypothesis of compensation and benefits are positively related to job satisfaction. Researchers in some studies were concluded that compensation and benefits have a significant relationship with job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2006; Steijn, 2002; Ting, 1997; Zheng & Siu, 2009). This study revealed a contradict findings whereby the result found non-significant of hypothesis and it neither significant positively relate both compensation and benefits with job satisfaction. However, this study supports the previous study done by Herzberg et al. (1959) that found no relationship between job satisfaction and compensation. Herzberg. (1987) in the Motivation-Hygiene Theory argued that although too little pay can irritate and demotivate a person, it does not mean that more money will bring about increase satisfaction. Reason being, based on the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, compensation is categorized in hygiene variables of job dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). In other words, if the theory is correct, compensation and benefits can be implemented to prevent job dissatisfaction by maintaining satisfactory compensation. These explained the courier service provider employees may precept compensation and benefits as a variable to prevent job dissatisfaction and therefore it does not have a significant relationship with job satisfaction.

7. CONCLUSION

This study was explained that employees' job satisfaction will be improved if effective supervisory communication is practiced. The study also has shown that although there was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and training as well as compensation and benefits, however, they may be the variables in preventing job dissatisfaction. Overall, the study had delivered insights into the relationship between human resource practices and job satisfaction among the freight services industry's employees in Penang. It is also considered as one of the research that studied and explored for theoretical and managerial implications on human resource practices and job satisfaction. It is with the hope that the results of this study could benefit practitioners in the human resource department of an organization.

This study had revealed useful insight for future strategic HRM plan by including factors which directly improved employees' job satisfaction as well as factors which avoid dissatisfaction. This insight is especially useful and to be referred by other freight service industry. As people and organizational factors change over time, it may be of interest to have a continuous view of appropriate human resource practices that motivate and contributed to employees' job satisfaction. Furthermore, it is encouraging that similar research being conducted or even cross-sectional study should be conducted to provide fruitful information for employees and academician that related to job satisfaction.

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