

Communication and Job Satisfaction among Workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs in the Northern State of Malaysia

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Abstract

This study aims to identify communication links with job satisfaction among workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs. This study also examines the relationship between job satisfaction and communication with the effect of communication on job satisfaction. It has been noted that since recently, communication used in an organization has been extremely weak, resulting in job satisfaction. A total of 200 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs. The study had received a total of 120 questionnaires with a 60% response rate. They were asked about their demographic information, communication, and job satisfaction. The tool for communication is based on the Satisfaction Communication Questionnaire, and the tool for job satisfaction is based on the Job Satisfaction Survey. The study concludes that communication has a significant relationship and impact on job satisfaction among workers in the department.

Keywords: Communication, Job satisfaction, Public servants, Public departments

Introduction

Managers' communication plays an important role in having a good relationship with their workers. Subsequently a good communication, it will lead to the workers' job satisfaction (Dewydar, 2015). Moreover, the effectiveness of communication in an organization is less satisfactory when there are disagreements among the workers affected by the delivery of a message that is not perfect. The study also looked at the impact of the ineffectiveness of the existing communication work dissatisfaction among workers. Moreover, communication is the exchange of messages between two or more parties to reach an understanding of the content of the message to be delivered.

The role of communication in the workplace is an essential element in ensuring performance to achieve organizational objectives (Femi, 2014). Through communication, the roles and responsibilities of an employee to work are implemented properly and with full dedication. Furthermore, the exchange of information in the communication process is a key element used by managers to influence the behavior of employees, whether in the form of verbal and non-verbal communication to achieve the expected performance of the organization. Therefore, as a manager, the person must be wise in conveying messages to their subordinates. On the other hand, ineffective communication can lead to job dissatisfaction among workers due to the managers' weaknesses and obstacles in their communication. Job satisfaction is an important aspect among workers in an organization. Their level of job satisfaction can relate to the organizations' performance and effectiveness, and their profits. Therefore, managers need to ensure their communication is conveyed and understood by their workers.

In the era of globalization, the government's agencies and organizations need to understand the challenges in communication that may affect the nation's achievement (Hassan, 2006). There are some weaknesses in the agencies and organizations, which is related to the ineffectiveness of the information delivery system. The role of communication is not only important in business management within the organization but also outside the organizations. Therefore, workers who experience depression would impact their job satisfaction (Rahani, 2015). After the observations made, the study found a significant problem among management and workers. Firstly, the two-way communication is not applied where the director directs the work differently and instructions are not clear to the employee, for example, interiors work assignment management services, which make the financial side and vice versa (Awang & Abdullah, 2012). This causes the workload and employees feel there is too much and job dissatisfaction among workers. Secondly, the communication between workers and employers and employees with workers affected in the event of discrimination on the job and the work

divided by the line manager is not fair and equitable (Shore, Cleveland, & Goldberg, 2003). So with decreased job satisfaction. Thirdly, the Head of Department did not carry out the responsibilities of the Assessing Officer with fairness during the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (Ikramullah, Shah, ul Hassan, Zaman, & Khan, 2011). For example, the Head of Department did not communicate with the officer who assessed the scoring entitled by the officer of the tasks performed during the year in the department. The study found that employees feel frustrated and decreased job satisfaction. Finally, the attitude of officers like boycotting friends in the office. This causes communication among fellow workers do not apply and hard work carried out following departmental objectives. When these happened employees feel job satisfaction was missing.

The objective of this study is to identify the communication used in organizations associated with work satisfaction among employees at the Department of Trade Union Affairs. This paper explores the relationship between communication and job satisfaction, and the impact of communication on job satisfaction among employees in the department.

Literature Review

Department of Trade Union Affairs Background

Department of Trade Union Affairs formerly was known as the Registry of Trade Unions. It was established in July 1946. The department was established to enforce the enactment of the trade union in the country. Under the enactment, any entity must apply to the Registrar of Trade Unions for their trade union to be registered. After the formation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963, the ordinance has been extended to Sabah and Sarawak, on March 25, 1965, and August 19, 1965, respectively. After the ordinance was reviewed by the Commissioner of Law Revision in 1981, he was renamed as the Trade Unions Act 1959. Subsequently, the title of the Registrar of Unions-Trade has been changed to the Director-General of Trade Unions when the act was amended in 1989 to reflect the actual roles and responsibilities of the Director besides the registration of trade unions. Therefore, the name of the Registration of Trade Unions has been changed to the Department of Trade Union Affairs.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an important element which significantly correlated with the development of the organization, where it measures the sentiment of an employee to the work they do (Judge et al., 2001; Ostroff, 1992). Job satisfaction is defined as an unpleasant emotional state resulting from the valuation of the work performed. It also affects the attitude and response that is effective against a person's job. Moreover, the attitude will affect job

satisfaction but it also should be differentiated through cognitive evaluation that affects emotions, beliefs, and behaviors. This definition can be described that the formation of attitudes towards work taking into account the feelings, beliefs, and behavior. Furthermore, work design can improve job satisfaction and performance, methods of job rotation, job enlargement and job styling. Management style and culture, empowerment, job position, and job involvement is autonomous of other effects that affect job satisfaction. Job satisfaction can be affected by management style and culture, empowerment, job position, and job involvement.

Job satisfaction contributes to the increase in work productivity toward achieving organizational objectives. Thus, most organizations adopt a standard rate of value-added for their profit or productivity returns. Vroom (1964) explains that a person who carries the role at the workplace based on emotion was one of satisfaction. Job satisfaction can motivate employees and improve work performance. Meanwhile, Spector (1994) explains that job satisfaction is the extent to which a person likes to work (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction). The concept of job satisfaction can contribute to psychological well-being in the workplace (Robins et al., 2001). Employees like that love their work can be seen through the emotions and positive qualities at work (Shaikh et al., 2012). Satisfaction can also be seen as a satisfactory relationship is seen between what is required by a person and what he perceived as the show (Locke, 1969). Furthermore, the work done in the form of positive or negative can be influenced by job satisfaction (Odom et al., 1990; Locke, 1976).

Communication

Communication has been defined as a process of information exchange through the individual through symbols such as signs, behavior, exercise, and so on. Communication in the workplace can occur in various forms of verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication is defined as communication face by using the mouth (oral) in the delivery of information when talking to colleagues such as face-to-face, meetings, and conversations over the phone. Non-verbal communication is the message conveyed without the use of words such as motion and how to stand or sit, face and eye movements, voice signals and, use numerous body or distance.

A positive culture that brought in the organization in the establishment of effective communication can create a win-win when employees get feedback on their work performance as soon as possible. Chitrao (2014) explained that the positive and good communication can increase job satisfaction and reduce complaints to the employee worked. Communication is a tool used by any organization to identify appropriate function to obtain profit organization and progress of the organization is created. Ineffective

communication can lead to misunderstandings, lack of information, laziness, and more job rotation. Ineffectiveness of managers in communicating with its employees would cause an employee being unsatisfied. Thus, this situation may cause workers' job satisfaction to be affected.

Similarly, if employees do not trust the manager, then the flow of information submitted does not occur and decreased job satisfaction. The leader can lead, build trust, and understanding of continuous learning and inspire workers through effective communication (Barrett, 2006). Therefore, managers and employees must work together to understand the principles of effective communication and communication barriers in the workplace to achieve the desired goals of the organization. Managers require extensive knowledge of communication to be efficient and effective toward their workers. Moreover, effective communication is considered as the capability of motivating and knowing how to exchange information in a group or individual and knowing the right time to communicate.

Relationship between Communication and Job Satisfaction

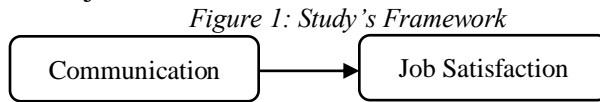
Communication and job satisfaction has a significant relationship in an organization. Communication and job satisfaction has a significant relationship in which it gave satisfaction to the workers. Moreover, it can be used with good communication between workers and employers, and between employers and workers. The communication between supervisors and employees through force, credibility, and content would affect the morale of job satisfaction in an organization.

Past research also found that workers concentrate fully on the work done in the dissemination of information on important matters such as company policy, performance feedback, command tasks, and roles responsible (Pincus, 1986). He suggested that if communication is used effectively and good, works as above can be implemented successfully the impact of job satisfaction. Pincus (1986) used a sample of nurses, there is some support found that the differential sensitivity to the realization of job satisfaction compared to the dimensions of information communication, although both have to do with job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is important because it provides a better working environment for employers in the United States (Nemiroff & Ford, 1976; Pettit et al., 1997). Thus, communications have a strong relationship with job satisfaction based on earlier researches (Ehlers, 2003, Pettit et al., 1997; Miles et al., 1996; Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Muchinsky, 1977; Falcione, 1974a & 1974b, Nicholson, 1980; Duke, 1981). This can be concluded that communication has a significant relationship and impact on job satisfaction.

Research Framework and Hypothesis

This study depicts its research framework in Figure 1. Communication is associated with job satisfaction.



Moreover, the hypothesis developed for this study as below:

- H₁: There is an association between communication and job satisfaction among workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs

Methodology

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs in a Northern State of Malaysia. A total of 200 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs. The study had received a total of 120 questionnaires with a 60% response rate. In this study, a sample random sampling among the employees in the department was done.

The respondents were asked to indicate their demographic information and their views on communication and job satisfaction in the department. The self-administered questionnaire was adopted and adapted based on the tools of Satisfaction Communication Questionnaire (Downs & Hazen, 1977) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994). Moreover, the reliability of the above research tools is above the acceptable level with the Cronbach's Alpha more than 0.70.

Data Analysis

Demographic Analysis

Table 1 depicts the demographic information of the study. The demographic information gathered are gender, marital status, ranks, age, qualification, and working experience of the workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs.

Table 1: Demographic Analysis

Item		n	%
Gender	Male	48	40.0
	Female	72	60.0
Marital Status	Married	84	70.0
	Single/Others	36	30.0
Age (years old)	25 and below	1	0.8
	26 to 35	70	58.3
	36 to 45	45	37.5

	46 to 55	1	0.8
	56 and above	3	2.5
Ranks	Grade 1 to 11	8	6.7
	Grade 19 to 41	106	88.3
	Grade 41 to 48	6	5.0
Qualification	Certificate	29	24.2
	Diploma	64	53.3
	Degree	27	22.5
Working Experience (years)	Less than 5	4	3.3
	5 to 10	50	41.7
	11 to 15	49	40.8
	16 to 20	11	9.2
	More than 20	6	5.0

Majority of the workers in the department are female (n=72; 60%) as compared to male workers (n=48; 40%). For marital status, the majority of the workers are married (n=84; 70%) as compared to single or others (n=36; 30%). The workers' age, the majority are between 26 to 35 years old with 70 workers (58.3%). This is followed by age 36 to 45 with 45 workers (37.5%), age 25 and below with one worker (0.8%), and age 56 and above with one worker (0.8%).

The workers indicated that they are in Grade 19 to 41 with 106 workers (88.3%), which is the majority of the workers in the department. On the other hand, Grade 1 to 11 workers are 8 (6.7%) and Grade 41 to 48 workers are 6 (5%). Based on academic qualification, majority of the workers are having a diploma (n=64; 53.3%) as compared to degree holders (n=27; 22.5%) and certificate holders (n=29; 24.2%).

For working experience, workers in the department indicated that they have 5 to 10 years are 50 workers (41.7%) and followed by 11 to 15 years are 49 workers (40.8%). Moreover, workers indicated the working experience of 16 to 20 years is 11 workers (9.2), more than 20 years are 6 workers (5.0%), and less than 5 years are 4 workers (3.3%).

Demographic Comparison Analysis

Demographic comparison analysis is done on gender, marital status, ethnicity, workers' grade, qualification, and work experience. In Table 2, the comparison between the gender of male and female. Male workers (mean=3.69) had indicated their high concern for communication as compared to women workers (mean=3.48). Similarly, male workers (mean=3.58) had indicated a higher concern for job satisfaction as compared to female workers (mean=3.37).

Table 2: Gender Comparison Analysis

	Male			Female			
	N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD
Communication	48	3.69	0.83	Communication	72	3.48	0.63
Job Satisfaction	48	3.58	0.74	Job Satisfaction	72	3.37	0.61

In Table 3, the comparison between mean was made on the marital status of workers toward communication and job satisfaction. In communication, married workers indicated a higher mean (mean=3.58) as compared to single/others (mean=3.51). Whereby in job satisfaction, single/others (mean=3.44) had indicated a higher mean as compared to married workers (mean=3.44).

Table 3: Marital Status Comparison Analysis

	Married			Single/Others			
	N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD
Communication	84	3.58	0.73	Communication	36	3.51	0.71
Job Satisfaction	84	3.44	0.65	Job Satisfaction	36	3.48	0.73

In Table 4, ethnicity was compared among Malay, Chinese, and Indian workers on their mean value of communication and job satisfaction. For communication, Chinese workers (mean=3.62) had indicated the highest value as compare to Malay (mean=3.56) and Indian (mean=3.40) workers. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, Indian workers (mean=3.80) had the highest value as compared to Chinese (mean=3.52) and Malay (mean=3.43) workers.

Table 4: Ethnicity Comparison Analysis

	Malay			Chinese			Indian				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Comm	109	3.56	0.75	Comm	5	3.62	0.41	Comm	5	3.40	0.43
JSat	109	3.43	0.69	JSat	5	3.52	0.30	JSat	5	3.80	0.73

Note: Comm = Communication; JSat = Job Satisfaction

In Table 5, the comparison was made among workers grade namely, Grade 1-11, Grade 19-40, and Grade 41-48, on communication and job satisfaction. Grade 41-48 workers (mean=3.93) had indicated the highest value on communication as compared to Grade 19-40 workers (mean=3.57) and Grade 1-11 workers (mean=3.14). Whereby on job satisfaction, Grade 19-40 workers (mean=3.48) had indicated the highest value as compared to Grade 41-48 workers (mean=3.37) and Grade 1-11 workers (mean=3.18).

Table 5: Grade Comparison Analysis

	Grade 1-11			Grade 19-40			Grade 41-48				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Comm	8	3.14	0.94	Comm	106	3.57	0.71	Comm	6	3.93	0.37
JSat	8	3.18	0.43	JSat	106	3.48	0.70	JSat	6	3.37	0.50

Note: Comm = Communication; JSat = Job Satisfaction

In Table 6, the comparison was made among workers’ academic qualification, namely certificate, diploma, and degree holders, on communication and job satisfaction. In communication, certificate holders (mean=3.77) had indicated the highest value as compared to degree holders (mean=3.52) and diploma holders (mean=3.49). Whereby on job satisfaction, degree and diploma holders had indicated a similar value (mean=3.51) as compared to certificate holders (mean=3.28).

Table 6: Academic Qualification Comparison Analysis

	Certificate			Diploma				Degree			
	N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD
Comm	29	3.77	0.63	Comm	64	3.49	0.76	Comm	27	3.52	0.69
JSat	29	3.28	0.65	JSat	64	3.51	0.67	JSat	27	3.51	0.70

Note: Comm = Communication; JSat = Job Satisfaction

In Table 7, the comparison was made on workers’ work experience, namely less than 5 years, 5 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years, and more than 20 years, on communication and job satisfaction. Workers with work experience 16-20 year (mean=3.74) had indicated the highest value as compared to workers with work experience 5 to 10 years (mean=3.61), less than 5 years (mean=3.60), 11 to 15 years (mean=3.52), and more than 20 years (mean=3.12). Whereby on job satisfaction, workers with work experience 16 to 20 years (mean=3.95) had the highest value. This is followed by workers with work experience 11 to 15 years (mean=3.50), work experience more than 20 years (mean=3.37), work experience 5 to 10 years (mean=3.36), and work experience less than 5 years (mean=2.90).

Table 7: Work Experience Comparison Analysis

	Work Experience < 5 years			Work Experience 5-10 years				Work Experience 11-15 years			
	N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD
Comm	4	3.60	0.97	Comm	50	3.61	0.64	Comm	49	3.52	0.66
JSat	4	2.90	0.48	JSat	50	3.36	0.64	JSat	49	3.50	0.63

	Work Experience 16-20 years			Work Experience > 20 years			
	N	Mean	SD		N	Mean	SD
Comm	11	3.74	0.72	Comm	6	3.12	1.50
JSat	11	3.95	0.76	JSat	6	3.37	0.90

Note: Comm = Communication; JSat = Job Satisfaction

Reliability Analysis

Before further analysis, the study took a reliability analysis of the variables, namely communication and job satisfaction. The Cronbach's alpha for the 10 communication variables is 0.91, which is excellent. The initial analysis for the 10 job satisfaction variables, the Cronbach’s alpha is 0.41, which is not acceptable as it was below 0.70. Further analysis of the item

reduction gives the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.74 on the 3 job satisfaction variables, which is acceptable.

Correlation Analysis

Table 8 shows the correlation analysis between communication and job satisfaction. Unfortunately, there is a moderate relationship between communication and job satisfaction among workers in the department as indicated by $r=0.45$.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis

Item	1	2
1. Communication	1	0.45**
2. Job Satisfaction		1

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

Regression Analysis

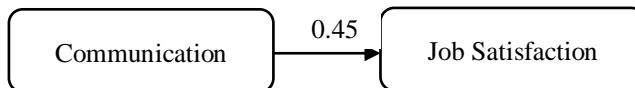
Table 9 depicts the regression analysis between communication and job satisfaction. The workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs had the adjusted R^2 value of 20% for the dependent variable of job satisfaction, which was explained by communication. This means that 80% of the variance for job satisfaction was explained by other unknown additional variables that have not been explored.

The regression model ($F=29.74$, $p<0.00$) was proven a significant model due to the F ratio being significant in predicting job satisfaction. Overall, the F ratio result presented that the combination of communication was a good fit for predicting job satisfaction. Communication ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.00$) was a significant predictor of job satisfaction for workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 supported in explaining the communication among the workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs had an impact on their job satisfaction. The regression analysis framework is depicted in Figure 2.

Table 9: Regression Analysis

Item	Job Satisfaction	
	Std. Beta	Sig.
Communication	0.45	0.00
R^2	0.20	
Adjusted R^2	0.20	
Std. Error	0.61	
F -Statistics	29.74	
Sig. F	0.00	

Figure 2: Regression Analysis Framework



Discussions

The workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs has indicated that communication plays an important aspect of their job satisfaction. The management of the department needs to ensure that their communication modes to their workers must be delivered for the understanding of their workers. The modes of communication could be seen from the verbal and email. These modes are important to ensure that their workers understood the work instructions and requirements. Moreover, due to the level of communication barrier would also affect the effectiveness of the work instructions and requirements for the workers in the department. As the workers are getting good communication modes from the management, this would, in turn, influences the workers' job satisfaction. This is in accord with Chitrao (2014) stated that positive and good communication can increase job satisfaction for employees and reduce employee complaints. Reviews on previous research also stated that communication has a positive relationship with job satisfaction (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996; Falcione, 1974a, 1974b; Pettit et al., 1997; Muchinsky, 1977; Nicholson, 1980; Duke, 1981; Ehlers, 2003). Thus, good communication with the management in the department could lead to the workers' job satisfaction.

Moreover, the impact of communication and job satisfaction among workers in the Department of Trade Union Affairs is supported. Thus, this indicates the importance of having good communication in the department that would lead to job satisfaction among workers. The management needs to provide positive feedback on the works done by their workers as this will lead to their job satisfaction. Apart from that, the management needs to avoid any factors that would lead to a poor and misleading communication between them and their workers. Furthermore, good relationships through communication between supervisors and subordinates in the department can produce happy and productive workers; and could lead to a higher job satisfaction level in the department.

Furthermore, the top management of the department needs to understand the impact of communication on their workers' job satisfaction. The understanding can be seen from the comparative analysis done on gender, marital status, ethnicity, work grade, academic qualification, and work experience. By understanding the differences, this would help the top management to make use of communication toward their workers' job satisfaction. Male employees of the department perceive communication by their top management is important and has an impact on their job satisfaction as compared to female employees. Thus, the top management would always ensure their ways of communicating on the department's information are well communicated especially to the female workers.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that communication has a relationship and impact on the workers' job satisfaction in the Department of Trade Union Affairs. Therefore, the management needs to cultivate and ensure that a good, proper, and effective communication must adhere at all times to the department. The department also needs to invest and promote their management and workers to attend various communication training and courses for improving communication modes. Similarly, the department also needs to encourage its workers to ask and get clarifications if they are having difficulties in understanding the works assigned to them. As they, management and workers, play their role in improving their communication; thus this will lead to job satisfaction, especially to the workers. Finally, the impact of communication and job satisfaction would lead to the achievement of the department's vision and mission.

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