

The Influence of Job Characteristics towards Job Outcomes among the Employees

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Abstract: The study aims to look at job characteristics that impact employees' job outcomes (skill diversity, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback). Employee job outcomes are influenced by employment features such as skill diversity, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Number of researches show how occupations created did influence workers' job satisfaction and organizational outcomes. A set of fundamental work qualities influences a range of emotional and motivational outcomes. A convenience sampling approach was employed in this study, and data were obtained from 150 employees. The findings showed that 60% of the employees are from the private sector, and job outcomes were statistically significant with job characteristics that include skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy. This study hopes to give an insight into the development of more productive employees and the redesign of jobs to match particular job titles.

Keywords - Job Characteristics, Job Outcomes, Job Satisfaction, Employees

I. Introduction

Recently, all agencies, in the public and private sectors, are being called upon to provide more responsive service, better collaboration with customers, increased transparency to the general public, and more proactive efforts to improve customer satisfaction. The ability of an organization to reach its goals depends in part on the talent and effort of its workforce. Employees' work attitudes can considerably influence their behavior in organizations and could have implications for organizational capabilities (Kotter, 1988; Mintzberg, 1973). Work attitudes are collections of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about behaving that people hold about their job and organization (George & Jones., 1999). Attitudes, including behavioral, affective, and cognitive components, are important antecedents of employee participation and role behavior in work environments (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1972).

According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) are regarded to influence critical psychological states, which in turn influence work outcomes such as motivation and satisfaction. The positive psychological states are associated with work motivation. Growth satisfaction, general satisfaction, and work effectiveness (Bohlander & Snell, 2013; Cascio, 2010; Moorhead & Griffen, 2008). A large body of research provides evidence that the way jobs are designed impacts outcomes that are important to workers (e.g., job satisfaction) and employers (e.g., productivity). Job design can be approached with one or more goals in mind. For instance, jobs can be designed to increase production efficiency, minimize physical strain, or have an eye on maximizing the extent to which they are motivating the worker (Campion & Thayer, 1985). However, job search research has overwhelmingly emphasized job finding success as the major

outcomes of the job search variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover (Steffy et al., 1989). Schwab et al. (1987) argued that job search intensity might lead to greater choices such as tenure and career progress. Therefore, it is hoped that the research outcomes will result in better job outcomes for Malaysian employees.

II. Literature Review

Job Characteristics

Hackman and Oldham's (1975, 1976, 1980) job characteristics model is one of the most influential theories ever presented in organizational psychology. Moreover, their job characteristics model (JCM) proposed associated links among job attributes, motivation, and other work-related outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and gave meaning to work (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). It has served as the basis for scores of studies and job redesign interventions over the past two decades and has been extensively reviewed (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Loher et al., 1985; Taber & Taylor, 1990).

The vast majority of research has supported the validity of the job characteristics model, although critiques and modifications have been offered (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Roberts & Glick, 1981). Job characteristics concepts encompassing skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback are experienced significantly (Ling et al., 2021). Enriching job characteristics are more likely to encourage a positive attitude and inherent motivation, stimulating job satisfaction, self-esteem, and critical thinking. Once employees believe that their job is significant, they will use various skills to carry out the job (Raut et al., 2021). They will also be more motivated to work harder if they believe their employers are concerned about their well-being (Mohd et al., 2020).

Skills variety

Skills variety plays an important role in the organization's performance as well as enhancing employees' capabilities. It is defined as '*the degree to which a job requires various activities to carry out the work, which involves using several different skills and talents of the employee*' (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Skills variety refers to the extensive skills essential in work (Raut et al., 2021) to perform better tasks. The non-routine and non-repetitive work tasks or jobs encourage the employees (Zaniboni et al., 2013). Employees with vast experience and exposure to multiskilled work tasks can execute well in any circumstances and crisis (Raut et al., 2021). Further, Raut et al., (2021) also reiterated that employees in the government sector would find their jobs more rewarding if they apply a diverse range of talents in their work and meet the demands of many stakeholder.

Task Identity

The degree of identification with work or job is referred to as task identity. Hackman and Oldham (1975) defined task identity as 'the degree to which the job requires completion of a "whole" and identifiable piece of work—that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome.' Sevastos et al. (1992) discovered that the well-being variables of anxiety-contentment and depression-enthusiasm have significant correlations towards the work qualities of skill variety and task identity. A study by Humphrey et al. (2007) also found in their meta-analysis that positive employee attitudes, such as job satisfaction, internal work drive, job participation, and organizational commitment, are linked to these qualities task diversity, skill variety, and task identity. Furthermore, individual, subjective performance has also been demonstrated to be favourably related to job qualities such as task diversity and task identity (Humphrey et al., 2007). Task identity also assists in coordinating the endeavours towards the objectives and builds the obligation and responsibility of the employees. Hence,

employees consider their work significant and beneficial (Raut et al., 2021). Moreover, employees learn more due to increased task variety and task identity because they are exposed to different knowledge areas and get a broader view of organizational processes (Mlekus & Maier, 2021).

Task Significance

Task significance has been defined as *'the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people—whether in the immediate organization or the external environment.'* (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Task significance prompts job satisfaction, personal initiatives, helping attitude, and job performance (Raub & Blunschi, 2014). Task significance is the good inclination of the worker concerning the effect of his work on the existence of individuals and associations (Raut et al., 2021). Indeed, when workers see that their work acquires change in the existence of individuals, they feel fulfilled and expand more endeavours, commitment, and inclusion in their work (Raut et al., 2021).

Autonomy

Hackman and Oldham (1975) stated autonomy as *'the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the employee in scheduling the work and determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out'*. Autonomy is used for decision making (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Job autonomy and employee strengthening work with critical thinking initiate inherent inspiration and efficiency (Ryan & Deci, 2006) in the company. Additionally, job autonomy alludes to how people have prudence over when, where, and how to manage their work (Stiglbauer & Kovacs, 2018). Besides, job autonomy also refers to how much control employees have over important work decisions, including the time and manner of their duties (Parker et al., 2001).

Job Outcome

Job involvement, job characteristics, and work engagement affect job outcome or performance achievement. This can be seen in a study by Prayogi and Fahmi (2021), who found that job characteristics, job involvement, and work engagement had a significant impact on the job outcome. However, this study also found that job involvement and job characteristics had an indirect effect towards job outcome through work engagement as the intervening variable (Prayogi & Fahmi, 2021). Hence, employees feel answerable for the results of job outcomes, thus accomplishing the work productively (Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016). Indeed, Hackman and Oldham (1975) claimed that occupations with high levels of five fundamental job characteristics provide excellent personal and professional outcomes. Moreover, for the company to be able to compete in a given industry, an organization's members must be able to come up with innovative ideas to differentiate their products or services from those of their competitors (Hj Musneh et al., 2021).

III. Research Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was carried out from May to August 2021. A convenience sampling approach was employed in this study. Data obtained were analyzed using a statistical package for social science (IBM SPSS version 23.0). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied. Simple frequencies were carried out to study the characteristics of the 150 respondents. Linear regression was conducted to examine variables' influence, including skills variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job outcome.

IV. Results and Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 reports the demographic profiles of the respondents showing their characteristics, namely age, gender, educational level, and household income. The majority of the respondents were over 30 years old, represented by 82 respondents. The remaining 45.3 per cent of respondents were in the range of fewer than 30 years old.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents (N=150)

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	58	38.7
	Female	92	61.3
Age	Less than 30 years	68	45.3
	31 - 40 years	30	20.0
	41 - 50 years	49	32.7
	Above 50 years	3	2.0
Marital Status	Single	66	44.0
	Married	80	53.3
	Others	4	2.7
Education Level	SPM	5	3.3
	STPM	3	2.0
	Diploma	53	35.3
	Bachelor's Degree	51	34.0
	Master's Degree	29	19.3
	PhD	8	5.3
	Others	1	.7
Monthly Income	Less than RM 2,500	61	40.7
	RM 2,501 - RM 3,500	19	12.7
	RM 3,501 - RM 4,500	12	8.0
	RM 4,501 - RM 5,500	9	6.0
	More than RM 5,501	49	32.7

The tendency in today's period is for women to be more empowered in their careers, and this survey is primarily dominated by women, with 61.3 percent (n=92) of respondents being female and the balance being male. The percentage of respondents who got higher education (diploma and bachelor's degree) is over 30%, with 34.0 percent receiving a bachelor's degree and 35.3 percent receiving a diploma. The majority of respondents (more than half) had a household income of less than RM2500. In addition to their earnings, only 58 respondents (38.7%) reported having a household income of less than RM4500.

Table 2: Work Characteristics (N=150)

No	Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Types of Job Sector	Public	51	34.0
		Private	90	60.0
		Self Employed	9	6.0
2	Job Category	Administrative	63	42.0
		Clerical	20	13.3
		Services	12	8.0
		Others	55	36.7
3	Working Experience	Less than 3 years	30	20.0
		3-5 years	32	21.3
		6-10 years	21	14.0
		11-15 years	17	11.3
		16-20 years	21	14.0
		Above 20 years	29	19.3

The majority of the employees (60%) were from the private sector and work in administrative positions. Furthermore, the majority of them (58%) had more than 5 years of professional experience.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was carried out to examine the association between job characteristics and job outcomes among employees in the private sector. Elements of job characteristics included skills variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job outcome. Cohen's (1988) criterion benchmarks for small ($r=0.10$), medium ($r=0.30$), and large ($r=0.50$) effect sizes to help interpret the relative size of the correlation magnitudes. Prior to correlation analysis, the normality of data was checked using skewness and kurtosis values. All constructs were normally distributed, with skewness and kurtosis values in the range of ± 3 . Table 3 presents the skewness and kurtosis values of each variable.

Table 3: Normal distribution of each variable

Variables	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Skills variety	3.471	0.68126	-0.407	0.592
Task Identity	3.907	0.57541	-1.054	2.727
Task significance	4.045	0.67808	-0.295	1.406
Autonomy	3.337	0.66931	0.748	1.087
Job outcome	3.335	0.56226	-0.01	-0.139

Pearson correlation was performed to assess the correlation between variables. Table 4 is extracted from the Pearson correlation data output, which reports the correlation between all the independent variables and dependent variables. The results revealed that job outcomes was statistically significant with job characteristics that includes skill variety ($r=0.350$, $p<0.05$), task identity ($r=0.305$, $p<0.05$), task significance ($r=0.286$, $p<0.05$), and autonomy ($r=0.390$, $p<0.05$). Referring to Cohen (1988) guidelines, it was suggested that correlation coefficient of skill variety, task identity, and autonomy were considered as moderate correlation; and only task significance was considered as a was small effect in correlation magnitude.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix

No	Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1	Skills Variety	1	.572**	.379**	.325**	.350**
2	Task Identity	.572**	1	.437**	.373**	.305**
2	Task significance	.379**	.437**	1	.335**	.286**
4	Autonomy	.325**	.373**	.335**	1	.390**
5	Job outcome	.350**	.305**	.286**	.390**	1

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

A multiple regression was performed to investigate the influence of job characteristics variables on job outcomes among employees. Regression analysis was first confirmed by assessing the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals, indicating that the residuals are normally distributed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). The results found that the model is significant ($F=68.782$, $p<0.001$) using the enter method. The adjusted R^2 of 0.197 indicates that the model explained 19.7% of the variance in the job characteristics towards job outcomes. Table 5 presents the results of the regression analysis. Based on the data findings, the beta weights suggest that skills variety ($\beta = 0.196$, $t(149) = 2.146$, $p<0.05$) and autonomy ($\beta = 0.275$, $t(149) = 3.381$, $p<0.05$) significantly predict the job outcomes of the employees.

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	sig	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
	(Constant)	.924	.410				
Skills variety	.233	.108	.196	2.146	.034	.018	.447
Task Identity	.047	.096	.046	.487	.627	-.142	.236
Task significance	.101	.086	.100	1.180	.240	-.068	.271
Autonomy	.333	.099	.275	3.381	.001	.139	.528
R^2	.219						
Adjusted R^2	.197						

V. Conclusion

The relationship between job characteristics and employee job outcomes is important due to the current situation of pandemic covid-19. This study reveals that job outcomes were significant with job characteristics, including skills variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy.

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