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Job Satisfaction in the Multinational Organization: A Case Study of Japanese Company in Pathumthani Province in Thailand

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate job satisfaction among the employees in the multinational organization of Japanese company in Pathumthani province in Thailand based on Herzberg's two factor theory. This investigation is determined the quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze and describe the job satisfaction among the employee. The respondents included 50 employees, five Japanese general manager, and five Thai managers. The result found that the maintenance factor still had higher impact than motivation factor or majority of employees are considered the extrinsic factor than intrinsic factor. Status, working conditions, and salary should be considered to decrease the dissatisfaction of the job.

1. Introduction

ABC company is the logistics service provider of Japan that established in the 1989 in Pathumthani Province, Thailand, and the investor of ABC is one of the biggest conglomerates of Japan. Characteristics of the culture of the firm tended to concentrate in the Japanese cultural value as: separation of the traditional role of male and female, using laws to control the uncertainly, and places the importance for future, thrift, persistence and tradition. Besides, ABC acquired and maintains ISO9001, quality management system. External audits are done by the once in three years by Mother Company, once in a year by regional headquarters of Singapore and internal audits are also done twice in a year, the attitude of ABC for the quality management and audit sustains the value in hierarchy strongly and indicates placing high value in stability that the degrees to that organizational activity emphasize maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth as well as placing low value in outcome orientation since the management emphasize the keeping the rule of the work processes. Moreover, twelve levels of the position in the organization in ABC indicates that culture of ABC is likely to have the value in hierarchy that refers in controlled and consistent. At the same time, management principles of ABC emphasize the "developing together" that associates with the clan that refers in collaborative and cohesive, and the both statements of the Mother Company and ABC, "integrity and sound management" should be the most important term of the firm. Furthermore, the previous researchers claimed that the cultural differences can be affected to the job satisfaction among employees (Eskildsen, Kristensen, & Antvor, 2010; Hofstede, 1983; Hofstede, 2011; Tsai, 2011). Cultural differences can be linked to the leadership concept to investigate the job satisfaction as well, for instance Lok and Crawford (2004) implied that difference of leadership styles and culture had an effect on job satisfaction differently and significantly based on Hong Kong and Australian managers. Communication Openness is the one issue which related to the job satisfaction that several researchers tended to examine and explain past 45 years, for instance, Burke and Wilcox (1969) claimed that the degree of communication openness can be affected on the job satisfaction among the superior and subordinate. Japan is the one of the county of Northeast Asia that Nishimura, Nevgi, and Tella (2008) explain that the Japanese language is high-context from the viewpoint of phonetics as well as the homonym of the language especially in the usage of the kanji, Chinese character, while Darawong and Igel (2012) explain Thai has a high-context culture. Consequently, several researchers tended to explain the job satisfaction among the employees by various independent variables, nevertheless, few scholars intended and designed the research in terms of mixed methods to investigate the job satisfaction especially the Japanese company in Thailand.

2. Objective of Study

The purpose of this study to investigate the job satisfaction among Thai and Japanese employees who worked in multinational corporations (MNCs) in Thailand based on case study the logistics service provider of ABC company by mixed methods.

3. Research Questions

The research questions of this study included what are the highest factors will affects job satisfaction of employees significantly?, what are the highest factors will affects job satisfaction of Thai and Japanese managers?, and what is the fitness variables to explain the job satisfaction among the employees in this circumstance?

4. Literature Review

Job satisfaction was determined to explain the felling and willingness among employees towards the task, workplace, and supervisors, majority of scholars employed this concept to motivate the employees to achieve the purposes of the firm (Lawler,1983; Robbins & Judge; 2015, Spector, 1997; Vroom, 1964). Furthermore, Farris (2012) and Hopkins (1983) explained that job satisfaction was considered within behavioral theory included McGregor’s X and Y theory, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and Herzberg’s two factor theory, however, Robbins and Judge (2015) described that X and Y theory, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs had few researchers or academics evidence to support. According to Herzberg, Mausner, & Synderman (1959) were presented the two factors theory included motivation and maintenance factors to explain the factors which can be affected toward employees in terms of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction respectively. Motivation factors included achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and possibility of growth, while maintenance factors included company policy and administration, supervision-technical, interpersonal relation with supervisor, working conditions, salary, personal life, status, and job security (Herzberg et al., 1959; Robbins & Judge, 2015). Besides, the job satisfaction was used to investigate the factors which can be affected on job satisfaction or considered the job satisfaction as independent variable to explain the other variables particularly utilizing the Herzberg’s two factor theory to investigate the job satisfaction in Thailand context (Fening & Chalothorn, 2014; Jitt-Tiang, 2010; Na-Nakorn, 2012; Pisan-Pattanakun, Keawsalong & Jaroenpon, 2012; Pollsriert, 2016; Ruthankoon & Olu, 2003;). Hence, Herzberg’s two factor theory is appropriated to investigate the job satisfaction especially in Thailand context.

5. Methodology

This investigation is determined the quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze and describe the job satisfaction among the population. ABC has six divisions and branches and twenty three departments, the total manpower included 294 persons as of April 1st, 2016 as shown in Figure1.

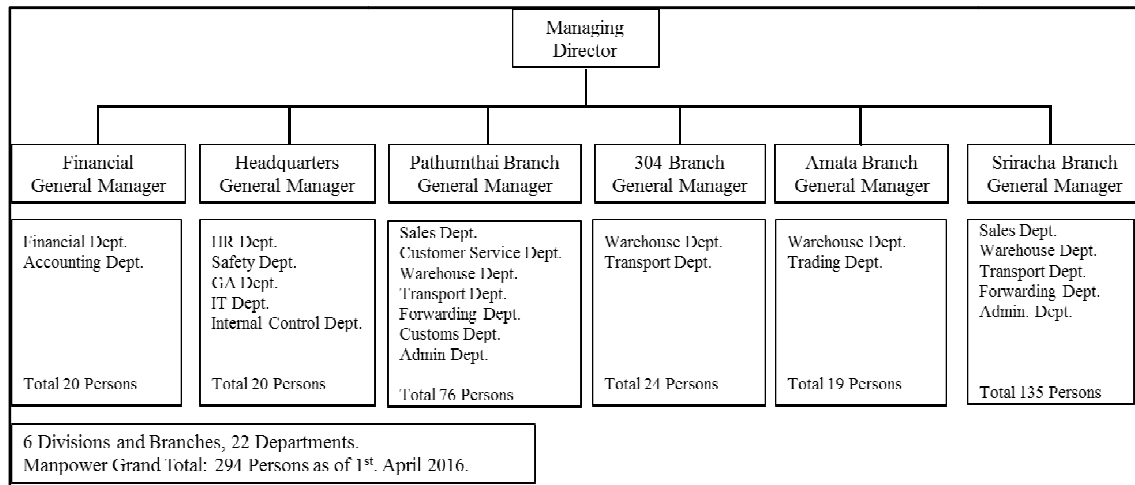


Figure 1: Organization Chart

ABC has nine expatriate management and managers working in organization and their job responsibly are top management, management of the branches, and the managers of the sales department who have to communicate with the Japanese account. In addition, ABC has twelve positions in the firm, i.e. staff, assistant chief, chief, assistant manager, manager, senior manager, assistant general manager, general manager, director, deputy managing director, and managing director. The role of the employee and salary are decided based on the positions and requirement of the department. However, this examine concerned only the Pathumthani branch included seven departments with 76 staffs. Data is collected by two methods included in-depth interview and questionnaire. Firstly, the in-depth interview will be done to the Japanese general manager of the Pathumthani Branch who is recruited by Type B using the job attitudes patterned interview. Since even the management level, employee recruited by Type B is controlled by the investor side of Type A.

1 st Step	2 nd Step	3 rd Step	4 th Step	5 th Step	6 th Step
Document Selection	Attending Seminar	First Interview by HR Manager	Qualification Exam	Second interview by HR General Manager	Final Interview by Board of Director

Figure 2: Recruiting Process of Type A

1 st Step	2 nd Step	3 rd Step	4 th Step
Document Selection	Interview by HR and Branch G.M.	Submitting of Non-Criminal Record	Interview by M. D.

Figure 3: Recruiting Process of Type B

Secondly, In-depth interview will be done to the five managers working in the identical branch using simplified and adopted patterned interview and interviewees are purposively selected from the different department. Lastly, the questionnaire will be sent to the fifty employees includes the five managers and also purposively selected to cover all the department of the branch. Thai language version of questionnaire will be used. The concept of Flanagan (1954) called the 'critical incident technique' is the technique to asking the exceptional events or extreme situation to the interviewee on their working history. Based on the Flanagan's concept, Herzberg (1959) insisted that the method had numerous advantages in order to avoid the problem inherent in the score's weighting and reducing distortions from rating. And the semi-structured interview technique gave respondents freedom in reporting their feelings and also fulfilled the requirement of the study. Herzberg conducts the fourteen specific questions called 'job attitudes patterned interview. In addition, Herzberg (1971) commented that asking people what experiences that produces satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a job is better way more than asking people what makes them happy or unhappy by scoring 1 to 21 (21 should be used for a sequence that affected your feelings as seriously as the most important events in managers working experience). Furthermore, Items of questionnaires was developed from Herzberg et al. (1959), Ruthankoon and Olu (2003), and Na Nakorn (2012) included 63 items ($\alpha = .951$). The survey data is subsequently entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) software to conduct the analysis, and analyzing will be separated by three parts as: (1) general information of respondents was analyzed by descriptive statistics included frequency and percentage, (2) determinants of job satisfaction in the multinational organization was analyzed by descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, (3) relationship among these factors toward overall of job satisfaction in the multinational organization is analyzed by correlation analysis, and the linear regression is analyzed the impact of factor on job satisfaction.

6. Discussion of Results

Japanese general manager commented the full-version of job attitudes patterned interview should be the time constrain to the workload of the employee and it should be simplified and the level of the education should be reflected to the actual situation. To clear time constrain, the description of the job attitudes patterned interview of 'Think of a time when you felt exceptionally good or exceptionally bad about your job, either your present job or any other job you have had. This can be either the long range or the short range kind of situation, as I have just described it. Tell me what happened.' should be the question for overall. Question 12 should be the single-item measure of least 1 and greatest 21 as the overall of job satisfaction linking with the sentence that let interviewee to describe the feeling. In addition, Question 1-11, 13, and 14 should be the semi-structured questions. To reflect the actual level of the education of ABC, the selection of 1) Bachelor Degree, 2) Master Degree, and 3) Doctor Degree was changed to 1) High School, 2) Vocational, and 3) Bachelor Degree. The depth-interview for the Japanese general manager and five managers were done. The managers from the warehouse department, sales department, forwarding department, customer service department, and admin department were selected. The researcher starts to interview let interviewee to think a time when they felt outstandingly good or bad toward their job. Then, let interviewee to describe the issue. Five persons described about good time, and one person described about bad time.

6.1. Result of Job Attitudes Patterned Interview for Japanese General Manager

Japanese general manager described about how felt outstandingly good time when interviewee had been taken recompensed for the effort from the superior. Interviewee said that "I was employed from another logistics company and working this company five years. The biggest incident in five years was the big flood in 2011 and I'm sure that real trust with the company was created in that period. Sure to say that I was employed and it should be trusted. But the flood was the severe incident and along the flood period and after the flood period, my superior, managing director, and also the directors in the mother company appraised my activity highly. And they took recognition and recompense deeply for my effort in the hard situation even their position is higher than me, even I was just a new comer." Besides, researcher asked about supervision, work conditions, and salary, interviewee said "Overall, I am satisfied. Communication in ABC is quite smooth and all the person comes from the mother company has high politeness." Then, interviewee marked 20 for Question 12.

6.2. Result of Job Attitudes Patterned Interview for Five Managers

Warehouse manager described about how felt outstandingly good time when interviewee had been treated fairly based on performance. Interviewee said that "I never thought that from forklift driver to be a warehouse supervisor. When I thought about that event it seem like I won a lottery because my education is just a vocational, don't know about English language but the management considered my performance and how I tackled to the job. I always shared with the staff "Doing your best and you will have a chance to promote because of the performance and attitude, not by the education. I already proof it, you see me!". Besides, when researcher asked about supervision, work conditions, and salary, interviewee said "I felt happy, when I don't understand some process under my responsibility, my boss shares his concept how to solve that problem, I have a good equipment to support my work as well as I satisfied with my salary." Then, interviewee marked 21 for Question 12. Sales manager described about how felt outstandingly good time as promotion that stimulates the further development of the skills. "Every time that I have been promoted by board of directors, it is the signal to remind me that I have to improve my skill, knowledge, and ability, it is very challenging to me." Furthermore, when researcher asked about supervision, work conditions, and salary, interviewee said "I satisfied in every factor." Then, she marked 20 for Question 12. Customer service manager described about how felt outstandingly good time when interviewee thought about the justice of company. "This circumstance had been emerged in March 2016, when I absent but the important document of company disappeared. The random person who took the document that issued from overseas from postman and took it on my table. But I had

never seen it before how it looked like since every parcel will on my table before distribute to other department. About this incident, we discussed about the countermeasure many times with long time. Finally management decided recalls the document and there was no punishment because of the unclear route cause. There was a justice for the untaken the punishment in case route cause is not clear.” Furthermore, when researcher asked about supervision, work conditions, and salary, interviewee said “General manager always assigned the important task that is required in high skill and critical thinking. I am feeling company tries to develop the skill of the employee on the real job training and I satisfied with my salary”. Then, interviewee marked 21 for Question 12. Forwarding manager described about how felt outstandingly good time when interviewee thought about the system and reputation in this company. “Actually, I work in this place just only three month, the reason that I desired to work in this place because I felt that this company has stability and good system. For instance, when I found some problem about customs clearance, I can check what exactly step of process that had problems. Besides, company pays appropriately to me.” Then, interviewee marked 15 for Question 12. Admin manager described about how felt extremely bad time when interviewee thought about interviewee is afraid of going to be fired. “Actually, I have twenty years experiences in accounting field. But after I move to administrative field, I thought it might not be appropriated to me because I cannot do anything well than accounting field. I think that when I cannot do anything in my responds well, I’m going to be fired” and interviewee cried while answering. When researcher asked about supervision, work conditions, and salary, interviewee said “My boss always advise me when I got a trouble, the facility man also supports my work, and my salary is appropriated”. Then, interviewee marked 15 for Question 12. Consequently, the five persons described about good time when they thought about recompense for the effort from superior, fair treatment based on performance, promotion that stimulates the further development of the skills, justice of applying the regulation, and company’s efficient system. These factors are likely to motivate the employee. Some of the factors have similarity with the Herzberg’s motivation factors and hygiene factors. The factor of the recompense for the effort from superior is unique factor and it should have related to both of the recognition in motivation factors and also the supervision, the interpersonal relation with supervisor in hygiene factors. In the other hand, the fear for the dismissal is likely to demotivate the employee. It is related to the company policy and administration in the hygiene factors.

6.3. Results of the Questionnaire Survey

According to table 1 implied the majority of respondents 70.0 percent of the respondents are the female, 60.0 percent of the respondents are ranged on the age between 25 – 35 years, 58.0 percent of the respondents are graduated from bachelor’s degree, 86.0 percent of the respondents are in the operation department, 48.0 percent of the respondents has tenure more than four years, and 58.0 percent of the respondents gain the salary less than 20,000 Baht.

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies	Percent
Gender	Female	35	70.0
	Male	15	30.0
Age	25 – 30	16	32.0
	31 – 35	14	28.0
	36 – 40	10	20.0
	More than 40	10	20.0
Education	Bachelor’s Degree	29	58.0
	High School	13	26.0
	Vocational	8	16.0
Department	Operation	43	86.0
	Administration	7	14.0
Work experience	More than 4 years	24	48.0
	1 – 2 years	12	24.0
	Less than 1 years	9	18.0
	3 – 4 years	5	10.0
Salary	Less than 20,000 Baht	29	58.0
	20,000 – 40,000	16	32.0
	40,000 – 60,000 Baht	5	10.0

Table 1: The General Information of Respondents

Table 2 demonstrated the mean of factors of job satisfaction determinants, the three highest mean included achievement, personal life, and work itself, while, three lowest mean included advancement, salary, and recognition.

Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
Achievement (M)	4.12	.57
Personal Life (H)	3.85	.64
Work Itself (M)	3.80	.64
Working Conditions (H)	3.75	.75
Company Policy and Administration (H)	3.75	.70
Job Security (H)	3.61	.87
Interpersonal Relation with Supervisor (H)	3.53	.97
Possibility of Growth (M)	3.43	.85
Supervision – Technical (H)	3.39	.95
Responsibility (M)	3.33	.71
Status (H)	3.25	.96
Recognition (M)	3.13	.72
Salary (H)	2.79	.90
Advancement (M)	2.71	.91

Table 2: Means of Factors

6.4. The Regression Analysis

The possible estimation of regression suggested the regressors for the dependent variable. The dependent variable is the job satisfaction of employee, while hygiene factors are the independent variables included status, working condition and salary shows the highest R-Square equals to 0.525 and the lowest standard error equals to 0.66075. Table 3 indicated the regression coefficients shows equation in terms of unstandardized coefficients affect toward the job satisfaction of employees in the multinational organization. Job satisfaction equals to $0.033 + 0.387(\text{Status}) + 0.381(\text{Working Conditions}) + 0.300(\text{Salary})$, where:

$$\hat{y} = .033 + 0.387X_1 + .381X_2 + .300X_3$$

Model	B	Std. Error	Sig.
(Constant)	.033	.587	
Status	.387	.109	.001
Working Conditions	.381	.131	.005
Salary	.300	.117	.014

Figure 3

This result implied that the status has the highest linkage with the job satisfaction because the employees satisfied in case they perceive that their position are importance toward the company, required their specialized skill as well as honor and reputation that socially acceptable. Working conditions is the factor of the equipment and facilities encouraged them to work such as temperature, brightness of the office, and cleanliness as well as the firm is organized department proportionally. Salary is also the factor that impact to the overall of motivation significantly. Furthermore, this regression is related to previous researchers that indicated the maintenance factors had affected on job satisfaction among the employees especially in Thai context to maintain the employees along with the firms or reduce the dissatisfaction of the job as Herzberg et al. (1959) defined (Fening & Chalothorn, 2014; Jitt-Tiang, 2010; Na Nakorn, 2012; Pollsrlert, 2016; Ruthankoon & Olu, 2003). Therefore, the status, working conditions, and salary had impact toward job satisfaction among the employees significantly.

7. Conclusion

Herzberg's two factor theory can be applied to explain the job satisfaction among the employees of MNCs in Thailand in terms of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. According to result and literature review implied the maintenance factor still had higher impact than motivation factor or majority of employees are considered the extrinsic factor than intrinsic factor. Obviously, Japanese general managers, Thai managers, and operational employees tended to concern the maintenance factor rather than motivation factors. For the future research should apply this concept and extend to generalization rather than case study, the culture, leadership, and communication factor should be determined because the MNCs is related to the cultural different, span of control, and direction of communication. For instance, Nishimura, Nevgi, and Tella (2008) explain that the Japanese language is high-context from the viewpoint of phonetics as well as the homonym of the language especially in the usage of the kanji, Chinese character, while, Darawong and Igel (2012) explain Thai has a high-context culture. The communication issue is related to the interview when Thai people do not always express everything they have in their mind and emphasizes recognizing and understanding by non-verbal communication are required skills to perceive hidden issues that should be critical but are not talked about with openness. Furthermore, the cultural differences, both of the Japanese management and Thai employees has background of the high-context culture and it implies that communication openness should be low degree, they shared the same value in terms of communication

between the high-context cultures. Besides, the communication gap between the high-context culture and low-context culture should be more significant than the Japanese-Thai communication.

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