

ABSTRACT

This study researched into the level of job satisfaction among salespersons in Klang Valley. Sales and marketing personnel were selected in this study in view of their pivotal roles in the organisation. The Brayfield-Rothe Index was used to measure the overall level of job satisfaction of the salespersons in relation to organisation structure, size and occupational level. The influence of major demographic factors was also being researched. Convenience sampling approach was adopted in this study. A total of 150 sets of questionnaires were sent out to various companies employing salespersons via normal mail. Out of this, 88 completed and usable questionnaires were collected signifying an ultimate success rate of 59%.

The samples collected and analysed consistently indicated a high degree of internal consistency with alpha values of more than 0.9 for both Job Description Index and Brayfield-Rothe Index.

There was a significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction with flatness in terms of organisation structure indicating non-hierarchical organisations were instrumental in facilitating communication and promptness in decision making mandatory in the sales profession.

The findings pertaining to the influence of firm size on the degree of job satisfaction indicated salespersons from large firms generally were more satisfied as compared to their counterparts in smaller set ups. This could be due to the fact that large firms offer better career path, better job enrichment and job enlargement programs and training that could be the motivating factors. More profoundly during this regional economic turmoil, salespersons in large firms were generally more "satisfied" for job security reasons.

There was a significant relationship between occupational level and level of job satisfaction. The general trend did register a positive relationship between occupational level and degree of job satisfaction. This may be due to the fact that salespersons at higher occupational level tend to enjoy higher salaries, perks and other benefits that could be the motivating factors.

As for the influence of gender on the level of job satisfaction, the analysis on unstratified sample indicated that the relationship was significant with males expressing higher level of job satisfaction. However, the stratified samples in terms of firm size were distorted due to insufficient respondents for small-medium firms. Females in large firms indicated higher level of job satisfaction compared to males. Gender per se was not a crucial factor. Rather, it was the formation of variables which covaried with gender such as pay, job level, promotion opportunities, societal prejudice and others more profoundly inherent in Asian business culture.

In terms of age, there was a significant relationship with the level of job satisfaction with older salespersons between the age of 30 and 49 indicated a higher level of job satisfaction compared to salespersons of other age groups.

Generally, age per se was not the absolute determinants for job satisfaction, rather it was the disposition of variables which covaried with age such as higher pay and higher position in firms.

The ethnic Chinese demonstrated higher level of job satisfaction in terms of race. This could be due to the fact that the ethnic Chinese possesses the quality needed to be successful in the sales profession which are aggressiveness accompanied with strong business acumen.

Generally, earnings have positive relationship with job satisfaction levels. This was due to the fact that those with higher income levels were normally

senior in position, enjoyed better benefits and command a higher status. The same was observed in terms of influence of academic qualifications.

Lastly, married salespersons expressed higher level of job satisfaction possibly due to higher satisfaction in life that may indirectly caused higher level of job satisfaction.

There are numerous benefits that employers in general and managers in particular could capitalise from the findings of this research. Efforts could be channelled into improving the set up of the marketing departments, training and development activities, the recruitment and selection programme or motivation exercise in generating the desirable behavioural outcome of salespersons in Klang Valley.

The set up of a marketing department should be non-hierarchical and flat to minimise red tape and bureaucracies. Promptness in decision making in the sales profession in terms of pricing, payments and delivery terms is vital in fostering business deals.

Salespersons were also registered higher level in terms of job satisfaction in large firms that offer better career path, training and job security. Employers and managers could seek to duplicate the desired characteristics of large firms even in smaller set-ups.

Motivation programme could also seek to target salespersons of lower occupational level as they were less satisfied. In terms of influence by ethnic race, efforts could be channelled into providing guidance and training for the non-Chinese salespersons. The Malays, for example, could be utilised into handling market segments which involve extensive contact with the authority and other governmental or semi governmental bodies.

Lastly, the employers and managers could, as far as possible, select married salespersons as they demonstrated higher level of job satisfaction.