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Job Satisfaction Among Administrative Staff in Health Department

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ABSTRACT

One of the most challenging issues faced by organizations in managing the workforce is job satisfaction. This study explores job satisfaction among the administrative staff in the Public Health Division of the Johor State Health Department, Malaysia. The researchers utilized self-made questionnaires to extract information from the 108 respondents across several departments. Accordingly, the data obtained were subjected to a t-test and a one-way ANOVA analysis. Seven factors were identified and tested to determine their influence on job satisfaction. The data indicate no significant difference in organizational job satisfaction among administrative staff in government health departments. Furthermore, the Bivariate correlation conducted on job satisfaction and the seven factors revealed that all mean factors were statistically significant (p-value < 0.01), except for operating conditions. Findings from this study provide insights for future research involving a larger group of administrative staff from different sectors and a comprehensive understanding of job satisfaction and related factors that motivate positive organizational behavior among employees in Malaysia.

Contribution/Originality: Based on the references, this study added to the existing literature on job satisfaction and its impacts. Furthermore, this study employs novel estimate methodology to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and sociodemographic factors. Additionally, this is one of only a few studies that have looked into job satisfaction among administrative staff in southern Malaysia.

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1. Introduction

Globalization has created a borderless world. Science, technology, communication, and human desire to take advantage of asymmetrical resources and economies have brought the world closer together through increased trade, knowledge management, and culture sharing (Noordin & Jusoff, 2018). Globalization is linked to various job-related factors, including job resources and demand, as well as the impact on job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has long been a hot topic worldwide. Job satisfaction means "a state of mind encompassing all those feelings determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs being met" (Geta et al., 2021). An individual's job performance is often determined by his or her level of job satisfaction (Hee et al., 2020). When employees are satisfied with their job, organizational performance improves. According to previous studies, individuals satisfied with their current employment tend to be more driven and eager to invest more effort in executing their obligations. Therefore, employee attitude, loyalty, support, and dedication to the organization are influenced by job satisfaction (Gedif et al., 2018). In addition, job satisfaction is a common organizational outcome that practitioners and researchers are concerned with due to the underlying notion that satisfaction drives productivity. Individuals who are content with their jobs are more likely to perform well and produce better results than disgruntled employees (Issah, 2021). Furthermore, people are often satisfied with most aspects of their jobs when they work among like-minded people with shared experiences and values.

Therefore, employees primarily strive for job satisfaction in varied endeavors. It is a crucial factor of corporate success and a topic of discussion in the workplace and organizational literature. Job satisfaction is fundamental in the organizational framework. Its absence leads to sluggishness and poor organizational commitment. On the other hand, job satisfaction enables workers to pursue more complex or challenging tasks within their job scope (Temesgen et al., 2018). Therefore, job satisfaction gives employees broader tasks to complete (although not necessarily more challenging). Overall, the work is more exciting, and employees gain a greater sense of accomplishment and job satisfaction.

The nature of work significantly impacts employee job satisfaction. Generally, employees gain satisfaction from exciting, challenging, or high-status work (Batool & Azra Batool, 2011). Work that is personally interesting to employees appears to contribute to job satisfaction. Previous studies also indicated that task variety might improve job satisfaction (Carrillo-García et al., 2013). Providing employees with opportunities for career advancement is another important factor in job satisfaction because a repetitive task or job is mundane and uninteresting. Challenging work is critical in measuring employee capabilities and improving their skills through new projects or goals (Kitsios & Kamariotou, 2021). Accordingly, employees gain broader knowledge and become valuable assets to the company. It reflects a critical need that employees have at work. However, the absence of these factors will directly impact employee job satisfaction and lead to adverse outcomes (Alias et al., 2017). Employees who are demotivated and dissatisfied will cause high turnover, absenteeism, and customer complaints. Therefore, employers must consider these factors to produce a satisfied, happy, and productive workforce.

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As a rapidly developing nation, Malaysia continues to engage in various studies on the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. This topic has become a fundamental aspect of organizational behavior to reduce high employee turnover and brain drain through training, succession planning, and long-term organizational changes. The ability of Malaysian urban organizations to manage and retain talent has become critical in the public and private sectors, especially in major cities with high demand for administrative staff (Idris et al., 2018). According to the Malaysian Productivity Report 2013/2014, numerous efforts have been made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector with an emphasis on employee well-being. Such efforts include improving motivation and skills among the workforce, bureaucratic transformation, improved management systems, performance measurement coupled with incentive schemes, and reorganization of jobs and work processes (Zirwatul et al., 2014).

The organizational behavior of health workers influences the quality of healthcare services. In particular, efficiency among employees in the medical and healthcare sector poses significant challenges (Mpembeni et al., 2015). As a result, healthcare administration must prioritize capitalizing on the human component to boost its efficacy and effectiveness (Ramlan et al., 2014). However, the welfare of administrative employees is neglected in advancing the organizational objectives (Yami et al., 2018). Moreover, organizational success depends on its support staff despite being underrepresented, underpaid, and undervalued in the organizational structure (Geleto et al., 2015). The current literature reveals a gap in employee satisfaction among healthcare administrative employees (Ngoc, 2019). Therefore, this study investigates the factors influencing job satisfaction among administrative staff of the Public Health Division, Johor State Health Department.

The objectives of this research are as follows:

i. Identifying the level of organizational job satisfaction;
ii. Determining the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and job satisfaction; and
iii. The correlation between social and economic factors to job satisfaction.

2. Methodology

The study involved an institution-based cross-sectional survey of the Public Health Division, Johor State Health Department, in the capital city of Johore Bharu. The duration was one week, from 1st May 2022 to 7th May 2022. The Public Health Division is the largest unit in the Johor State Health Department. This department has 13 units and 134 staff, including administrative staff and healthcare professionals. The primary function of the Public Health Division is implementing, monitoring, and evaluating public health programs or activities throughout the State. The District Health Offices implement the Public Health Program by coordinating activities within the health clinic infrastructure.

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 128 staff between 2nd May 2022 to 5th May 2022. The researchers determined a sample size of 108 participants using openepi.com for a population-based study. At the end of the study period, 108 subjects were included in the final analysis, with a response rate of 84.4%. The researchers obtained written informed consent from the participants, and the guidelines in the ethics form were fulfilled. Further, this study complied with ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, the Malaysian Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Guideline, and

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was solely funded by the Johor State Health Office. Ethical approval will be obtained from the Malaysian Review Ethics Committee (MREC).

The self-assessment-based questionnaire to measure employee job satisfaction was adapted from a previous study, namely, the Job Satisfaction Survey (Meier & Spector, 2015). The first section concerns socio-demographic data with basic information about the respondents. The other seven sections comprise 35 questions on salary satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, benefits satisfaction, operational satisfaction, co-worker satisfaction, work environment satisfaction, and communication satisfaction. The dependent variable is job satisfaction, and responses on satisfaction were measured based on a 5-point Likert scale.

Subsequently, the researchers employed the Statistical Package for Social Science version 25.0 for data analysis. A scoring system was utilized in the evaluation of the job satisfaction data. The average of the responses in each section was calculated. Accordingly, the descriptive statistics of socio-demographic factors comprised frequencies and percentages. The relationship between independent variables and job satisfaction was determined using a series of independent t-tests and one-way ANOVA analyses for normally distributed data.

Meanwhile, Spearmen's correlation was used for non-normally distributed data for the outcome of the normality test. The descriptive results were presented using tables and figures. Variables with a value of p <0.01 were considered statistically significant factors.

3. Results

There were 62 (57%) male and 46 (42.6%) female respondents (Table 1). The respondents with the highest level of education had a Diploma, and 14(13%) of respondents with a certificate-level qualification represented the lowest level of education in the group. Most participants were professionals, followed by the lowest job category participants from Supportive Group III of 17 respondents (15.7%). The highest age group was 31 to 40 years (49.1%), and the lowest age group was 51 to 60 years (7.4%). Further, 51 respondents had the highest frequency of salary income between RM1000 to RM3000 (47.2%). Most participants worked for one to five years (51.9%), whereas the minority worked for less than one year (7.4%).

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Gender	Male	62	57.4	0.43	0.497
	Female	46	42.6		
Level of education	PMR/SPM	20	18.5	2.99	1.28
	Certificate	14	13		
	Diploma	35	32.4		
	Degree	25	23.1		
	Masters	14	13		
Job category	Supportive III	17	15.7	2.82	1.066
	Supportive II	21	19.4		
	Supportive I	34	31.5		
	Professional	36	33.3		
Age (Years)	21-30	18	16.7	2.25	0.822
	31-40	53	49.1		

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	41-50	29	26.9		
	51-60	8	7.4		
	1000-3000	51	47.2		
Salary (RM)	3001-5000	25	23.1	1.82	0.863
	> 5000	32	29.6		
	< 1	8	7.4		
Tenure (Years)	1-5	56	51.9	2.47	0.826
	6-10	29	26.9		
	> 10	15	13.9		

3.1. Factors Associated with Job Satisfaction

Seven factors were tested to determine job satisfaction (Table 2). Based on the Likert scale scores by the participants, most participants were moderately satisfied with pay (66%), promotion (51%), fringe benefits (78%), and operating conditions (68%). In addition, many participants were contented with co-workers (69%), the nature of work (80%), and communication (53%). The Normality test (Shapiro-Wilk) was conducted on the means variables. The mean of pay and communication were normally distributed (Sig value > 0.05), whereas other variables were not normally distributed (Table 3).

Table 2: Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
	Low (1-2.33)	10	9.3		
Pay	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	66	61.1	1.20	0.592
	High (3.67 -5)	32	29.6		
	Low (1-2.33)	9	8.3		
Promotion	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	51	47.2	1.36	0.633
	High (3.67 -5)	48	44.4		
	Low (1-2.33)	5	4.6		
Fringe benefits	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	78	72.2	1.19	0.496
	High (3.67-5)	25	23.1		
	Low (1-2.33)	36	33.3		
Operating conditions	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	68	63	0.70	0.534
	High (3.67-5)	4	3.7		
	Low (1-2.33)	3	2.8		
Co-workers	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	36	33.3	1.61	0.544
	High (3.67-5)	69	63.9		
	Low (1-2.33)	4	3.7		
Nature of work	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	24	22.2	1.70	0.534
	High (3.67-5)	80	74.1		
	Low (1-2.33)	11	10.2		
Communication	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	44	40.7	1.39	0.667
	High (3.67-5)	53	49.1		

Table 3: Normality Test for Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Mean	Statistic	df	*P* value
Pay	0.981	108	0.136
Promotion	0.949	108	0.001
Fringe benefits	0.948	108	0.001
Operating conditions	0.967	108	0.001

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Co-workers	0.939	108	0.001
Nature of work	0.933	108	0.001
Communication	0.964	108	0.119
Job satisfaction	0.102	108	0.008

The One-way ANOVA tests were performed on the socio-demographic factors and job satisfaction (Table 4). The continuous variable was job satisfaction, whereas the socio-demographic factors were categorical variables. The mean difference was statically insignificant in each group. Further, the researchers tested the bivariate correlation between the means of job satisfaction and the seven factors mentioned above. Consequently, all the mean factors except operating conditions were statistically significant (p value <0.01) (Table 5).

Table 4: One-way ANOVA Test on Socio-demographic Factors and Job Satisfaction

Variables	**Df**	**F**	**Sig.**
Education	4	0.51	0.728
Salary category	2	0.665	0.516
Job category	3	0.812	0.49
Tenure	3	0.443	0.723
Age category	3	0.602	0.615

Table 5: Pearson Correlation

Mean	**Correlation**	***P*value**
Pay	0.681	0.001
Promotion	0.76	0.001
Fringe benefits	0.65	0.001
Operating conditions	0.131	0.175
Co-workers	0.617	0.001
Nature of work	0.733	0.001
Communication	0.798	0.001

4. Discussion

This study indicates no significant association between job categories and socio-demographic factors. Further, this finding implies no difference in job satisfaction among gender, level of education, job categories, age, salary, and tenure. However, socio-economic attributes, such as long-term business goals, employee welfare, environmental factors, workers' interests, social discourse, involvement of third parties, and adaptability, may significantly impact co-worker relationships and job satisfaction (Occhipinti et al.,2018). From these attributes, co-worker relationships and adaptability generally influence job satisfaction. Most administrative staff in organizations are generally satisfied with their work. Therefore, work stress tends to be low when satisfaction is high, and vice versa (Riaz et al., 2016).

However, there are moderating variables, such as the degree to which people feel their jobs are essential. The bivariate correlation shows a positive correlation between job satisfaction and socio-demographic factors (Hussain & Diaz, 2020). One of the main factors that correlate to job satisfaction is promotion. In any organization, promotion is a means of advancing one's career (Mctiernan & Mcdonald, 2015). Promotions or

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opportunities for promotions can significantly impact employee job satisfaction, morale, and motivation. Another factor that correlates to job satisfaction is salary. A reasonable salary system is seen as one of the essential factors in business and boosts productivity, attracts top talent, and reduces employee turnover (Iqbal et al., 2017).

Furthermore, job satisfaction has been proven to influence employee engagement and communication. Employee engagement is higher in companies with effective communication. In addition, positive co-worker relationships reduce stress in a high-stress environment and increase job satisfaction (Pongton & Suntrayuth, 2019). Therefore, the present study shows a strong correlation between job satisfaction and co-worker relationships. Moreover, fringe benefits also have a significant correlation with job satisfaction. A reward is a critical tool in employee performance (Zulkiflee et al., 2021). Well-compensated employees believe that the company they work for values them. They are also motivated to work harder and better if they recognize that employers value their well-being and provide opportunities for self-development and career advancement.

5. Conclusion

Many employees in the Public Health Division, Johor State Health Department, were generally satisfied with their jobs. The main factors contributing to job satisfaction are pay and benefits, lack of training and development, relationships with organizational leaders, a well-designed working environment, organizational culture, and communication. In light of these findings, healthcare policymakers and administrators should consider the specified factors to improve job satisfaction among administrative staff in private and public hospitals. However, this study is limited to a small number of respondents from one public department in the country. Future studies should extend to a larger population of administrative staff from various public and private entities across Malaysia for an in-depth understanding of job satisfaction and its impact on organizational behavior.

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Disclosure Statement

Approval of the research protocol: This study was approved by the Medical Research and Ethics Committee of the Ministry of Health, Malaysia (Reference no: 22-00510-K84). Informed consent was obtained from each participant via hardcopy. *Registry and the registration no. of the study/trial:* N/A. *Animal studies:* N/A.

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Conflict of Interest

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