

WHO IS SATISFIED THE MOST: SHIFT HOUR OR NORMAL HOUR WORKERS?

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Abstract

The study examines the level of job satisfaction of shift hour workers and to compare it with normal hour workers. The revised Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used and a total of 156 respondents of normal hours, n=50, and shift hour workers, n=106, were employed in the study. Findings revealed that shift hour workers are satisfied with their jobs however t-test discovered that there is a significant different in job satisfaction between normal hour workers and shift hour workers in their job and promotional opportunities. A few recommendations are included for future research.

Keywords: job satisfaction, shift workers, MSQ, quantitative study.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation is essential to the success of any organization regardless of size whether big or small. In the modern workplace, human resources are valued above all others. Motivated employees are productive, happy and committed (Bhosale, 2004 as cited by Wirawani, 2012). The after effects of this would include result driven employees, workplace harmony and increased organizational performance. Job satisfaction is typically defined as positive or negative attitudes held by individuals toward their job (Greenberg & Baron, 2008), and the feelings a person has about his or her job. It is also related to an emotional state reflecting an affective response to the job situation.

This study employs participants from the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD). The RMCD is one of the frontline government agencies whose responsibility among others is to assist in the implementation of the nation's industrial development policy and trade activities effectively and efficiently in terms of facilitating trade and industrial activities. In the modern industrialized society, many companies and organizations stay open and continue to run their business 24 hours a day and to facilitate these organizations especially in trade and customs related matters, the presence of RMCD personnel is required at all entry points to the country such as airports, seaports, land borders and also at industrial and trade areas such as at the free trade zones and free industrial zones which operates 24 hours a day. Another objective of the department which is to further improve detection capabilities and preventive measures against tax avoidance activities, smuggling of dutiable goods and goods that are detrimental to the national security would also require RMCD to have its personnel on standby around the clock and therefore it becomes a necessity for the department to implement 24 hours rotating "shift" working hours in order to fulfill its responsibilities.

The term "shift" work would make different people come out with different definitions. Shift work is popularly regarded as a work in which the employees' "shifts" are scheduled on some regular basis from daytime to evening or nighttime. Many researchers defined shift work as an employment in which two or more groups of employees work at different times of a 17-hour or 24-hour time-span, including a so-called "day" shift. "Shift" work was introduced after the Industrial Revolution (McNall, 2010). At first, "shift" work was only implemented in sectors such as the military, security and health sectors but due to the massive growth of the industrial sector, "shift" work also expanded rapidly especially in the economic and technological sectors (Inge, Akerstedt, Ekstedt & Kecklund, 2012)

In the now a more globalized world, many activities such as trade, industrial and commercial activities have extended their operating hours outside and beyond the normal work hours. Services such as banking, communications, transport, catering, and retailing are routinely available during evening hours and often round-the clock. These activities also affect the front line government agency such as the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD). At the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) which is one

of the entry points to the country, a large number of trade and commercial activities occur 24 hours a day. At present RMCD KLIA has over 700 personnel stationed at various division / units with more than half of the number works in a 24 hour rotating “shifts”. In general, many workers find that shift work disrupts their family and personal life and can to health problems. On the other hand, some workers prefer shift work because it usually allows for more free time.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the shift hours workers of the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) job satisfaction level, and to compare it with the normal hour workers. Furthermore, in order to make the comparisons, the level of job satisfaction of normal hour workers is also explored. Hence, the following research questions are to be answered:

RQ1: Are normal hour workers satisfied with their job?

RQ2: Are shift workers satisfied with their job?

RQ3: Is there any difference in the level of job satisfaction between shift workers and day workers of RMCD in KLIA?

2. **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In modern societies, many companies and organizations stay open 24 hours a day, requiring people to work in shifts. The term “shift work “means different things to different people. The shift work is a work schedule in which a group of workers work in shifts. The shifts can be organized either in a rotation, continuity or in a discontinuous system. Day by day, the shift work becomes increasingly prevalent in contemporary life, affecting 20% to 25% of the employees in manufacturing industries and also a growing number in the service industries. However, it is realized that there is no ideal shift system which meets fully the needs of an organization and social and family needs of each and every employee. Many researchers define shift work as an employment in which two or more groups of employees work at different times of a 17-hour or 24-hour time span, including a so-called “day” shift.

Shift work has both advantages and disadvantages. Shift work provides a number of no of pecuniary advantages for some workers. Working in evenings or nights allows employees more free time during the day. Some workers enjoy a variety of rotating shifts, while others appreciate of being able to remove themselves from unwanted family situations or responsibilities. The camaraderie and sense of loyalty is satisfying features of certain evening or nighttime occupations, which can be the satisfying substitutes for normal social and family life (Goswami, Jena & Mahapatro, 2011). Many shift workers have less tension and a more relaxed pace in night shift than during the day because of less supervision or fewer interruptions from clerical or management personnel. Finally, shift work accommodates “night owls”, who function poorly in day time and best during evening or night (Goswami, Jena & Mahapatro, 2011).

According to Greenberg and Baron (2000 p190) the definition of motivation could be divided into three main parts. The first part looks at arousal that deals with the drive, or energy behind individual (s) action. People turn to be guided by their interest in making a good impression on others, doing interesting work and being successful in what they do. The second part referring to the choice people make and the direction their behavior takes. The last part deals with maintaining behavior clearly defining how long people have to persist at attempting to meet their goals.

Todd (2009) suggest that motivation can be defined in a variety of ways, depending on who you ask .Ask someone on the street, you may get a response like “it’s what drives us” or “it’s what make us do the things we do.” Therefore motivation is the force within an individual that account for the level, direction, and persistence of effort expended at work.”

Ritter and Anker (2002) defines motivation as “a person’s active participation and commitment to achieve the prescribed results”. They further presents that the concept of motivation is abstract because of the different strategies will produce different results at different times and there is no single strategy that can produce guaranteed favorable results all the times. Hence, one’s motivation to work will lead to job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is an important factor for any organization to achieve among its employees as it helps in maintaining the stability and productivity in the operations in organizations (Fako, Moeng, &Forcheh, 2009). Mora, Aracil and Vila (2007) suggest that job satisfaction indicates how people value the whole package of both monetary and non-monetary returns to their jobs according to their own personal tastes, preferences and expectations. Their finding suggests that job satisfaction, as a personal perception, and individual expectations, physical and psychological needs, is a relative issue closely related to comparison and expectation. Individuals compare their own current situation with the situation of comparable people around them and draw conclusions depending on their expectations and relative personal position, and there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction.

McNall, Masuda, and Nicklin (2010) moreover found that the availability of flexitime of doing jobs and compressed workweek schedules influence work-to-family enrichment which in turn relates to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. They suggest that the balance of work and family is important in order to have more satisfaction in jobs as the balance conceptualized the overall work-family interface.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative experimental/predictive design which includes the analysis of comparison data between two independent variables; employees of RMCD at KLIA who works on a 24 hour rotating “shift” and employees who works normal hours.

The sample size for the purpose of this study encompasses of 156 employees of the Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA). Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used as a data gathering tool which measures on a five-point Likert scale. The format of MSQ is a paper and pencil inventory, which measures vocational needs and social values based on job satisfaction. The MSQ is administered in a self-report style and required participants to read at the minimum ability of a fifth grade level (Weiss, Davis, England & Lofquist, 1967). The items include the job itself, pay, promotion opportunity, supervision, and coworkers. The MSQ questionnaire was revised to enable the researcher to gain as much information as possible, fit the respondents background and at the same time suit the current working environment. It is also translated to Bahasa Melayu so that it will be easier to be answered by employees of RMCD in KLIA.

Preliminary test revealed a reliability score of 0.805 which suggested that the revised questionnaire is valid to be used to the respondents. Descriptive statistics and t-test of SPSS were used analyze the data. Table 3.1 below indicates the reliability score for each construct.

Table 3.1: Reliability score

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
The Job	.820	6
Pay	.910	6
Promotion	.915	6
Supervisor	.898	6
Co-workers	.716	6

All the scores are above 0.7 which implies that the questionnaire items and construct are reliable and valid to be administered to the respondents.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic

The results show that there are 50 normal hour respondents and 106 shift hour respondents. The demographic information of the respondents is simplified in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Demographic

Items	Information	Normal hours		Shift	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	19	22.4	66	77.6
	Female	31	43.7	40	56.3
Age	<20 years old	0	0.0	1	100.0
	21-25 years old	3	15.0	17	85.0
	26-30 years old	22	40.7	32	59.3
	31-35 years old	9	34.6	17	65.4
	36-40 years old	2	14.3	12	85.7
	41-45 years old	4	30.8	9	69.2
	46-50 years old	2	28.6	5	71.4
	51-55 years old	7	43.8	9	56.2
Race	56-6- years old	1	20.0	4	80.0
	Malay	50	35.0	93	65.5
	Chinese	0	0.0	3	100.0
	Indian	0	0.0	6	100.0
Level of education	Others	0	0.0	4	100.0
	School leavers	27	39.1	42	60.9
	Undergraduate	23	26.7	63	73.3
Income	Post graduate	0	0.0	1	100.0
	<RM1000	1	100.0	0	0.0
	RM1001-RM3000	36	34.6	68	65.4
	RM3001-RM5000	13	28.3	33	71.7
Length of service	RM5001-RM7000	0	0.0	5	100.0
	< 1 year	2	13.3	13	86.7
	1-5 years	14	26.9	38	73.1
	6-10 years	18	50.0	18	50.0
	11-15 years	4	30.8	9	69.2
	16-20 years	4	25.0	12	75.0
	20-25 years	4	40.0	6	60.0
>25 years	4	28.6	10	71.4	

The 30 items of revised MSQ is listed to find the frequency percentage of the level of job satisfaction of RMCD employees in KLIA working normal hours. The scale of five-Likert points were recoded to only

three-Likert scale, where the scale of 'very satisfied' was recoded under 'satisfied' and 'very dissatisfied' was recoded under 'dissatisfied'.

4.2 Normal hour workers' level of job satisfaction

Descriptive analysis was employ to calculate the percentages of the data. It was found that the percentages of satisfied scale are the highest followed by uncertain and dissatisfied. According to the analysis, normal hour employees are most satisfied with the opportunity to create close friendship with co-workers (98.0%), sense of pride and happy to work (96.0%) followed by unreasonable stress (94%). The normal hour employees are found to be the most dissatisfied with the ability to earn extra income with percentage of 34.0%.

4.3 Shift hour workers' level of job satisfaction

The findings suggested that shift workers are most satisfied with friendliness of the co-workers and sense of pride with percentage of 93.4%, followed by opportunity to create close friendship with co-workers (92.5%) and interaction between co-workers (89.6%0. On the other hand, shift workers are also found to be the most dissatisfied with promoted fast (48.1%) and chances for promotion at 34%

4.3 The level of job satisfaction between shift hour workers and normal hour workers

T-test was used to analyze the different levels of satisfaction between the two groups of employees.

Table 4.2: Difference of job satisfaction between shift and normal hour workers

	Working hours	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
JOB	Normal hours	50	25.30	3.05	3.510	.001
	Shift	106	23.23	3.58		
PAY	Normal hours	50	21.62	4.79	1.797	.074
	Shift	106	20.06	5.15		
PROMOTION	Normal hours	50	20.58	4.45	3.310	.001
	Shift	106	17.65	5.45		

SUPERVISOR	Normal hours	50	23.10	3.96	1.968	.051
	Shift	106	21.71	4.15		
CO-WORKERS	Normal hours	50	24.60	2.82	1.220	.224
	Shift	106	23.94	3.27		

Based on the table above, the data indicates that the normal hour employees job satisfaction in the areas of job ($t=3.510$, $p=.001$) and promotion ($t=3.310$, $p=.001$) are significantly different from employees working in shift. When the mean scores are compared, it is found that normal hour employees are more satisfied than those employees working in shift in terms of those job satisfaction constructs.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The percentages of *satisfied* measures of MSQ was higher than the *dissatisfied* measures with all score above 50% indicating that normal hour employees were satisfied with their current jobs. Specifically, it was found that they are most satisfied with the opportunity to create close friendship. This is true since working in a normal working hour would enable them to plan activities with their colleagues during and outside their working hours. The ability to create close friendship then leads to positive attitude towards their jobs and duties (Song, 2005).

Furthermore, It was found that shift hour workers are also satisfied with their jobs since the percentages of *satisfied* measures of MSQ was higher than the *dissatisfied* measures with all score is found to be more than 50%. Shift hour workers are seemed to be most satisfied with their sense of pride towards their job with a percentage score of 93%. However, they seemed to be most dissatisfied with the opportunity to be fast promoted with a percentage score of 48%. Moreover, it was also found that the reason why shift workers are most satisfied with their sense of pride in their job is due to the fact that as being the front liners, Customs officers especially those stationed at entry and exit points of the country have the authority when dealing with the public.

The independent T-test was conducted to find out whether or not there is any difference in job satisfaction between normal hour and shift workers. The results indicate that normal hour workers are more satisfied in their job compared to shift hours. This is congruent with the findings by Inge, Akerstedt, Ekstedt and Kecklund (2012) who found that shift hour workers have lack of time or predictability of time for family or leisure activities resulting in poor satisfaction.

Furthermore, normal hour workers also found to be satisfied more in their job and promotion. It is believed that normal hour workers have fixed and predictable job to do and have better promotional opportunities. Since normal hour workers have better predictability of time for family or leisure activities (Inge, Akerstedt, Ekstedt and Kecklund, 2012), it is believed that they are not working under pressure and thus, they are more satisfied with their jobs and when they are satisfied with their jobs, they will tend to work better and this will lead to job promotion. As Naved, Usman and Bushra (2011) found that job satisfaction can be predicted by promotional opportunity.

Some limitations are found throughout the study and recommendations for future researches are as follows to better outcomes:

Firstly, some respondents may have lackadaisical attitude and prejudice in their response to the survey. Response bias could also arise if operators fear retaliation from superior or leader. Consequently, the employees may not provide a feedback that is open and honest. Although, confidentiality is assured in this survey, it is possible that the respondents either over-or under-report their level of satisfaction on the MSQ, and their assessment of the five (5) factors which consist a total of 30 items on the Jobs Satisfaction Survey modified questionnaire

The second limitation is this research does not examine the different perceptions of employees with different background such as level of education and genders as they might have different view on job satisfaction.

Thirdly, the respondents were not equally distributed especially for the normal hour workers and shift hour workers. Better control of the selection of equally distributed respondents is encouraged.

Fourthly, 34.6 percent of the respondents were obtained from the age group 26-30 and these respondents may have difference beliefs, behaviors and certain extent of emotion towards affective response to questionnaire presented. Thus the results obtained may not be accurately reflected the overall job satisfaction of RMCD employees.

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