

HERZBERG THEORY vs. JOB SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF THE APPAREL INDUSTRY IN PUTTLAM DISTRICT

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Introduction

Today the apparel industry has become one of the largest income generating avenues in the country. BOI reports reveal that it has contributed to 45% of the country's export earnings. In addition to that the industry directly employs nearly 300,000 people in the workforce through out the country (BOI, 2008). There are 830 garment factories of which 157 are small, 438 – medium and 235 – large scale factories (Saheed, 2005). The significant character of the industry is that 65% to 95% young women employees are employed in this workforce (ILO, 2001). There are 14 BOI approved Garment factories in Puttalam districts which are operating on various scales and have nearly 7000 employees. These factories employ 5400 people of the production line workers indirectly. They comprise 75% of total population of apparel workers in Puttlam district.

The apparel industry is a labour intensive industry. It is important to identify the individual behavior & attitudes of these industry workers. Satisfied employees for instance, have lower rates of turnover, absenteeism and withdrawal behaviors (Robbins, 2007). Job dissatisfaction generally results in high incidence of absenteeism, high rate of labour turnover and general lack of cooperation,

In the Sri-Lanka, A study done by Centre for the Welfare of Garment Workers in 1997 has revealed that a high degree of dissatisfaction with the working conditions and the supervisory style. In 1995, All Ceylon Federation of free Trade zone Union (ACFTU) survey reported that 46% did not believe that their job skills would help prospect for future employment, 67% are dissatisfied with their job.

Research Problem

The study is launched to explore the job satisfaction of the production line workers of apparel industry in Puttlam district. Therefore the problem statement of the study states as “Are employees’ satisfied with their job with the present conditions?”

Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to gain a better understanding of the job satisfaction of production line workers of apparel industry in Puttlam District. To achieve the above objective this study focused on:

- The factors affecting job satisfaction of the production line workers of the apparel industry.
- Give recommendations to increase job satisfaction of the production line employees of the apparel industry.

Theoretical background

Job satisfaction can be defined as positive feelings about one’s job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. (Robbins, and Jugde, 391:2007) Job satisfaction refers to person’s general attitudes towards his or her job. A person with a high level of job satisfaction has positive attitude towards his or her job, while a person who is dissatisfied has a negative attitude. However, who have failed to understand the significant opportunity that creates through the job satisfaction.

Frederick Herzberg (1959) theorized that employee satisfaction has two dimensions: "Hygiene" and "Motivators". Hygiene issues, such as Salary, Supervision, Company policies & Administration, Interpersonal relations, & Working condition decrease employees' dissatisfaction with the work environment. Motivators, such as recognition and achievement, Work Itself, Responsibility, and Advancement make workers more satisfied.

Hackman and Oldham (1975) suggested that jobs differ in the extent to which they involve five core dimensions: Skill variety, Task identity, Task

significance, Autonomy, Task feedback. (Nirmal 2001). Important factors conducive to job satisfaction include mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions, and supportive colleagues. Commitment to and involvement with the organization and the actual job are also factors. (Howe and May 20: 2003).

According to the conceptual framework of the study, there are five independent variables under “Hygiene factors” and there are three independent variables under “Motivators” and totally eight independent variables. Company policies & Procedures, Supervision, Salary & Benefits, Inter Personal Relations, & Working condition can be categorized under “Hygiene” category and, Work Itself, Achievement, & Responsibility can be categorized under “motivators”. The dependent variable is Job satisfaction.

Research Methodology

The sample of this study consisted of 150 employees who are engaged in production line operations from 3 different factories in Puttalam District & use stratified random sampling method to select participants and they were production line workers, and used a 6-point Likert-type scale (6= Satisfied very much, 1= Dissatisfied very much). Both qualitative & quantitative methods were use to analyze data such as ratios, graphs & charts, correlation coefficient, and statistical test.

Data analysis and Findings

This study has used both qualitative and quantitative data analyses methods. The age group of the workers in this study 65% was in the 16-30 years group and 35% were above age 30 years. Therefore, majority workers are very young and sometimes they don't care about their job seriously and this may be the cause of the high rate of turnover as well as absenteeism. 79% of workers were Machine operators in the production line. 72% were female. In addition to that 70% of workers have completed G.C.E O/L qualification.

Statistics	Mean	SD	Correlation Coefficient
1. Policies and Procedures	4.05	0.81	0.793**
2. Supervision	3.02	0.60	0.639**
3. Salary & Benefits	3.67	0.98	0.693**
4. Inter personal Relations	3.19	0.61	0.692**
5. Working conditions	4.27	0.49	0.731**
6. Work itself	4.08	0.72	0.725**
7. Achievement	3.86	0.65	0.739**
8. Responsibilities	3.04	0.70	0.592**

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level(2-tailed)

Source: Survey Data

The mean value of company policies and procedures, working conditions, and work itself are as 4.05, 4.27, and 4.08, respectively. The scale was supported 1-3 to identify the dissatisfaction level and 4-6 to identify the satisfaction level. The descriptive statistics of the dependent variable Job satisfaction indicates that the

mean value of the Job satisfaction 3.65 and SD=0.48. it cannot exactly indicate the meaning whether the workers were Satisfied / dissatisfied on their job of the relevant industry.

According to the above analysis on the basis of the conceptual framework, could be identified the factors such as “Hygiene factors” and “Motivators” affect the Job satisfaction of the workers and further more, that there are positive correlation between independent Variables (“Hygiene factors”, “Motivators”) and the dependent variable (“Job satisfaction”). There were significant relationship between job satisfaction and the “Hygiene factors” and “Motivators”; However, Job satisfaction was found to be low of this particular category of workers in the Puttalam District.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The employee’s perceptions about the company policies and procedures, Salary & Benefits, Working Conditions, Work itself, Achievements were somewhat favorable. However the workers are not completely satisfied about the existing system. The Supervision, Interpersonal Relations, Working Conditions were unfavorable with the empirical findings.

The findings of the survey further discovered that the “Hygiene factors” contribution for the job dissatisfaction for the production line workers in

Apparel industry in Puttlam District were 74.22% and the reduction of job dissatisfaction / job satisfaction 25.78%. And also “Motivators” contributions for job dissatisfaction were 73.89% and 26.11% job satisfaction.

Overall job satisfaction of the production line workers in apparel industry in Puttlam District was 23.58% and also it means that the job dissatisfaction was 76.42%. So, Job satisfaction was found to be low of this particular category of workers in the Puttlam District. In 1994 (ILO working paper No.69) Jayaweera, Sanmugam, and Abayawardana has pointed out that the job satisfaction of the factory workers in Kogalla, Biyagama, and Katunayake as 39%, 21% to 26% respectively.

To improve job satisfaction of the production line workers, the following can be suggested for the development of the particular industry; Recognize individual differences, Build favorable attitudes towards job and the organization, Enhance social support within the organization, Enhance salary & benefits schemes, Check the system for equity, Enhance work place conditions, Enhance and support employee involvement programs, Introduce employee recognition programs, Introduce suggestion system, Enhance employee Training and development (T&D) programs, Introduce career counselling programs, and Enhance employee welfare programs.

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