

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION, ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND GENDER

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine whether significant differences exist between the two genders in term of employees' job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Gender plays an important role in creating individual attitudes pertaining to the workplace and in interpreting the meaning of these attitudes. Survey data was gathered from 112 employees in Labuan. A t-test mean comparison results showed that both male and female employees in Labuan have the same level of perception of job satisfaction and different level of organisational commitment. Implications and recommendations were also discussed.

Keywords: *Gender, Perception, Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, T-test*

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Introduction

The presence or absence of numerous attributes, originating internally from within the employing organisation, influences an individual worker's attitudes concerning his/her job and his/her commitment to his/her organisation (Herzberg, 1966; Steers, 1977). Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are related, but distinguishable, attitudes. Job satisfaction is associated with the affective response to the immediate work environment, while organisational commitment is more stable and enduring (Norris and Niebuhr, 1983).

Job satisfaction has become one of the most favourite areas of research particularly in today's world where corporate institutions are concerned over its impact to the overall performance of the company. Cranny *et al.* (1992) indicated that more than 5,000 studies of job satisfaction have been published. As a matter of fact, employee satisfaction has become one of the main corporate objectives in recent years. Organisations cannot reach competitive levels of quality, either at a product level or a customer service level, if their personnel do not feel satisfied or do not identify with the company (Stewart, 1996). In the other hand, motivated and committed staff can be a determining factor in the success of an organisation. Smith (1992) stated that job satisfaction can lead to cost reduction by reducing absences, task errors, and turnover. Both management theorists and practitioners are concerned with methods for improving job satisfaction because greater job satisfaction equates to both a better quality of life and better physical health, and thus potentially greater performance and productivity (Cranny *et al.*, 1992). Since, work is an important aspect of people's lives and most people spend a large part of their working lives at work, an understanding of the factors involved in job satisfaction is crucial to improving employees' performance and productivity.

In addition, there are many theories concerning the causal relationship between motives, behaviour and proceeds. For example, job satisfaction can be seen as a result of a behavioural cycle; it can be seen as a cause of behaviour; or it can be seen as part of a regulation system in which the evaluation of results leads to decisions concerning whether or not changes are to be made (Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007). Some definitions involve a differentiated approach in which job satisfaction is seen as consisting of satisfaction with different aspects of the job and the work situation. In this approach, job satisfaction is assessed by totalling the satisfaction reported for many different aspects of the job and the work condition. Such an assessment gives an accurate picture of the employees' total job satisfaction (Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007).

Organisational commitment is vital to preserve and attract well-qualified talent pool in any organisation. Organisational commitment has gained prominence in management discourse since it plays an essential role in the goal achievement, innovation and stability of an organisation. It improves trust between employees, managers, owners, units and other concerned parties of any organisation. Therefore, it fosters better superior-subordinate relationships and improves organisational climate. Stronger and more generalised commitment may enhance organisational development, growth and survival (Awamleh, 1996). As a result, organisational commitment in has become a major pre-occupation throughout many countries. This has led to a considerable increase in the development of public policies and programs aimed at addressing the problem as well as many empirical studies of such (Joolideh and Yeshodhara, 2009).

Over the years, the increasing interest in the area added to the lack of consensus on the definition of organisational commitment. In the past, many definitions of organisational commitment have been described and investigated. Some of these definitions concern different dimensions of organisational commitment (Falkenburg and Schyns, 2007). As Meyer and Allen (1991) outline, commitment consists of three dimensions, namely, affective, normative and continuance commitment. According to them, affective organisational commitment is defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and commitment to an organisation. Cohen (1992) also reported that the concept of "organisational commitment" has gained increasing attention primarily because of the negative relationship between absenteeism, employee turnover and commitment. Greater organisational commitment has been linked to low rates of absenteeism and also better job performance. Because of its relationships to these important outcomes, organisational commitment has become one of the most thoroughly investigated topics in the organisational literature (Sikorska, 2005). The most commonly cited definition of organisational commitment is that of Mowday *et al.* (1982). They defined it as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation.

Literature Review

Gender Differences in Job Satisfaction

As a result of many decades of effort by researchers, there appears to be a high level of agreement among scholars on the meaning of the construct of job satisfaction. Typically job satisfaction is conceptualised as a general attitude toward an object, the job (Okpara, 2006). There are, of course, a few largely unimportant variations to the general construct. Wanous and Lawler (1972) discussed these differences. In general, therefore, job satisfaction refers to a person's constructive poignant response to a particular job. It is an affective reaction to a job that results from the person's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired, anticipated or deserved. However, the results of the many studies concerning the relationship between job satisfaction and the sex of the employees have been contradictory (Oshagbemi, 2000). One common explanation for the different level of work satisfaction sometimes reported for men and women is that women have different expectations with regard to work (Campbell *et al.*, 1976). It was revealed that careers were of central importance to men but not as important to women (Kuhlen, 1963).

Research has suggested that men and women may use qualitatively different criteria in their assessment of work. From this perspective, job satisfaction is seen to be an emotional response resulting from the interaction of work rewards and work values. The greater the perceived congruence between rewards and values, the greater the job satisfaction; the greater the perceived discrepancy, the less the satisfaction. Centres and Bugental (1966) have reported other differences. Their research suggested that women placed more value on the social factors of a job than did men, and that men valued the opportunity for self-expression in their work more than did women. Schuler (1975) found that the females in his study valued the opportunities to work with pleasant employees more than males, whereas males regarded the opportunities to influence important decisions and direct the work of others as more important.

The inconsistency in the findings by various authors on the effect of gender on job satisfactions has been widely reported. For instance, Oshagbemi (2000) reported that there have been inconsistencies in findings concerning the relationship between gender and job satisfaction due to a variety of factors. Not only might males and females in the same organisations differ in job level, promotion prospects, pay and so on, they may differ in the extent to which the same job satisfies their needs. A job high on social satisfaction but low on skill utilisation and career prospects may result in higher job satisfaction for females than for males, whereas in occupations allowing little scope for social relationships, the differences in satisfaction might be in the opposite direction. Given the overall results from these studies, it is apparent that when other variables are taken into account, there is very little evidence to suggest that gender directly influences job satisfaction. There is no compelling reason to believe that given equal education, employment and advancement opportunities, and an equal chance to apply their skills to appropriate challenges, women should be any less satisfied than men with their jobs.

Result from a study by Weaver (1977) also supports the hypothesis that gender and job satisfaction is unrelated when the effects of other variables are controlled. Findings from a report by Forgionne and Peeters (1982) similarly suggest that other factors may be involved in the relationship between gender and job satisfaction, such as the number of dependants in a family and the level of management position held in the workplace. Al-Ajmi (2006) in his study conducted in Kuwait found that there was no significant relationship between genders and job satisfaction thus both men and women have the same level of job satisfaction. Linz (2003) however noted that gender differences did not emerge among the Russian employees participating in her survey. Generational differences were evident – older workers exhibited a higher level of job satisfaction than younger worker. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_{1a}: There is no significant difference between Gender and Job Satisfaction.

H_{1b}: Men and women have the different level of Job satisfaction.

Gender Differences in Organisational Commitment

There are varied empirical evidences on the differences in organisational commitment reported by many writers. One set of studies reports greater organisational commitment by men (Arana *et al.*, 1986; Baird *et al.*, 1998; Dodd-McCue and Wright, 1996; Kaldenberg *et al.*, 1995). However, in some of these studies, the bivariate results lose their significance once job-related factors are entered as controls (Arana *et al.*, 1986; Dodd-McCue and Wright, 1996). Nevertheless, there are studies that report greater organisational commitment by men, even after controlling for job-related factors (Kaldenberg *et al.*, 1995). Another set of studies, including a meta-analysis (Matthieu and Zajec, 1990), reports greater commitment by women, a finding consistent with several subsequent individual studies (Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Wahn, 1998). A third set of studies (Bielby and Bielby, 1989; Bruning and Snyder, 1983; Fry and Greenfeld, 1980; Koberg and Chusmir, 1989).

In a meta-analysis, Aven, Parker and McEvoy (1993) found that gender and commitment were unrelated. Moreover, it has been established that men and women experience similar levels of organisational commitment (Marsden *et al.*, 1993). In addition, in their study on correctional officers, Savicki, Cooly and GJesvold (2003) have found that men and women did not differ on organisational commitment. In addition, Al-Ajmi (2006) also found that there was no significant relationship between genders and organisational

commitment in his study. He concluded that men and women have the same level of organisational commitment. Finally, in a study of 772 business executives in Hong Kong, Ngo and Tsang (1998) have found that organisational commitment is not affected by gender. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_{2a}: There is no significant difference between Gender and Organisational Commitment.

H_{2b}: Men and women have the different level of Organisational Commitment.

Methodology

A random sample of employees from various industries in Labuan was selected. The sample mainly comes from the financial services sector. In addition, samples are also obtained from oil and gas, information technology and telecommunication sectors. Respondents from other sectors include education and hospitality industry were also sought to provide wide dispersion of sampling variety. Of the 130 questionnaires distributed, 112 were returned, for a response rate of 86.2 percent. The job satisfaction instrument used in this study is adopted from the Hackman and Oldham (1974) scale. This scale consists of 15 items. A seven-point response scale was employed, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Organisational commitment was assessed using a 15-item measure developed by Mowday, Porter, Steers and Boulian, (1974). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement regarding each item on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Analysis to examine the differences between Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment and Gender is performed via a t-test mean comparison.

Data Analysis and Findings

Demographic Profile

As depicted in Table 1, 48% of the respondents are male and the balances are female. More than 70% of the respondents are single with the age ranges between 20 to 29 years old. 76.8% of the respondents are degree holders with a majority of work experience between one to ten years. More than half of the total respondents (61.6%) earn RM50,000 and below per annum (Table 1). 42.9%, 40.2% and 17% of the respondents are the clerical/ support staff, executive and managers respectively. More than 48% of the respondents are from the financial and services industries such as trust companies, banks, insurance and insurance-related companies and audit firms. Other respondents are from the oil and gas (5.4%), telecommunication (3.6%), information technology (6.2%) and other sectors like education, hotel, logistics and shop assistance (cumulatively 36.6%).

Reliability Analysis

The reliability of scale indicates that the study is free from random error. Internal consistency is measured in this research using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, (α). The statistic provides an indication of the average correlation among all of the items that make up the scale. Values range from 0 to 1 with higher values indication greater reliability. Table 2 indicates the result of analysis of the Cronbach's alpha scale for Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment where its value is more than 0.7. This indicates that the survey instrument (questionnaire) can be a reliable tool to measure the two constructs consistently. Moreover, all of the measures of constructs had been used in

past studies, and have thus been validated.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic	Criteria	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	54	48.2
	Female	58	51.8
Age (years old)	Between 20 and 29	66	58.9
	Between 30 and 39	40	35.7
	Between 40 and 49	4	3.6
	50 and over	2	1.8
Marital Status	Single	79	70.5
	Married	33	29.5
Education Level	Secondary School Certificate	11	9.8
	Diploma	2	1.8
	Bachelor's Degree	12	10.7
	Master's Degree	86	76.8
		1	.9
Annual Income	Below RM12K	15	13.4
	Between RM12K - RM50K	69	61.6
	Between RM51K - RM100K	26	23.2
	Between RM101K - RM150K	1	.9
	Above RM200K	1	.9
Experience	Less than 1 year	9	8.0
	1 to 5 years	46	41.1
	6 to 10 years	43	38.4
	11 to 15 years	9	8.0
	16 to 20 years	2	1.8
	More than 20 years	3	2.7
Position	Clerical/Support staff	48	42.9
	Executive	45	40.2
Industry	Managerial	19	17.0
	Financial services	54	48.2
	Oil and gas	6	5.4
	Telecommunication	4	3.6
	Information technology	7	6.2
	Others	41	36.6

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of Item	Item Deleted	Alpha
Job satisfaction	15	-	0.890
Organisational commitment	15	-	0.780

Factor Analysis for Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment

Factor analysis technique is used to measure Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy to confirming the appropriateness of proceeding with analysis to reduce the number of items and identity the dimensions of talent variables. The initial Factor Analysis stipulated two factors and allowed them to covary (principal components with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization), including 15 items each for Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment factor. Factor loadings below 0.50 were suppressed. All Job Satisfaction items loaded only on their respective factor except two statements: ‘I am able to act independently of my supervisor in performing my job function’ and ‘My job provides me the opportunity of self-directed flexibility of work hours’ (refer Table 3). The final factor analysis on the remaining 13 Job Satisfaction items showed excellent sampling adequacy (KMO = .861; Bartlett’s χ^2 (105) = 774.392; $p < .001$), and accounted for 41% of the variance for Job Satisfaction. As shown in Table 5, all items loaded only on their respective scale, that is, Job Satisfaction items on the Job Satisfaction factor. These results provide initial support for the distinctiveness of the Job Satisfaction measurement constructs.

Table 3: Factor Analysis for Job Satisfaction

Statements	Loadings
My job influences day-to-day company success.	.779
My job by itself provides feedback on how well I am performing as I am working	.752
My job is arranged so that I have an understanding of how it relates to the business mission.	.703
While performing my job I get the opportunity to work on many interesting projects	.693
My job has the ability to influence decisions that significantly affect the organisation.	.685
My job is one that may affect a lot of other people by how well the work is performed	.666
My job is arranged so that I have a chance and the ability to talk with customers/clients/end users.	.661
My job provides a lot of variety	.648
My job provides me with the opportunity to both communicate with my supervisor and to receive recognition from them as well.	.629
I receive feedback from my co-workers about my performance on the job.	.621
My job gives me the opportunity to use many new technologies.	.585
My job allows me the opportunity to complete the work I start.	.566
My job lets me be left on my own to do my own work.	.563

Further investigation on employees’ satisfaction with the job, they confirmed that the job influences the day-to-day company success with $\lambda = .779$, followed by the job by itself provides feedback on how well they are performing as they are working, $\lambda = .752$ (refer Table 3). The first statement is identified as having the highest factor loadings in the Job Satisfaction construct. Likewise, job satisfaction is also of high concern to the employees when the job is well arranged so that they have an understanding of how it relates to the business mission ($\lambda = .703$). Certainly, while performing the job, employees also get the

opportunity to work on many interesting projects, with factor loadings .693. Among the fifteen Job Satisfaction statements, results indicated that the statement ‘My job lets me be left on my own to do my own work’ had lowest loadings ($\lambda = .563$), thus employees find it as the least important issues in terms of their satisfaction with the job, beside statement ‘My job allows me the opportunity to complete the work I start’ ($\lambda = .566$).

For the Organisational Commitment, items also loaded only on their respective factor, except six that showed weak factor loadings. One was ‘Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part’, ‘There’s not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely’, and the other ‘Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation’s policies on important matters relating to its employees’. The subsequent poor loadings statements includes ‘I feel very little loyalty to my organisation’, ‘I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the types of work were similar’, and ‘It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation’. The final factor analysis on the remaining 9 Organisational Commitment items showed excellent sampling adequacy (KMO = .757; Bartlett’s $\chi^2 (105) = 624.612$; $p < .001$), and accounted for 33% of the variance for Organisational Commitment (refer Table 4).

Table 4: Factor Analysis for Organisational Commitment

Statements	Loadings
For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.	.778
This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	.750
I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help my organisation be successful	.711
I talk up my organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	.708
I really care about the fate of this organisation	.690
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	.665
I find that my values and the organisation’s values are very similar	.644
I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined	.623
I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.	.579

Table 4 enumerates that all 9 items loaded only on their respective scale. These results provide initial support for the distinctiveness of the employees’ commitment to the organizations. Factor loadings = .778 was found in statement ‘For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work’, and factor loadings = 750 for ‘This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance’. Committed employees is increasing rapidly when they are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the organisation be successful ($\lambda = .711$) together with talk up about the organisation to their friends that it is a great organisation to work for ($\lambda = .708$). Another contributing aspect is they would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization ($\lambda = .579$).

The remaining 13 Job Satisfaction items and 9 Organisational Commitment items were compute separately to produce a single mean score for each construct to be used n the next level of data analysis such as means, standard deviation, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Coefficients

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients of the gender, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment amongst the sample. Gender is not significantly correlated with job satisfaction ($r = -0.183$). However, there is a significant negative correlation between gender and organisational commitment ($r = -0.189$) at 95% confidence level. Both job satisfaction and organisational commitment is significantly correlated with $r = 0.575$ at 99% confidence level. Although the size of the correlation between independent and dependent variables is not strong, such a result in management is important.

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Gender	Organisational Commitment
Gender				
Organisational Commitment	3.2696	.35122	-.189*	
Job Satisfaction	4.9762	.93842	-.183	.575**

Differences between Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment and Gender

In order to determine if significant differences exist between the two genders in term of their Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment, a t-test mean comparison between the responses of the male (54) and female (58) subjects were conducted. Table 6 depicts the summary of these comparisons between the genders. The mean scores for male subjects in terms of Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment were 5.1531 and 3.3383 and for the female subjects were 4.8115 and 3.2057, respectively. Result infers male subjects have higher mean scores in both variables. There also exists a significant difference between these variables and the two types of gender (Job Satisfaction, $p < 0.10$, $t = 1.949$; Organisational Commitment, $p < 0.05$, $t = 2.023$). This indicates that both male and female subjects respond differently to Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment items. Therefore, hypotheses which suggest that employees (male or female) differ in their Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment are supported. Thus, all the hypotheses (H1 and H2) in this study are supported.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of data analysis showed both men and women have different level of **Job Satisfaction**. Finding in this study is consistent with other researches such as Al-Ajmi (2006); Linz (2003); Weaver (1977). One common explanation for the different level of work satisfaction reported in some studies for men and women is that women have different expectations with regard to work than men (Campbell, Converse, and Rogers, 1976). An employee has higher or lower levels of job satisfaction because they have lower or higher expectations and greater or less ability to satisfy them. From this perspective,

job satisfaction is seen to be an emotional response resulting from the interaction of work rewards and work values. The greater the perceived congruence between rewards and values, the greater the job satisfaction; the greater the perceived discrepancy, the less the satisfaction (Oshagbemi, 2000).

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviation Values for both Genders

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	Male	54	5.1531	.98854	1.949	.054
	Female	58	4.8115	.86546		
Organisational Commitment	Male	54	3.3383	.39171	2.023	.046
	Female	58	3.2057	.29822		

Job satisfaction is, therefore, seen by some people to be a function of what is expected and what is received. Thus if one expects little and gets little, one will be satisfied. At the same time, if one expects a lot and gets a lot, one will be satisfied. However, if one expects a lot and gets little, one will be unsatisfied. The basic argument is that although women receive less from their jobs than men do, they have lower expectations and hence feel just as satisfied as men (Kinman, 1998). In the current study, employees satisfied with their job for the reason that it provides them with the opportunity to both communicate with their supervisor and to receive recognition and feedback from co-workers about performance on the job. They are also able to act independently of the supervisor in performing job function. While performing the job, they are able to get the opportunity to work on many interesting projects. Thus, employees' job satisfaction influences day-to-day company success.

Further investigation of the study confirmed that men and women also have different level of **Organisational Commitment**. Current finding is analogous to research done by Arana *et al.* (1986); Baird *et al.* (1998); Dodd-McCue and Wright, (1996); Kaldenberg *et al.* (1995). Organisational commitment is highly valuable. Studies have highlighted that commitment has a great impact on the successful performance of an organisation. This is because a highly committed employee will identify with the goals and values of the organisation, has a stronger desire to belong to the organisation and is willing to display greater organisational citizenship behaviour i.e., a willingness to go over and beyond their required job duties. In this study, it was bring into being that employees are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help the organisation to be successful. They find that their values and the organisation's values are very similar and proud to tell others that they are part of the organization as they would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.

It can be concluded that both male and female employees in Labuan have the same level of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Employers normally expect that people with higher levels of job satisfaction will have higher levels of organisational commitment. If employees are highly satisfied with their work, co-workers, pay, and supervision and derive high level of overall job satisfaction with their jobs they are more likely to be committed to the organisation than if they are not satisfied (Warsi, Fatima and Sahibzada, 2009).

The focus on these two key concepts cannot be over stated because job satisfaction and commitment are primary determinants of employee turnover, performance, and productivity (Opkara, 2004). Committed and satisfied employees are normally high performers that contribute towards organisational productivity (Samad, 2007). Therefore, employers must take into consideration all of the possible factors that may contribute to increasing the job satisfaction and commitment of employees. Organisations can rely on the demographic characteristics of employees such as gender to understand employees' commitment to organisation but it would not provide an exhaustive indication to accurately designing any policy or incentive in relation to employees for adoption.

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