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**JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND JOB SATISFACTION
AMONG ADMINISTRATORS
IN A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA**

By



**Thesis Submitted to
School of Business Management,
UUM College of Business, University Utara Malaysia,
In Fulfilment of the Requirement for the
Master of Human Resource Management**



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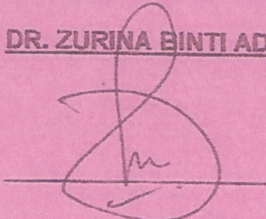
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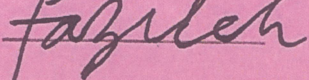
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to assess the predicting role of job characteristics on job satisfaction. Six dimensions of job characteristics HRM practices examined in this study are variety, autonomy, feedback, task significance, dealing with others and friendship opportunities. Data from a total of 191 administrators from a public university in Malaysia were analyzed. Based on the statistical tests conducted, the author observed that only variety and autonomy had significant positive impact on respondents' job satisfaction. Discussions elaborated the findings and finally, recommendations and conclusion were also highlighted.

Keywords: job satisfaction, job characteristics



ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk melihat peranan sifat-sifat kerja terhadap kepuasan kerja. Enam dimensi sifat kerja telah dikaji di dalam kajian ini. Data daripada 191 kakitangan pentadbiran di salah sebuah universiti awam di Malaysia telah dianalisa. Berdasarkan keputusan analisis, didapati kepelbagaian kerja dan autonomi mempunyai kesan yang positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan kerja. Perbincangan untuk hasil dapatan dibuat dan akhirnya, cadangan dan kesimpulan disertakan bersama.

Kata kunci : sifat kerja, kepuasan kerja



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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

| | |
|------|---|
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |
| JCM | Job Characteristics Model |
| JCI | Job Characteristics Inventory |
| MSQ | Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire |
| JS | Job Satisfaction |
| V | Variety |
| A | Autonomy |
| F | Feedback |
| TI | Task Identity |
| DWO | Dealing With Others |
| FO | Friendship Opportunities |



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In an organizational's life, change and transition are inevitable and leads to negative and intense emotions among people in the organization (Wood, Zeffane, Fromholtz, Wiesner, Morrison, Factor & McKeown, 2019). Dorling (2017) indicates that negative emotions are triggered during change process. A study by Lee and Jang (2019) found that positive emotions related positively to job satisfaction while negative emotions showed a negative link with job satisfaction.

Numerous organizational and work behavior namely performance, attitude, leadership, motivation, conflict and many more oftenly associated with job satisfaction (Pang & Lu, 2018; Parvin & Kabir, 2011). Nelson and Quick (2011) affirmed that job satisfaction proved to be correlated to plenty of crucial personal and organizational outcomes.

In the light of this scenario, organization must then creatively plans and executes approaches to contain the dire impact possibly a change could bring to the employee's emotions which impacted job satisfaction, that eventually impacted the organization as a whole.

Organization should offer attention on employee's job since it have significant effect towards employees job satisfaction as proved by Lindfors and Hansen (2018) through their study.

Employees's sense of belonging towards organization would be increased aligned with the increasement of commitment and responsibility level as the results from optimum assessment of job content and context (Ahmad, 2018).

1.2 Background of the Study

Public sectors in Malaysia had experienced periodic reforms and transformation through various initiatives initiated by government. Siddiquee (2019) asserted that Malaysia is at the forefront among developing countries for public sector reform and the efforts shows concrete improvements despite some pitfalls, misgivings and failure in previous reforms.

In 2013, the public services in Malaysia once again stepped into a new paradigm to the new journey of transformation aligned with National Transformation agenda in the effort to achieve the status of high-income developed nation.

The second strategic thrust of this transformation focused on rearranging and restructuring, whereby a transition in executing tasks introduced and the

organizational structure being reorganized. These measures are adopted to endure the competitiveness, value and relevancy as well as to achieve a more flexible, dynamic, lean, open and agile public service delivery. At the same time, to reduce bureaucracy and lift the productivity, downsizing and significant cost saving become a crucial approach.

Literally, the ultimate goals for this strategic thrust is to control and reduce public sector's size and spending. Due to this reform, the universities as one of the public sector entities experienced changes in its management's approaches.

The recruitment and staffing activities of the non-academic staff bear the most intense impact. New employments are greatly restricted while contract based staff were reduced and as a result, excessive workloads become a concern among employees. They complain a lot to their immediate supervisors who then referred the matter to the upper management. Human Resource Management been flooded with enormous letter application of new staff from departments and the grievance become a dominant issue raised up in meetings.

The employees felt burden of their excessive workload and this circumstances impacted their mood and behavior. Some supervisors also reported that their staff experienced difficulties concentrating on the tasks at hand.

Given the inevitable scenario occurred that undeniably affected the employee's morale, attitude and job satisfaction, the university need to pay thorough attention and nurtures other factors and influences of job satisfaction. As showed in a study by Blum (2019), the job itself contribute positively and significantly towards job satisfaction. Furthermore, with budget as a restriction, investigating job characteristics appears as a perfect approach to better design employees job and preserve the employees's job satisfaction.

This objective of this study is investigating the linkage of job characteristics with job satisfaction of a public university's in Malaysia which experiencing a change. Understanding job characteristic as job satisfaction's predictors is an effort to fill the void of satisfaction that had been impacted by the change, by better design a job that suits well to employees favorable.

1.3 Problem Statement

Job satisfaction become one of the most widely researched elements of the psychological sciences (Locke, 1969, 1983; Rafferty & Griffin, 2016). Globally, there are substantial amount of previous empirical research focused on the linkage of monetary incentive with job satisfaction (Asiamah, Mensah & Azinga, 2019; Che Ahmat, Arendt & Russell, 2019; Huang, 2018). Many other researchers dig on job satisfaction's relation with various other measures such as personal characteristic (Darmody & Smith, 2015), leadership style (Farrington & Lillah, 2018) and policies and practices (Ling et al., 2017).

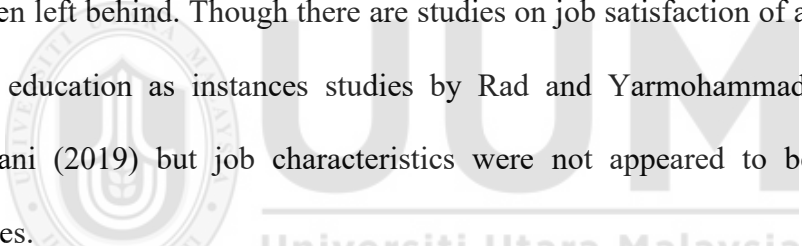
Job satisfaction could be the indicator of extrinsic (external) and intrinsic (internal) motivation (Daley, 2017). Referring to self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1991), employee obtained their motivation by internal reward that is “enjoyment in doing, exploring, and learning things” (intrinsic motivation) or by external reward in the form of money and prestige (extrinsic motivation) (Luttenberger, Paechter & Ertl, 2019). According to Gheitani et al. (2018), employees equipped with intrinsic motivation execute assigned job effectively without relying on external rewards.

Hoornweg (2016) posited intrinsic motivation is oftenly correlated with job characteristics. The means of the improved job characteristics is the job redesign, which is a job with higher and better quality (Daniels, Gedikli, Watson, Semkina & Vaughn, 2017) are proved to bring significant and inverse relationship with worker’s performance while job satisfaction showed a significant positive relationship with performance (Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016).

Numerous previous researchers have seen the value of job characteristics, for example studies done by Andrade and Westover (2018), Keena, Lambert, Haynes, May and Buckner (2018) and Matijaš, Merkaš and Brdovčak (2018) which examined the empirical link of job characteristics and job satisfaction and found the evidences. Thus, this current study is viable considering the realism of the job characteristics as variables to act as predictors for job satisfaction. Furthermore, the fact that case scenario in this study which involved cutbacks in the organization intensified the justification.

In spite of the sufficient research on job satisfaction of public service employees whether those working in public management (Canteralli, Belardinell & Belle, 2016) and also public servants of specific job classifications as instances the school educators, police officers as well as welfare employees (Steijn & Van Der Voet, 2017), scarce detected on studies that focusing motivational values of a job (Johari, Shamsudin, Tan, Yahya & Adnan, 2019).

Looking closer within the higher education, the focus of previous researchers were directed on motivational values among academicians for example the study by Stoermer, Luring and Selmer (2020) but the administrators or non-academic staff had been left behind. Though there are studies on job satisfaction of administrators in higher education as instances studies by Rad and Yarmohammadian (2020) and Aldaihani (2019) but job characteristics were not appeared to be the measured variables.



This current study meant to fill in the gap, to acknowledge the vital part played by the administrators at the public universities as previous research showed public servant namely in healthcare and education sectors dealt with an increase bundle of administrative responsibilities (Haw and Kotterbova 2016; Noordegraaf & Steijn 2013). The role of the non-academic staff in running the higher learning institutions are undeniably crucial (Rahman, Osmangani, Daud, Chowdhury & Hassan, 2016).

So far, the higher learning institutions cannot be work alone with only academic staff, preferably non-academic staff plays an important role in running the institutions (Rahman et al., 2016).

In Malaysia, the same gap occur. There are studies measuring job characteristic's effect towards job satisfaction on public servant working at public universities such as study by Johari et al, (2019) but the non-academic staff were not involved. This study will be an effort to mitigate the gaps and also, attempted to contribute to the literature and furthermore put a significant contribution on job design for the public universities administrators.

1.4

Research Objectives



Listed below are the study's objectives :

- 14.1 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (variety) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia.

- 14.2 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (autonomy) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia;

14.3 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (feedback) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia;

14.4 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (dealing with others) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia;

14.5 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (task identity) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia;

1.4.6 To examine the relationship between job characteristic (friendship) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia;

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (variety) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.5.2 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (autonomy) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.5.3 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (feedback) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.5.4 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (task identity) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.5.5 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (dealing with others) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.5.6 Is there any positive and significant relationship between job characteristic (friendship opportunities) and job satisfaction among administrators in a public university in Malaysia?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The participants involved in this study are the non-academic employees or administrators of a public university in Malaysia. This study intended to canvass their job characteristics (variety, autonomy, feedback, dealing with others, task identity and friendship opportunities) and its relationship with job satisfaction.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study perceived to provide a better understanding of relationship between job characteristics with employees job satisfaction. Looking at managerial approach, a clearer insight on this matters would be benefited for the university to strategize further action plans pertaining job redesign to fill in the discrepancies in employee's job satisfaction. Job redesign could improve the intrinsic meaning of work (Wilson, 2010).

Academically, the results of this research will also enriched the studies on this area and will add to the existing literature.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1.8.1 Job Satisfaction

According to Robbins and Judge (2017), job satisfaction referred to a positive feeling about job from an individual judgements about the job characteristics, with the satisfaction experiences of a job would be the sum from a multiplex equation consisting numerous discrete elements.

Job satisfaction defined as the degree to which employees have positive attitudes about their jobs (Stone, 2008). Relatively in implementing a job, an individual could be satisfied with a part of it but dissatisfied with other parts (Buelens, Sinding & Waldstrom, 2011). Vroom (1964) expanded the thought, inserted that a harmonious working experience which appeared from the job itself is a definition of job satisfaction.

1.8.2 Job characteristics

Phillips and Gully (2013) explained that job characteristic are attributes that describe the nature of wor and some job characteristics are naturally more motivational than others.

Job characteristics which underlined the relationship of an individual and job's specific traits appeared to be the classical approach used in designing and redesigning job, and it is literally a person-job fit model instead of universal job design model (Nelson & Quick, 2013). According to Cummings and Worley (2015), job characteristic approach considered as a well-researched approach to job enrichment in designing jobs.

The Job Characteristic Model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) become the most commonly used model with five (5) core job characteristic on which jobs differ that are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Sims, Szilagyi and Keller (1976) worked out further on the model and come out with six (6) dimensions of job characteristic which are variety, autonomy, feedback, dealing with others, task identity, and friendship opportunities.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

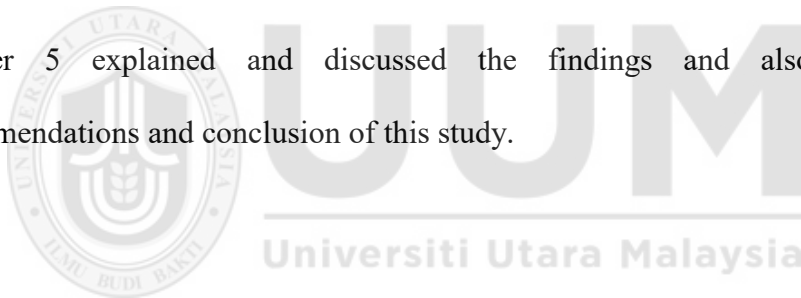
Presented in five (5) chapters, the first chapter introduced the study through the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study and definition of key terms.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review of job characteristics and job satisfaction, and also the relationship between them. It also includes the research framework.

Chapter 3 interpreted the methodology and statistical analysis that involved in this study, explained under the topics of research hypotheses, research design, population, sampling technique, data collection procedure, research instruments, data analysis and pilot study.

In Chapter 4, findings from statistical analysis are stipulated including the response rate, profile of the respondents, normality test, reliability test descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis that is the hypotheses testing and the summary of the findings.

Chapter 5 explained and discussed the findings and also provide the recommendations and conclusion of this study.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on reviewing and analyzing the theoretical and empirical literatures of job satisfaction and job characteristic.

2.2 Review of Related Literature

2.2.1 Job Satisfaction



Job satisfaction had drawn tremendous attention over the decades for its complexity and relational dynamic with other attributes.

Locke (1969) argued that the complex emotional reactions derived from a job are called job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Being a multifaceted concept, the positive and negative feelings towards job are referred to job satisfaction (Darmody & Smyth 2016; Greenberg & Baron, 1994).

According to Locke (1976) job satisfaction refers to positive emotion or enjoyment in individual's job experiences while Spector (1997) referred it as one's feelings (like or dislike) towards their job. These interpretation referred to an individual's emotions which inspired productivity, creativity and dedication (Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016).

Job satisfaction also denoted the perspective of emotional impression on work (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1996; Valaei & Jiroudi, 2016) and generally assessed as an attitudinal variable (Keena et al., 2018; Spector, 1997).

Another point of view linked job satisfaction with the roles the employees performed that then evaluated through cognitive and affective assessment of situational attributes (Matthews, Daigle and Houston, 2018; Vroom, 1964).

Job satisfaction is referred as “an employee's general attitude toward his or her job” by Robbins et al. (2017). Meanwhile Griffin (2016) posited that response towards the level of pleasant and happiness one's have with tasks defined as job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Attitudes inferred as a assessment of favorable or unfavorable towards things, humans, or occurances that reflect a person's feeling about something. When people mention “I like my job”, they are actually expressing their attitude on their work (Robbins & Judge, 2017).

Job satisfaction is apparently a work attitude that signify one's feeling towards job (Baeza, Gonzalez & Wang, 2018; Spector, 1997) and also described common employee's attitude that encompass the reactions and feelings towards monetary rewards, work conditions, career advancements, social aspects including personal and group relations, recognition and many more (Blum & Naylor, 1968; Gustainiené & Endriulaitiené, 2009; Kianto, Vanhala & Heilmann, 2016).

Herzberg (1959) made an important contribution in theorising about motivation and job satisfaction as he proposed the famous two-factor theory, also known as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory stated that the factors contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction are the constituent of a job and job environment. Job satisfaction become a vital predictor to determine motivation. Further, Herzberg (1968) theorized that hygiene and motivator factors impacted motivation. Motivator factors are associated with job satisfaction while the job dissatisfaction is correlated to hygiene factors.

Job satisfaction shows the extend of employees coping with their job (Jalagat, 2016; Parvin & Kabir, 2011). Various workplace events namely the performance, leadership, conflict, motivation and attitude often linked to job satisfaction (Pang & Lu, 2018; Parvin & Kabir, 2011).

Not only benefiting the employees, job satisfaction is also precious for employers. It was found to has inverse relationship with absenteeism and other negative work phenomenons (A. Malek, 2016; Locke, 1969). A study by Daghagheleh and Abafat

et al. (2016) demonstrated a strong link of this variable and burnout with mental health.

There are various variables that predict the satisfaction or dissatisfaction difference experiences of a worker namely the monetary rewards, types and characteristics of the job, relationship at work, social aspects of the job, leadership and feedback, personal characteristics of a worker and also cultural and diversity facets (Robbins & Judge, 2017).

Idris, See and Coughlan (2017) revealed how the empowerment of employee contributed positively on job satisfaction among local employees working in urban Malaysia. Lalitamishra (2017) found job satisfaction become result for the existence of rewards, stress, leave, benefits and compensation's factor.

Job characteristics together with organizational progressiveness were the causes of job satisfaction in United States of America (USA), Singapore and India through a research conducted by Sankar and Wee (2015). While in Malaysia, Md. Dawal and Taha (2015) proposed that job and environmental factors are significant factors that influenced job satisfaction.

In Vietnam, result that proved absolute and relatives incomes and the human resource practices pertaining salary and human resource development affected job satisfaction was found in a research done by Anh et. al. (2019).

Baeza, Gonzalez and Wang (2018) examined how job satisfaction being influenced by job flexibility among Mexican professionals and documented positive linkage among the job satisfaction and the predictors variables while research done by Darody and Smith (2016) investigating Irish primary school teachers showed correlation between job satisfaction and individual attributes, workplace situation, organizational aspects and occupational features.

Using 240 sample data of 240 frontliners in a large-scale retail store in Hong Kong, the connection of workplace fun with job satisfaction was found to be mediated by trust towards management with greater link established for workers who indulge with high degree of fun at work (Chan & Mak, 2016).

Research by De Simone et. al. (2016) indicate the relationship between public service motivation with job satisfaction, job engagement and life satisfaction as well as the influences of job engagement on both job and life satisfaction.

Investigating the impact of job satisfaction towards workers motivation, commitment and loyalty, result showed that in Spanish organizations which developed the innovative human resource management including offering more training and more social benefits and incentives and this kind of organizations most likely to offer occupational pension scheme scored an elevated degree of satisfaction among employees and reduced the tendency to change job regardless of their position held and salary (Garcés-Galdeano, García-Olaverri & Huerta, 2016).

Zhang, Rasheed and Luqman (2019) found that among nurses, job and life satisfaction became the underlying psychological reasons in the positive relation for conflicts of work-family and turnover intentions.

A study conducted in Malaysia's lean manufacturing companies to learn how lean practices impacted job characteristic and job satisfaction reached to a conclusion that customer's social relations, human resource managements and product design approaches bring positive indirect effect towards job satisfaction whereas process and equipment practices showed a negative result (Sui Minh et. al., 2017).

While in Singapore, an investigation on personal characteristics influenced towards quantity surveyor's job satisfaction indicates a significant high passion and satisfaction with task variety and impartial system. However, the workload, working period and the absence of work-life balance become variables that the employees are significantly dissatisfied (Lian & Ling, 2018).

A study that examined job satisfaction, age as well as generational differences was conducted by Andrade and Westover (2018). This global study involving 35 countries revealed that age significantly and positively impacted job satisfaction. However, the inspection with the same age cohort showed that age was only statistically significant for baby boomers.

Another finding by Rahman, Akhter and Ullah Khan (2017) showed hygiene and motivational factors of Herzberg's theory are the predictors for job satisfaction in Pakistani's conventional and islamic insurance sales agents.

Research by Westover (2015) found that job redesign as the means of job characteristics brought significant correlation with employee performance inversely, and job satisfaction related significantly and positively to employee performance.

Asiamah, Mensah and Azinga (2019) had studied the impact of materialism of remuneration-satisfaction relationship on 458 nurses at Ghana Health Service. Remuneration appeared to be positively significant towards the nurses job satisfaction while materialism makes a negative effect on it. Materialism and remuneration interact with each other and produced significant negative impact towards job satisfaction.

Examining whether knowledge management could encouraged satisfaction, Kianto, Vanhala and Heilman (2016) tested a set of 824 data from Finnish municipal organization. They found a significant link between that the existance of knowledge management and job satisfaction. An intriguing result was shown which was knowledge management nurtured satisfaction of job differently compared to the role of job characteristics.

Aiming to generate insights pertaining minimum wage policy by assessing the work motivation, engagement and job satisfaction as mediators, Che Ahmat, Arendt and Russell (2019) collected data from 239 samples among employees of hotels in Malaysia. Result demonstrates that all three (3) work behaviors are the significant mediators for the relationship of compensation satisfaction with turnover intention.

Huang (2018) conducted a research to understand how individuals valued and felt the satisfaction on different types of incentives using 330 samples from various organizations in USA. He found that individuals place their own values on job enjoyment and job satisfaction. When individual received sufficient amount of reward, the motivation and satisfaction from other rewards will relatively reduced.

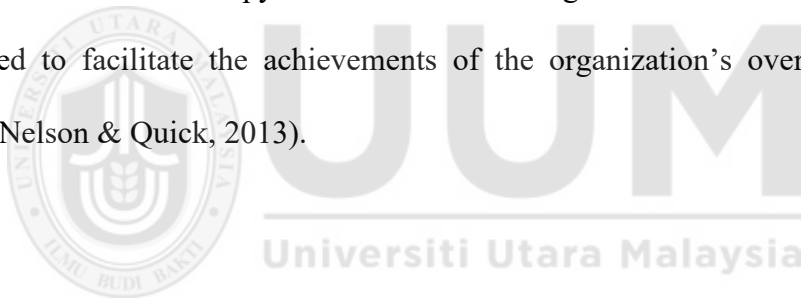
In Ireland, result indicates job satisfaction together with occupational stress established links with an assortment of personal characteristics, working conditions, school context and teacher climate. 898 principals involved in this study by Darmody and Smyth (2016) which aimed to reveal the factors related to job satisfaction and occupational stress.

Farrington and Lillah (2019) revealed that servant leadership and job satisfaction generated a significant positive link among 241 South Africa private healthcare practitioner who involved in their research.

Anasi (2020) conducted a study in Nigeria among 102 academic librarians to examine the composite impact of work relationship, workload and physical working environment towards job satisfaction. A significant linear relationship among the variables were computed with work environment and work relationship significantly effected job satisfaction.

2.2.2 Job Characteristic

Robbins and Judge (2017) define job as a set of specific and defined activities in works or tasks that occupy a worker. Jobs in organization are interdependent and designed to facilitate the achievements of the organization's overall mission and goals (Nelson & Quick, 2013).



The way jobs and tasks been organized by a set of activities and decisions are known as job or work design (Fraccaroli, Zaniboni & Truxillo, 2017). The job design or redesign is a result of changing job characteristics that then enhanced the quality of the job (Daniels et al., 2017).

Steers (1977) and Mottaz (1988) identified job characteristics appeared to be predictors of intrinsic motivation and become a rewarding elements for employees (Ahmad, 2018). “The doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence” and “doing something because it is inherently

interesting or enjoyable” are the definitions of intrinsic motivation (Kim, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

This is aligned with Herzberg (1969) via his motivation theory called Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory that draws attention to the profound impact from intrinsic aspect of job to boost up job satisfaction. The theory was inspired by earlier motivation theory named Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Jones, 2011) and was the pioneer to recognize job from its own characteristics aspects, which later been detailed out by the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980). The theory was actually stemmed from the earlier work of Turner and Lawrence (1965) as well as using additional finding by their own research.

Through three (3) psychological states, JCM predicts the influence of five (5) job characteristics towards work outcomes such as job satisfaction and work performance. The three (3) psychological states are experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results.

The theory suggested that the job characteristics played role as a contextual elements or a system that lead to a desirable behavioral outcomes by promoting as well as effecting the cognitive and psychology aspects and also attitude towards job.

The five (5) job characteristics which identifies five (5) core job dimensions that specify the task conditions which expected to be the predictors of one's work prosper are:

- Skill variety - the extend that a job vary and provide challenges, and requires a worker to employ number of diferent skills and talents.
- Task identity - whether tasks bring the opportunities for an employee to own it as a whole from the beginning till end and with seeable results.
- Task significance - the meaning of their role as perceived by the employees, and whether their task impacted lives or work of other people inside organization as well as external parties.
- Autonomy - the level of liberty in job that allows employees to be independant and use their own discretion while handling tasks and determining the process and procedures involved.
- Feedback from the job itself - concerning the guide and information obtained by the superior to ascertain employee's understanding on his or her performances and achievements.

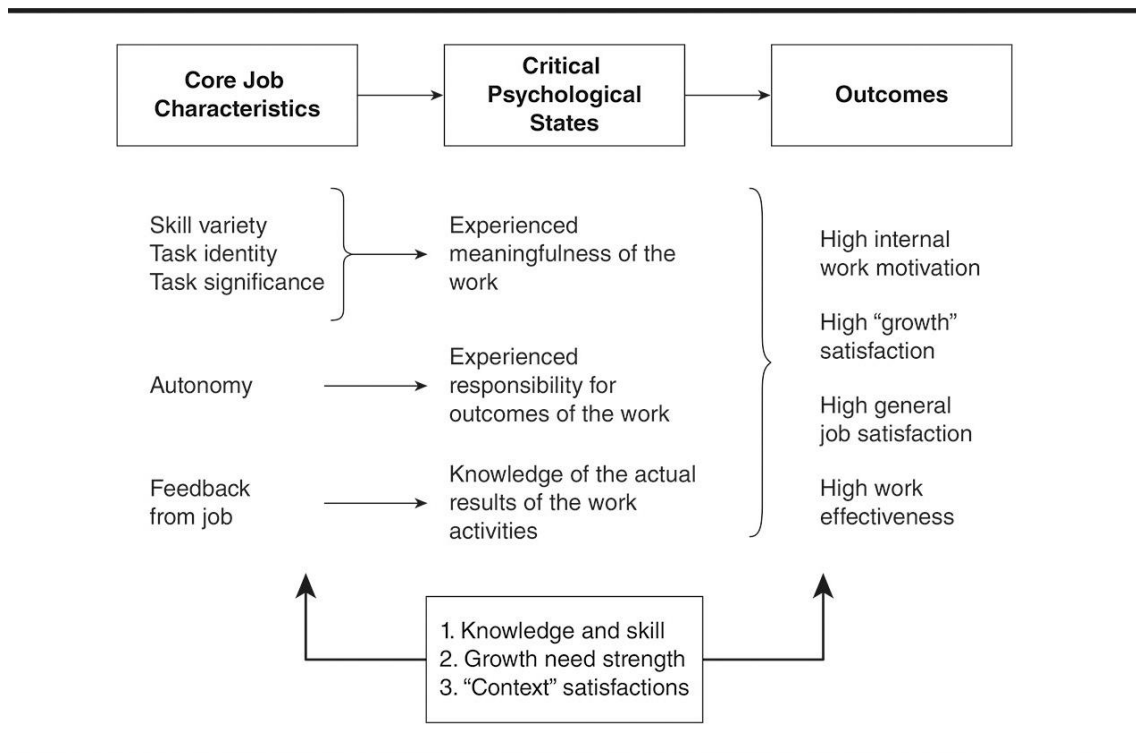


Figure 2.1

Hackman and Oldham (1975) Job Characteristics Model

Not anticipated to be uniformly effectual for all, the theory by Hackman and Oldham (1975) predicts that employees who recognize values and have intense desire for attainment and advancement will show positive respond towards an elevated motivation values in a job.

Later, an instrument called the Job Characteristic Inventory (JCI) was build by Sim, Szilagyi and Keller in 1976, on the prior efforts of Turner and Lawrence (1965), Hackman and Lawler (1971), and Hackman and Oldham (1975). Six (6) dimensions of job were meant to be assessed via the instrument that are :

- Variety - the opportunity to use various equipments and procedures in executing tasks or job that provides a broad range of systems and operations.
- Autonomy - chances for workers to use own discretion in setting, planning and executing the tasks as well as determining system, process, procedures, equipments and instruments to be used.
- Feedback - how much the superior is giving information pertaining worker's performances while they are executing tasks.
- Task Identity - workers been able to determine the outcome of the tasks that origin from their own effort for the whole work from the beginning to the end.
- Dealing With Others - the need in a job for a worker to deal with other workers while completing tasks.
- Friendship Opportunities- the level of social elements penetrated in a job which letting workers establish connections and relations with other workers.

Sims, Szilagyi and Keller (1976) through their instrument give extra consideration to structural and individual factors which have the probability to impact the relationship

of job characteristic and the individuals while the critical physiological state is not incorporated.

Tan (2013) stated that the theory gain extra point for the emphasis on the incorporation between individuals intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation factors which then perfectly cover the discrepancies on other theories.

A research was done in Malaysia by Johari et al. (2019) involving 208 public sector employees that meant to reveal structural link of job characteristics with employee well-being and job performance as a reform introduced by the government via the Government Transformation Program. They found that 26.4% variance of job characteristics explained employee well-being and via worker's well-being, feedback was found to significantly affected job performance.

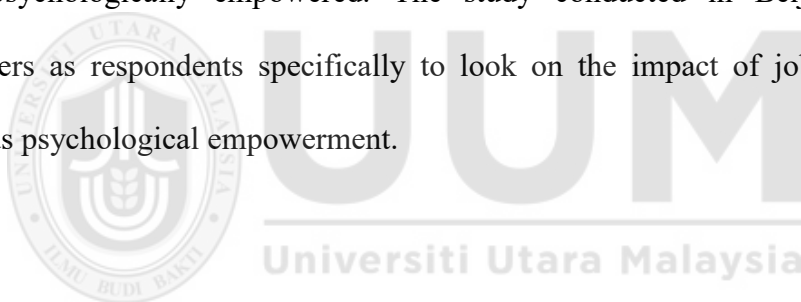
Through a study conducted by Ling and Toh (2014) in Singapore, job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significant, autonomy, feedback and meet the workers growth need) were found to have a significant correlation with personal as well as work outcomes.

A study in Swiss public hospitals by Giaouque (2016) among middle managers of the hotels which also gone through a reform demonstrates that job characteristics specifically the liberty and freedom to execute work (autonomy), working hour's flexibility and the degree of conflict have significant relationship with stress

perception. Furthermore, positive attitudes towards change showed negative relationship to stress, and successfully mediate the relationship.

Chambel et al. (2017) had investigated and compared influence of job characteristics on workplace well-being among part time workers and full time workers from Portugese call centre companies. The results revealed that the job characteristics of both group of employees influenced the level of burnout and job engagement.

Ahmad Shahzat (2018) posited that job characteristics directed positively to workers who psychologically empowered. The study conducted in Beijing with bank managers as respondents specifically to look on the impact of job characteristics towards psychological empowerment.



In India, Choudhary, Naqshbandi, Philip and Kumar (2017) conducted a study to learn the influence of leader's ability to manage emotion towards their employee's performance by incorporating job characteristics as mediator. Leader's emotion management ability was shown to positively related to their subordinate's job performance, mediated by employee's perception on job characteristics (variety, feedback, significance, autonomy and identity). Thus more points being scored on five (5) core dimensions of job characteristics for leaders that managed to well control the emotions.

Data collected by Sabella, El-Far and Eid (2016) from 20 distinct local non-profit arts and cultures agencies in Palestine showed that job characteristics as predictors of work and organizational commitment.

Othman and Nasurdin (2019) investigated the link of job characteristics and work engagement within 856 nurses of Malaysia's public hospitals. Out of five (5) job characteristics, four (4) were positively correlated to work engagement that were task identity, autonomy, feedback and task significance.

2.3 Relationship Between Job Characteristics and Job Satisfaction

Various researches were conducted to establish empirical link between job characteristic and job satisfaction. Wood et. al. (2019) explained that hygiene factors from Herzberg's two-factors theory established relationship with job contexts which associated to work setting of a person. The job and its content (job characteristics) which are the intrinsic facets of a job lead to job satisfaction.

Malek (2016) who ran an investigation among firefighters in Malaysia revealed positive association of job characteristics and environmental factors with job satisfaction.

Ahmad (2018) through a study that investigating the relationship of job characteristics towards staff behavior including job satisfaction among 654 hospital staff in India found an inverse perspective towards job was formed from the employee's personal assessment on intrinsic factors of the job itself. The perspectives then characterized as job satisfaction.

Hauff and Richter (2015) found out that the importancy of job autonomy arised in order to increase the job satisfaction among employees who appreciate a consultative decision making style by their superior which created a low power distance workplace. The study was conducted using data from the work orientation module of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) included 16 nations.

Research by Ferreira, Martinez, Lamelas and Rodrigues (2017) which included 525 hotel's employees in Portugal suggested that the relationship between job characteristics (task significance and task identity) and turn over intentions were mediated by job satisfaction and job embeddedness.

In the attempt to investigate how the satisfactions of life, job and work-life balance as subjective well-being indicators been impacted by work conditions and job characteristics, a research by Guzi and Garcia (2015) showed that job and life satisfaction linked positively with a number of job characteristics namely the proper skill match and occupation prestige. However the satisfaction of work-life balance did not affected.

Karanika-Murray, Michaelides and Wood (2017) concluded their observation stated that compensation effect for job job satisfaction in elevated autonomy and competence work environment. A study by Sawalha, Kathawala and Magableh (2017) indicate that job satisfaction significantly moderated the correlation of four (4) job characteristics (feedback, skill variety, task identity and autonomy) and organizational citizenship behavior.

A positive impact from an elevated autonomy level in job as well as co-worker support towards job satisfaction were detected in both genders was the result from a study conducted by Matijaš, Merkaš and Brdovčak (2018). The study among 653 participants from Croatia's Capital also showed that co-worker support established an indirect effect on job satisfaction.

A study among facility management workers in Singapore indicates that job characteristics of autonomy, ability to do challenging work using own skills, the chances to imply own discretion in executing tasks and leadership resulted a high level of work outcomes as indicated by having the intrinsic work motivation, excellent achievement and satisfaction in job (Ling & Wong, 2016).

Job characteristics (variety and quality of supervision) were proved to be positively correlated to job satisfaction in a research by Keena et al. (2018) who conducted a research to study the association between those variables. The respondents were 322 prison employees in USA.

Employees of a research company in Sarawak, Malaysia involved in a study by Andrew, Haris, Zekariah and Zakaria (2016) that attempt to investigate the impact of job characteristics towards job satisfaction. It was revealed that job characteristics significantly correlated with job satisfaction with task identity scored the highest correlation.

Stoermer, Lauring and Selmer (2020) explored the influence of job clarity and autonomy towards expatriate academic's job satisfaction, which later found that the highest satisfaction was presence for both job characteristics involved in the study. The result was generated by 428 data samples from Northern and Western Europe.

734 social workers in Germany were involved in a study by Blanz (2017) which investigated the Job Characteristic Model. This study incorporated the three (3) psychological states that proposed in the model. All five (5) core job characteristics stipulated in the model were positively correlated to job satisfaction, with higher coefficients for the psychological states compared to the job characteristics. The result also showed psychological states as mediators of the variables relationship.

A group of Facility Management from Singapore joint a research conducted by Ling and Wong (2016) which meant to recommend strategies in boosting their work outcomes. Result showed that Facility Management would have an increased performance, intrinsic work motivation as well as satisfaction in the presence of the job characteristics that were skills variety, autonomy and involvement in exciting tasks.

2.4 Research Framework

A research framework had been established based on the concept, definition and existing theory that had been discussed. It facilitates the understanding of the research that to find influence between job characteristics (independent variables) towards job satisfaction (dependent variable). Figure 2.1 shows the framework of this research.

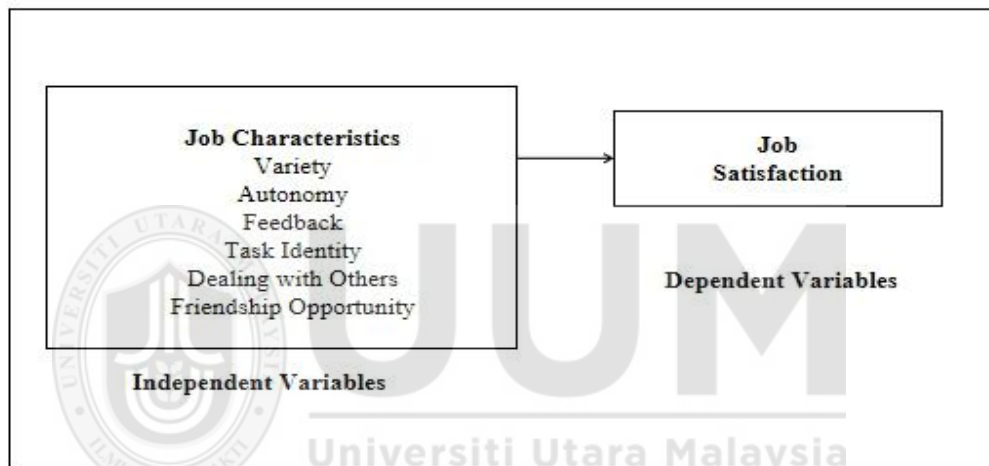


Figure 2.2
Research Framework

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter described the methodology used in this study through an overview over the research hypotheses, research design, the population sample, the sampling technique, data collection procedures, research instruments and data analysis to analyze the gathered data.

3.2 Research Hypotheses



The following six (6) hypotheses are proposed based on previous studies :

H1 : There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (variety) on job satisfaction.

H2 : There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (autonomy) on job satisfaction.

H3 - There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (feedback) on job satisfaction.

H4 - There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (task identity) on job satisfaction

H5 - There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (dealing with others) on job satisfaction.

H6 - There is a significant and significant influence of job characteristic (friendship opportunities) on job satisfaction.

3.3 Research Design

This research applied a quantitative research design that attempts to test the influence of independents variables (job characteristics) that are variety, autonomy, feedback, task identity, dealing with others and friendship opportunities towards dependent variable (job satisfaction).

3.4 Population

The sampling frame for this study was the university's staff from the managerial clasification, referred as 'N' scheme, includes five (5) posts group that were the "Pegawai Tadbir", "Penolong Pegawai Tadbir", "Pembantu Tadbir (Perkeranian/ Operasi)" and "Setiausaha Pejabat" and Pembantu Operasi" only . These five (5) posts of 'N' scheme being chosen considering the facts that:

- They form the majority numbers in the university's staff population.
- They occupy in all departments at the public universities.
- They involve directly in managerial and administration aspects of public universities;
- They are the backbones and directly involved as well as the ones that executing the universities's management including governance and academics and also finance management.

The entire population was a total of 396 staff. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) rule of thumb's was referred in determining size of the sample, and according to the table that they proposed, this study required 196 samples.

The reason why Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) being chosen for this study was for the facts that this is the only education university in Malaysia. This university believed that in accomplishing its main purpose that is to fulfill the nation's need on competent human resource (in education and other expertises), UPSI is committed to develop not only the student's potential but also their staff expertise. To respond to this philosophy, the endeavor to maintain the staff's satisfaction is vital and this study will provide an insight to better developed job design and compliment the universty's effort.

3.5 The Sampling Technique

The population first had been grouped as a few strata using stratified sampling based on their post group and their working department (either faculties or administrative departments). Simple random sampling then was utilised to select the respondent. The structured questionnaires were distributed by hand to respondent and collected later.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaires distribution took about two (2) weeks time to be completed, started 15 February 2020. Prior to that, a letter to the university's Registrar had been handed over to ask permission on conducting this research.

3.7 Research Instruments

The self-administered questionnaires consist three (3) parts measuring the variables of job satisfaction (20 item) and job characteristics (30 item), with 7 item questions on demographic profiles of the respondents. Respondents answered all the questions by ticking an appropriate answer. Table 3.1 shows the questionnaire's components of job characteristics and job satisfaction.

Table 3.1

Questionnaire's Component of the variables

| Construct | Instrument Developer | Number of Item |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | Weiss et al. (1976) | 20 |
| Job Characteristic | Sims, Szilagyi, and Keller (1976) | 30 |

Section A of the questionnaire contained questions on personal characteristic (age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, working experience, academic qualification and job group).

The short form version of Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) which developed by Weiss et al. (1967) was used in Section B to measure job satisfaction. The instrument contains 20 item, with five point rating scale, ranging from (1) very dissatisfied to (5) very satisfied and covers three (3) job satisfaction's dimensions that are intrinsic, extrinsic and general satisfaction.

Scores ranged differently for each dimension in the instrument and higher scores bring to a conclusion of a higher satisfaction level. The scale range and total score are described in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Scale, items and scale range for Short-Form MSQ

| Scale | Items | Scale Range |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Intrinsic Job Satisfaction | 1,2,3,4,7, 8, 9,10,11,15,16,2 | 12 to 60 |
| Extrinsic Job Satisfaction | 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 19 | 6 to 30 |
| General Satisfaction | 12 items from Intrinsic job satisfaction, 6 items from Extrinsic job satisfaction, and 2 additional items, 17 and 18. | 18-90 |
| Total Scale Scores | | 20-100 |

Section C with 30 item measuring job characteristics using instrument by Sims, Szilagyi, and Keller's (1976) named Job Characteristics Inventory (JCI). It used Five-point Likert scale started from 'very little' (1) to 'very much' (5). Variety (5 items), autonomy (7 items), task identity (4 items), feedback (4 items), dealing with others (4 items), and friendship opportunities (6 items) are the six (6) job characteristics dimensions that measured. High motivation on job represented by high scores. Table 3.3 presented the scale, items and scale range of section C.

Table 3.3

Items of JCI

| Scale | Items | Scale Range |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Variety | 1,7,12, 17, 22 | 5 to 25 |
| Autonomy | 2, 8, 9, 13, 18, 23, 28 | 7 to 35 |
| Feedback | 4,14, 20, 25 | 4 to 20 |
| Task Identity | 3, 19, 24, 29 | 4 to 20 |
| Dealing with others | 6, 11,27, 3 | 4 to 20 |
| Friendship | 5, 10, 15, 16,21,26 | 6 to 30 |
| Opportunity | | |
| Total Scale Scores | | 30 to 150 |

3.8

Data Analysis

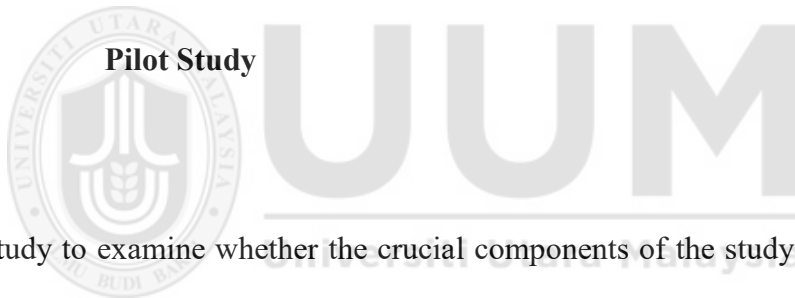
Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to analyzed the collected data and subsequently provides answers for the research questions and eventually examined hypotheses. The statistical method that involved for data analysis were Descriptive Analysis, Pearson Correlation Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis.

Descriptive Analysis was to compute the mean, minimum and maximum values and standard deviation of all variables.

The Pearson Correlation Analysis used to analyzed relationship among variables and the degree of the relationship. Values between -1 and +1 were computed using this analysis, whereby values of +1 signifies that variables correlated positively and perfectly. Value of -1 means a negative relationship between variables while lack of relationship between variables that is no linear relationship indicated by an 0 value.

The Multiple Regression Analysis was adopted for the determination of the dominant factors impacting job satisfaction. The factors with a significant beta value will lead to a conclusion that the factor is significantly influenced the dependent variable.

3.9 Pilot Study



Pilot study to examine whether the crucial components of the study are feasible was conducted for this study. 30 data have been collected and analyzed not only to assured the questionnaire's reliability, but also to test the measurement instruments's clarity and acceptance.

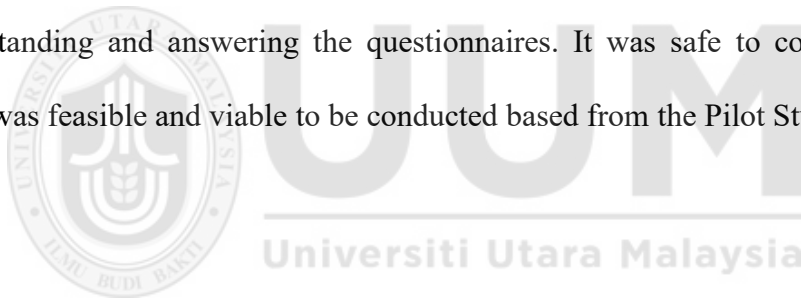
The cronbach alpha's from reliability test showed alpha value of 0.6 or more for all variables's measurements. Alpha value of 0.6 to 0.7 is acceptable for reliability test (Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck, 2001; Ursachi,Horodnic & Zait, 2015).

Table 3.4

Pilot test results

| Variables | Item | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | 20 | 0.938 |
| Variety | 5 | 0.693 |
| Autonomy | 7 | 0.866 |
| Feedback | 4 | 0.743 |
| Task Identity | 4 | 0.815 |
| Dealing With Other | 4 | 0.648 |
| Friendship Opportunity | 6 | 0.800 |

Furthermore, there was no complaint or feedback that stated the difficulties understanding and answering the questionnaires. It was safe to conclude that this study was feasible and viable to be conducted based from the Pilot Study's findings.



CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results and findings from the analysis conducted to examine the influence of job characteristics towards job satisfaction. IBM Statistical Package For Social Science (SPSS) Version 25 was used to analyze the collected data. Analysis for reliability was done followed by the Normality test and Pearson Correlation Analysis. Finally, Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted for hypotheses testing.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed with 204 returned, and eight (8) of them were incomplete . This represented 93.3% response rate. Data collection period took approximately a week period.

4.3 Profile of Respondents

Table 4.1

Participant's demographic profile

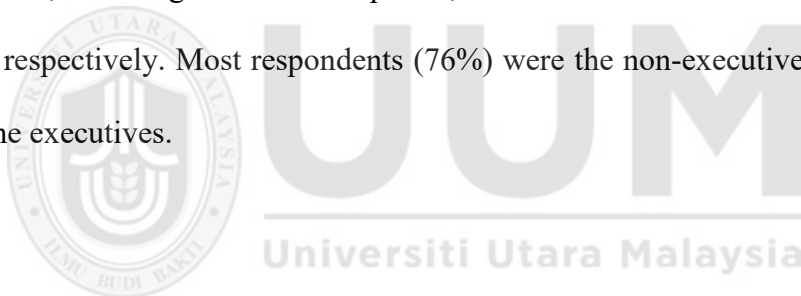
| | DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Age | Less than 20 | - | - |
| | Between 21 and 30 | 47 | 24.0 |
| | Between 31 and 40 | 111 | 56.6 |
| | Above 40 | 38 | 19.4 |
| Gender | Male | 64 | 32.7 |
| | Female | 132 | 67.3 |
| Ethnicity | Malay | 193 | 98.5 |
| | Chinese | - | - |
| | Indian | 2 | 1.0 |
| | Other | 1 | 0.5 |
| Marital Status | Single | 43 | 21.9 |
| | Married | 145 | 74.0 |
| | Divorced | 8 | 4.1 |
| Working Experience | Less than 5 years | 35 | 17.9 |
| | Between 6 and 10 years | 49 | 25.0 |
| | More than 10 years | 112 | 57.1 |
| Highest Academic Qualification | SPM | 32 | 16.3 |
| | STPM | 17 | 8.7 |
| | Diploma | 69 | 35.2 |
| | Degree and above | 78 | 39.8 |
| Job Group | Non-executive | 149 | 76.0 |
| | Executive | 47 | 24.0 |

Table 4.1 depicted the participant's demographic profiles. More than half (56.6%) of them aged 31 to 40 year old while 24% were in age group between 35 to 39 year old. The remaining 19.4% were above 40 year old.

67.3% that represent majority of the respondents were female with only 32.7% male participants. The respondents comprised of 98.5% Malay and 74% of them were married, 21.9% single and 4.1% were divorced.

57.1% of the respondent have more than 10 years working experience while 25% have work experience for 6 to 10 years. Other 17.9% had been working for less than 5 years.

On the education level of the respondents, 39.8 percent completed a bachelor degree and above, 35.2% graduated a Diploma, 16.3% and 8.7% were SPM and STPM holder respectively. Most respondents (76%) were the non-executive group and 24% were the executives.



4.4 Normality Test

The values of skewness and kurtosis for each variables are presented in Table 4.2. The kurtosis for most of the variables is more than 1. value of '0 represent a perfectly normal distribution of data (Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.2

Normality Test Result

| Variables | Skewness | Kurtosis | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | .183 | -.415 | .57214 |
| Variety | -.141 | 1.588 | .45493 |
| Autonomy | -.398 | 1.665 | .54777 |
| Feedback | -.284 | .830 | .53729 |
| Task Identity | -.905 | 4.044 | .53825 |
| Dealing With Other | -.460 | 2.218 | .55950 |
| Friendship Opportunity | -.623 | 2.058 | .54742 |

This result showed that the data were a skewed data, a procedure of transforming the data using reflect and logarithm technique in SPSS was done. Unfortunately, even after the data transformation, the appropriate kurtosis was still not achieved.

The procedures to check the outliers had been done and as a result, with five (5) extreme data been deleted, making the total data reduced to 191. Table 4.3 shows the final skewness and kurtosis after the changes.

Table 4.3

Normality Test results for variables without outliers

| Variables | Skewness | Kurtosis | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | .147 | -.376 | .56930 |
| Variety | .264 | .542 | .43117 |
| Autonomy | -.326 | -.035 | .48445 |
| Feedback | .057 | -.028 | .50404 |
| Task Identity | .020 | -.089 | .46928 |
| Dealing With Other | .060 | .131 | .52180 |
| Friendship Opportunity | -.019 | -.004 | .49743 |

4.5 Reliability Test

To determine whether the instruments were internally consistent, Reliability Test was conducted. The computed values of cronbach's coefficient alphas were as shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Cronbach's Alpha values

| Variables | Item | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | 20 | 0.937 |
| Variety | 5 | 0.588 |
| Autonomy | 7 | 0.805 |
| Feedback | 4 | 0.691 |
| Task Identity | 4 | 0.741 |
| Dealing With Other | 4 | 0.701 |
| Friendship Opportunity | 6 | 0.767 |

As depicted in Table 4.4, the alpha value for all variables were all among 0.60 and above. For Reliability Analysis, a general accepted rule for the admissible alpha value is 0.6 to 0.7, and any values higher than 0.95 could indicate redundancy and considered as not necessarily good (Hulin, Netemeyer, & Cudeck, 2001; Ursachi, Horodnic & Zait, 2015).

4.6 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics for all variables are depicted in Table 4.5. The mean value for task identity was 3.78 and the mean value for friendship opportunity was 3.76. Compared to these two (2) variables, other variables produced a relatively low mean values.

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics for all variables

| Variables | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Job Satisfaction | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.4764 | .56930 |
| Variety | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.7120 | .43117 |
| Autonomy | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.5819 | .48445 |
| Feedback | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.5916 | .50404 |
| Task Identity | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.7788 | .46928 |
| Dealing With Other | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.7173 | .52180 |
| Friendship Opportunity | 191 | 1 | 5 | 3.7635 | .49743 |

4.7 Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis results showed that all variables established positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction. The results ranging from 0.63 to 0.49 with ($P < 0.01$) and they support study hypotheses. All independent variables

showed strong association with job satisfaction with the values above recommended threshold of 0.4 (Hair et al., 2007; Othman & Nasurdin, 2018).

Table 4.6

Correlation Analysis results

| | | JS | V | A | FB | TI | DWO | FO |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| JS | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | | | | | |
| | N | 191 | | | | | | |
| V | Pearson Correlation | 0.577 | 1 | | | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | | | | | | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | | | | | |
| A | Pearson Correlation | 0.634 | 0.703 | 1 | | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | | | | | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | | | | |
| FB | Pearson Correlation | 0.563 | 0.674 | 0.760 | 1 | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | | | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | | | |
| TI | Pearson Correlation | 0.489 | 0.681 | 0.705 | 0.590 | 1 | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | | |
| DW | Pearson Correlation | 0.602 | 0.710 | 0.717 | 0.697 | 0.677 | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | |
| O | Pearson Correlation | 0.568 | 0.640 | 0.657 | 0.657 | 0.631 | 0.752 | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 |
| FO | Pearson Correlation | 0.568 | 0.640 | 0.657 | 0.657 | 0.631 | 0.752 | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | |
| | N | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 | 191 |

Pearson Correlation Analysis results showed that all variables established positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction. The results ranging from 0.63 to 0.49 with ($P < 0.01$) and they support study hypotheses. All independent variables showed strong association with job satisfaction with the values above recommended threshold of 0.4 (Hair et al., 2007; Othman & Nasurdin, 2018).

4.8 Regression Analysis - Hypotheses Testing

Regression analysis result revealed the R square value of 0.477 which explained that job characteristics collectively explained 46.6 percent of the variance in job satisfaction. Further reported, of six (6) independent variables, only variety ($\beta = 0.250$, $p < 0.05$) and autonomy ($\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.05$) are significantly associated to job satisfaction. Thus, H1 (variety have a positive relationship with job satisfaction) and H2 (autonomy have a positive relationship with job satisfaction) are accepted.

Table 4.7

Multiple Regression Analysis results

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | β | Std. Error | β | | |
| (Constant) | .203 | .286 | | .709 | .479 |
| Variety | .236 | .110 | .250 | 2.145 | .033* |
| Autonomy | .399 | .116 | .409 | 3.446 | .001* |
| Feedback | .042 | .102 | .043 | .409 | .683 |
| Task Identity | -.090 | .100 | -.097 | -.898 | .370 |
| Dealing With Other | .179 | .106 | .191 | 1.688 | .093 |
| Friendship Opportunity | .184 | .098 | .198 | 1.878 | .062 |

$R^2 = 0.470$ $F = 27.197$ * $p < .05$

4.9 Summary of Findings

This chapter revealed the results of the analysis adopted to analyze the data of 191 respondents. Via Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis, the results showed that all independent variables are correlated to dependant variables, with variety and autonomy appeared to be the significant predictors of job satisfaction.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explain and discuss the findings followed by recommendations, then a conclusion is incorporated to wrap up this study.

5.2 Summary

The current study's purpose is to measure the link established between job characteristics (variety, autonomy, feedback, task identity, dealing with others and friendship opportunities) with job satisfaction. Correlation and multiple regression analysis were conducted to examined the hypotheses.

It was found that job characteristics are significantly correlated with job satisfaction with the highest correlation appeared in relationship of autonomy with job satisfaction.

Multiple regression analysis computed results showed that out of six (6) job characteristics dimensions, variety and autonomy were the significant predictors of job satisfaction. The results were skill variety ($\beta = 0.250$, $p < 0.05$) and autonomy ($\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.05$) which supported H1 and H2.

Four (4) more variables were failed to proved a significant relationship with job satisfaction. At 10% significance level, there were two variables that were dealing with others ($B = 0.191$, $p < 0.10$) and friendship opportunity ($B = 0.198$, $p < 0.10$).

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Relationship Between Variety and Job Satisfaction

The result of statistical analysis showed job which provide chances for employees to use a wide range of skills, talents, and conduct numerous activities while completing tasks significantly associated with job satisfaction. This finding validated the results of past studies by Guzi and Garcia (2015) and Ling and Wong (2016) who reported that variety influence job satisfaction.

Age and experience factors explained the finding. Majority of respondents (57.1%) have more than 10 years of working experiences while 56.6% and 19.4% of them aged between 31 to 40 and 40 year old and above respectively. Workers with more

experience and matured whose likely enjoying the career stability would placed higher value on work enrichment and ability. Alcover and Topa (2018) indicate that an elevated degree of psychology working capability that generated from job variety are perceived by the middle career employees.

5.3.2 Relationship Between Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

Result indicates that autonomy established significant association with job satisfaction, supported previous researchers by Hauff and Richter (2015) and Stoermer, Selmer and Lauring (2020) who found a positive significant contribution of job autonomy towards job satisfaction.

This result also congruent with previous result in this present study as discussed earlier and a plausible explanation for this is again reflecting the experience aspect of the respondents. Experienced employees are already proficient, skillful, confident and highly adapted to their work thus they own the capacity and ability to decide and control their tasks. Work experience tend to offer and provide opportunities for job autonomy (Dodd and Ganster, 1996; Garg, 2019). It can be concluded that work variety which most likely embraced and appreciated by experienced workers would lead ways to job autonomy.

5.3.3 Relationship Between Feedback and Job Satisfaction

Feedback was not found to affect job satisfaction. The finding is incongruent with past findings by Blanz (2017) and Keena et al. (2018) which showed a job that provide optimum and adequate feedback regarding worker's performance were correlated significantly with job satisfaction.

To explain the finding, we shall look on the practise in public sectors including the public universities which seemingly only focusing on yearly evaluation of Laporan Nilaian Prestasi Tahunan (LNPT) as medium to provide feedbacks to employees. The employees are so used to this kind of evaluation culture and did not expect more, although feedbacks could and should also gathered informally as a routine throughout the tasks.

This explained by the Malay cultural existance in this study as this public university is a Malay majority agency. Malay leaders tend to not bluntly and directly comment on their subordinate's performances as their culture and religious values bounded the manners, attitudes and beliefs which intepreted the direct feedback and negative comments as rude, insensitive and contrary to the Malay's 'jaga air muka' (preserving the dignity) principal (Kennedy & Mansor, 2000; Othman et al., 2018).

5.3.4 Relationship Between Task Identity and Job Satisfaction

Task Identity was found to be a non-significant influence of job satisfaction according to the result of this study. This is dissimilar to previous findings conducted by Andrew et al. (2016) and Othman and Nasurdin (2019) that substantiated empirical link between task identity and job satisfaction.

The nature of work in public services would be the explanation for this finding, whereby the public servants are accustomed to specific job descriptions and work standardization that had been set in all the procedures and tasks (Johari & Yahya, 2016).



5.3.5 Relationship Between Dealing With Others and Job Satisfaction

This research also failed to prove an empirical link between dealing with others and job satisfaction. It is inconsistent with Matijaš, Merkaš and Brdovčak (2018) study who found significant contribution of this variable towards Job Satisfaction.

Job that demanded workers to deal with others failed to let the respondents expressed their satisfaction towards it. The explanation would be related with this research's previous finding, whereby variety and autonomy showed significant influence to employees job satisfaction. The employees tend to work by their own using their

own skills and experties and they did not interested to deal with others in completing their tasks. The increased responsibilities at work and in life also also a plausible cause for this finding for this group of employees. A research done by Potgieter, Coetzee and Ferreira (2018) suggested career concerns acted as boundary to the psychological aspect of workplace relationship.

5.3.6 Relationship Between Friendship Opportunities and Job Satisfaction

Result did not showed significant relationship between friendship opportunities and job satisfaction. This is dissimilar with other findings for instance Anasi (2020) reported friendship opportunities has strong predicting role on job satisfaction.

The participants are experienced and complacent enough as can be seen in the demographic profile. Most of them also considered as senior employees (57.1% respondents with 10 years and more working experiences) and there are also 24% of respondents who are superior (executives job group). Senior employees are generally putting most interest and energy on their work and family matters instead of prioritizing the socializing or creating close social relationship at work, and similar scenario occur to the higher level employees. Study found that a lower levels of work friendship are associated with structural factors such as seniority and higher-ranking employees (Morrison & Cooper-Thomas, 2015; Wright, 2009).

In the light of its great influence and impact towards attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, job characteristics are vital at the individual motivation level.

Theoretically, findings of this study supplement the empirical evidence on job characteristics's research efforts. It also added literature in understanding the link of job characteristics and job satisfaction. Practically, this research are useful basis for human resource practitioner at public universities in redesigning and constructing an enhanced, satisfying and motivating job for the university's administrators.

The limitation for this study would be the limitation of generalizability of the findings as the respondents only from the administration and clerical staff. It is highly suggested that future research would expand the investigation among other work group such as technical, engineering and finance.

To conclude, this research successfully answered its targeted objectives which are to find empirical link between job characteristics and job satisfaction.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Please answer all the questions by circling the appropriate answer OR by filling the blanks.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Age | 1. Less than 20 2. Between 21 and 30 3. Between 31 and 40 4. Above 40 |
| 2. Gender | 1. Male 2. Female |
| 3. Ethnicity | 1. Malay 2. Chinese 3. Indian 4. Other _____ |
| 4. Marital status | 1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced |
| 5. Working experience | 1. Less than 5 years 2. Between 6 and 10 years 3. More than 10 years |
| 6. Highest academic qualification | 1. SPM 2. STPM 3. Diploma 4. Degree and above |
| 7. Job Group | 1. Non-executive 2. Executive |

SECTION B: JOB SATISFACTION

Please read the following statement related to your job satisfaction and give a true picture of your feelings about your present job. Ask yourself how satisfied are you with the aspect of your job.

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Very dissatisfied</i> | <i>Somewhat dissatisfied</i> | <i>Satisfied</i> | <i>Somewhat satisfied</i> | <i>Very satisfied</i> |

| Statements | Ratings | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. The chance to work alone on the job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The chance to do different things from time to time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The chance to be 'somebody' in the community. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The chance to do things for other people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The chance to tell people what to do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. | The chances for advancement on this job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | Being able to keep busy all the time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | The competence of my supervisor in making decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | The way my job provides for steady employment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | The way company policies are put into practice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | The way my boss handles his/her workers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | The way my co-workers get along with each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | My pay and the amount of work I do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | The freedom to use my own judgment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | The working conditions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | The praise I get for doing a good job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SECTION B: JOB CHARACTERISTICS

BAHAGIAN B: SIFAT KERJA

There are two (2) part in this section. Please respond to each statement by choosing ONE of the boxes associated with five ratings (1,2,3,4, or 5).

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------|
| Very little | Little | Moderate amount | Much | Very much |

| Statements | Ratings | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. How much variety is there in your job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. How much are you left on your own to do your own work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. How often do you see projects or jobs through to completion. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. To what extent do you find out how well you are doing on the job as you are working. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. How much opportunity is there to meet individuals whom you would like to develop friendship with. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. How much of your job depends upon your ability to work with others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. How repetitious are your duties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 8. To what extent are you able to act independently of your supervisor in performing your job function. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. To what extent do you receive information from your superior on your job performance. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. To what extent do you have the opportunity to talk informally with other employees while at work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. To what extent is dealing with other people a part of your job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. How similar are the tasks you perform in a typical workday. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. To what extent are you able to do your job independently of others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

For Part II, where 1=minimum amount, 2=little, 3=moderate amount and 4=much, and 5=maximum amount.

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Minimum amount | Little | Moderate amount | Much | Maximum amount |

| Statements | Ratings | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 14. The feedback from my supervisor on how well I'm doing. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Friendship from my co-workers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16. | The opportunity to talk to others on my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | The opportunity to do a number of different things. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | The freedom to do pretty much what I want on my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | The degree to which the work I'm involved with is handled from beginning to end by myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | The opportunity to find out how well I am doing on my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. | The opportunity in my job to get to know other people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. | The amount of variety in my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | The opportunity for independent thought and action. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. | The opportunity to complete work I start. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. | The feeling that I know whether I am performing my job well or poorly.. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. | The opportunity to develop close friendships in my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. | Meeting with others in my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. | The control I have over the pace of my work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. | The opportunity to do a job from the beginning to end (i.e., the chance to do a whole job). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. | The extent of feedback you receive from individuals other than your supervisor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |