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## **Job Satisfaction among Woman Managers in Malaysian Automobile Manufacturing Sector**

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**Abstract:** The primary aim of the study was to assess the job satisfaction of the women managers working in automobile industry in Malaysia based on primary survey from 200 woman managers. The job satisfaction score was calculated using Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. The result showed that female managers were generally satisfied with their job. A close view of specific job facets indicate that the highest level of satisfaction occurs in the areas of supervision, job in general, present job and present pay. However, relatively more number of women managers was dissatisfied with co-workers, pay and the present job. The correlation analysis showed that there was a significant negative correlation between age, education and various job factors that determine the job satisfaction.

**Key words:** Job satisfaction, women managers, Malaysia

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Job satisfaction is a heavily researched area and the literature on this issue is quite large and it is ever growing. Due to the great effort by social scientists, there appears to be a high level of agreement between them, regarding the meaning of the construct of job satisfaction. Typically, job satisfaction is conceptualized as a general attitude towards an object, the job. For example, the definitions given by Lofquist and Dawis, Porter, Locke and Henne are similar to the one offered by Locke<sup>[1]</sup> who defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state, resulting from the appraisal of one's job experience. There are, of course, a few but largely unimportant differences in the general construct. Hence, job satisfaction refers to an individual's positive emotional reactions to a particular job.

The topic of job satisfaction is an important one because of its relevance to the physical and mental well being of employees. Work is an important aspect of people's lives and most people spend large part of their lives at work. An understanding of the factors involved in job satisfaction is relevant to improve the well being of a significant number of people. Moreover, job satisfaction is also important because it has lot of implications on job related behaviors such as productivity, absenteeism and turnover. Therefore, apart from its humanitarian utility, it appears to make economic sense to consider how job satisfaction can be improved.

As women gear themselves to make more crucial decisions today in corporate and public affairs, the new millennium sees women to be the most significant indicator of social transformation and development in society with strong commitment to a family development vis-à-vis personal success, educational and professional achievements of children; it seems their agenda is strongly futuristic, self-empowering and autonomous.

The drastic changes in the participation and involvement of women in the workplace have led to a considerable amount of research interest and to the publication of number of books and journals which confront these issues directly. Many studies explored the determinants of job satisfaction and the effects of variables such as pay, job security, age and job commitment on job satisfaction<sup>[2,3]</sup>. In fact, there are numerous studies on job satisfaction but relatively less studies have focused on job satisfaction of female managers in general and particularly on the job satisfaction of manufacturing sector in Malaysia<sup>[4]</sup>. In general, most of these studies were focused on service occupations, especially nursing or teaching and concerns with professional women, who are in the upper echelons of occupational hierarchies<sup>[4,5]</sup>.

There has been little empirical work, which examines how women (managers or at other levels) perceived their job content-related factors and job context-related factors specifically. Moreover, the experience of women managers working in manufacturing settings appears to have

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been completely neglected. This is an unfortunate omission since manufacturing is not only an area of enormous importance to national economies but also a sphere from which they have been traditionally excluded and had considerable difficulty in making progress. Hence, the main purpose of this paper is to elucidate information about the experience of women managers working in manufacturing settings in terms of how they assess their organizations and how they rate their pay, work itself, supervision, people on present job, career development opportunities, promotion and job satisfaction as a whole. Moreover, the present study also investigates the relationship between selected personal characteristic, age and education with job satisfaction

**Job satisfaction theories:** Job satisfaction theories can be broadly classified in to three categories namely content theory, process theory and situational models.

Content theory assumes that fulfillment of needs and attainment of values can lead to job satisfaction<sup>[6]</sup>. Maslow's need hierarchy theory<sup>[7]</sup> and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory<sup>[8]</sup> are the two main theories used popularly as content theories. Regardless of criticisms, Herzberg's theory has been widely read and its popularity is maintained over the past 30 years for measuring job satisfaction and helping workers in planning and controlling work. There are some research done, which examines and investigates the job satisfaction based on Herzbergs theory<sup>[9-12]</sup>. This theory focuses attention on the work itself as a principal source of job satisfaction. According to Herzberg, the concept of job satisfaction has two dimensions, namely intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors are also known as motivators or satisfiers and extrinsic factors are known as hygienes or dissatisfiers. The motivators are related to job content (work itself) and include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement. The hygienes relate to job context (work environment) and involve company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. Motivators are related to job satisfaction when present but their absence do not lead to dissatisfaction. Hygienes are associated with job dissatisfaction when absent but not with satisfaction when present.

Process theory assumes that job satisfaction can be explained by investigating the interaction of variables such as expectancies, values and needs<sup>[13]</sup>. Adam's equity theory<sup>[14]</sup>, Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model<sup>[15]</sup> and Vroom's expectation theory<sup>[16]</sup> are representatives of process theory.

Situational theorists assume that the interaction of variables such as task characteristics, organizational

characteristics and individual characteristics influences job satisfaction<sup>[17]</sup>. Examples of this theory are the situational occurrences theory of job satisfaction<sup>[18]</sup> and Glisson and Durick's<sup>[19]</sup> predictors' theory of job satisfaction.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was based on content theory, especially on Herberg's Two-Factor Theory. As explained in the theories of job satisfaction, the intrinsic factors such as work on present job and opportunity for promotion are called as job content-related factors and present pay, supervision and the people on present job are called as job context related factors.

Hence, the present study identified both job content and job context factors such as work on present job, present pay, opportunities from promotion, supervision, people on their present job and job in general, to retest the Herzberg's two-factor theory. To measure the overall job satisfaction, a questionnaire was developed on line with the Job Descriptive Index and Job. In General<sup>[20]</sup> along with some demographic questions. The questionnaire attempts to measure the overall job satisfaction as well as satisfaction with different components of the managers' job from automobile industry.

The questionnaire used in this study had three-point response format. In each variable, it consisted of positive or negative descriptive word or phrase. The word with positive description or phrase in the scale was measured with three points for "Yes" representing satisfied, zero point for "No" representing dissatisfied and 1 point for "?" representing "cannot decide". For negative descriptive word or phrase, items in the scale were measured with three points for "No" representing satisfied, zero point for "Yes" representing dissatisfied and 1 point for "?" representing cannot decide. Overall job satisfaction was estimated by average score of all the variables identified. Each variable score is estimated as follows:

The satisfaction or dissatisfaction of work on present job is measured with 18 questions, with maximum score of 54. Hence, if the summed score is equal or greater than 27, it indicates that the respondent has achieved satisfaction with the work on present job. The other factor scores are estimated as follows:

The satisfaction or dissatisfaction on present pay was measured with nine questions and hence, the maximum score was 27 and the middle score was 13. The satisfaction and dissatisfaction on opportunities for promotion is measured with nine questions and hence, the maximum score was 27 and the middle score was 13. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the supervision is

measured with 18 questions and hence, its maximum score was 54 and the middle score was 27. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the people on their present job is measured with 18 questions and hence the maximum score was 54 and the middle score was 27. Finally the satisfaction or dissatisfaction on job in general was measured with 15 questions and hence the maximum score was 45 and the middle score was 24.

To measure the job satisfaction and dissatisfaction on job content-related facets, the mean scores of the work on present job and opportunity for promotion were summarized.

To measure the job context-related factors the mean scores of present pay, supervision and people on present job were summed.

The five factor's job satisfaction was calculated by summarizing the scores of 5 factors, namely, work on present job, present pay and opportunities for promotion, supervision and people on present job. The mean score of these five factors were ranged from 0 to 216, indicating high degree of dissatisfaction to high degree of satisfaction. If the summed score was equal or greater than the middle point 108, it shows that the respondent has achieved satisfaction and less than that indicates dissatisfaction.

Overall job satisfaction is measured on the basis of the score of the all the six variable. Grader than or equal to the mean score of the six variable, 131, indicates satisfaction and less than that indicates dissatisfaction. The higher the mean score the greater the job satisfaction and vice versa.

The population of the study comprised of female managers working in domestic automobile manufacturing companies such as Perodua and Proton, as these were the only domestic car manufactures. The targeted population of this study was the woman mangers working in these companies units situated in the Klang Valley. Names of the potential respondents were obtained from units email list. The survey was conducted between April 2003 and May 2003. A total of 300 questionnaires were randomly administered to the respondents through e-mail. The respondents were asked to return the questionnaires through e-mail or fax. The response rate was 86% (258) and only 200 of these respondents were valid for this study because some of them had only partially answered the questionnaire and others did not fulfill the respondent's requirement for this research study. Hence, the samples for this study were collected from 200 respondents. Since the means for gender and position were virtually identical for the population and sample, the sample was representative of the population.

**Data analysis methods:** Frequency distribution of the respondents, according to age, tenure, gender and length

of services was presented. Descriptive statistics were computed to examine different levels of satisfaction with each of their primary tasks. Data collected on demographic variables were processed and reported in percentage through the descriptive analysis. Correlation analysis is used to test the level of job satisfaction in different factors with the respondents' demographic factors.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents' gender, race, age, highest education level, marital status, job status, length of service and their management responsibilities.

The race distribution shows that among the total respondents, 70.3% of them were Chinese, 17.7% were Malay, 10.0% were Indians and others contributed to 2.0%.

The majority of the respondents were in the age group of 25-34 years consisting of 73.5%. It was followed by the age group of 35-44 years consisting of 24.5%.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	(%)
Race	
Malay	17.7
Chinese	70.3
Indian	10.0
Others	2.0
Age group (years)	
25-34	73.5
35-44	24.5
45-54	2.0

Table 2: Social characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	(%)
Education	
STPM/diploma	18.5
Graduate degree	72.0
Postgraduate degree	9.5
Marital status	
Single	48.5
Married	51.5

Table 3: Job title and length of the service of the respondents

Job status	(%)
Assistant manager	79.0
Manager	13.0
Senior manager	6.0
Deputy general manager	0.5
General manager	1.5
Length of service (years)	
1-4	46.5
5-10	33.5
>10	20.0

Table 4: Ranking of Female Managers' Job Satisfaction on the Six Variables and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	No.	Mean score	S.D	Mean score (%)
Supervision	200	45.75	4.85	84.72
Job in general	200	38.26	4.46	80.02
Work on present job	200	42.97	10.13	79.57
Pay	200	21.29	2.84	78.85
Opportunities for promotion	200	18.36	5.00	68.00
People on present job	200	30.68	6.86	56.81

Source: Computed from survey data

Table 5: Female managers' job satisfaction score on job content-related facets, job context-related factors and overall job satisfaction

Variables	Number	Mean score	S.D	Mean score (%)
Job Content-related facets	200	61.33	10.43	75.71
Job Context-related factors	200	97.71	9.97	72.38
Overall job satisfaction	200	197.30	18.55	75.59

Source: Computed from survey data

Table 6: Number of Female manager satisfied/dissatisfied with their job

	Satisfaction level	Number of manager	% of Managers	Mean
Present job/Work	Satisfied	165	82.5%	42.97
	Dissatisfied	35	17.5%	
Pay	Satisfied	151	75.5%	18.36
	Dissatisfied	49	24.5%	
Promotion	Satisfied	200	100.0%	21.29
	Dissatisfied	00	0.0%	
Supervision	Satisfied	19	97.5%	45.75
	Dissatisfied	55	2.5%	
People and present job	Satisfied	126	63.0%	30.68
	Dissatisfied	74	37.0%	
Job in General	Satisfied	19	97.5%	38.27
	Dissatisfied	55	2.5%	
Overall job satisfaction	Satisfied	200	100.0%	61.33
	Dissatisfied	00	0.0%	
Job Content related factors	Satisfied	19	95.5%	97.71
	Dissatisfied	55	2.5%	
Job context related factors	Satisfied	200	100.0%	159.04
	Dissatisfied	00	0.0%	
Job factors	Satisfied	200	100.0%	197.3
	Dissatisfied	00	0.0%	

Table 7: Mean±SD and correlations with age aspects of job satisfaction

	Work on Present job	Pay	Promotion	Supervision	People on present	Job in general	Overall job satisfaction
Mean	42.97	21.29	18.36	45.75	30.68	38.26	197.3
SD	10.13	2.84	5.00	4.85	6.86	4.46	18.55
Age	-0.567**	0.153*	0.217**	-0.133	-0.009	-0.082	-0.286**
Education level	0.665**	-0.226**	-0.380**	0.086	-0.252**	-0.337**	0.075

\*p.05; \*\*p<0.01

Only 2.0% of the respondents were above 45. It illustrates that most of the respondents were able to become managers at a young age who were below 35 years.

**Highest education level:** Nearly, 72.0% of the respondents were graduates, 9.5% of the respondents obtained postgraduate degree and 18.3% of them had only STPM or Diploma. Overall, the respondents appear to be educated with almost 82% holding at least a bachelor's degree (Table 2).

**Marital status:** Most of the respondents were married contributing 60.7%, while others 39.3% were still single (Table 2).

**Job status:** Since the study was aimed at investigating the job satisfaction of female managers in the automobile firms in Malaysia, this research question was asked to ensure whether the respondents fulfilled the requirement. Most of the respondents were assistant managers, amounting to 79%, followed by managers contributing to 13%, senior managers 6%, deputy general managers 0.5% and general manager indicated by 1.5% (Table 3).

**Length of service:** Nearly 47% of the respondents had 1-4 years of service. The second highest group was from the range of 5 to 10 years indicated by, 33.5% of the respondents and remaining 20% of the respondents had more than 10 years of work experience (Table 3).

A statistical summary of the mean scores of the six variables have been estimated to understand the level of satisfaction, the female managers have in different aspects of their job and in general.

The percentage of means score on six variables, namely the work on present job, present pay, opportunities for promotion, supervision, people on present job and job in general were calculated as the measurement scale of each variable is different. Results on Table 4 were presented in descending order to observe facets reflecting relatively greater and relatively lesser satisfaction levels. The highest value of percentage of means score among the six variables will imply the job-facet in which women managers were currently most satisfied.

The mean score shows that the women manager appeared to be satisfied with the work on present job (42.97>27), present pay (21.29>13), opportunities for promotion (18.36>13), supervision (45.75>27), job in general (38.26 >27) and people on present job (30.68>23). On the whole they achieved overall job satisfaction, obtaining 197.3 of mean score, which was greater than the determination point of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, which had 131 points.

The mean scores of the three factors in Table 5 imply that the female managers achieved higher satisfaction on job content-related facets with 75.71% followed by job context-related factors with 72.38%. The percentage of overall job satisfaction is 75.59%, which shows that the overall job satisfaction is affected more and it was towards the job content-related facets instead of job context-related factors. Further, the results of the percentage of mean score on job context-related factors (72.8%) show that the job context-related factors have minimized the degree of satisfaction instead of dissatisfaction.

**Female manger's level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with their job:** Table 6 describes the number of woman managers who were satisfied and not satisfied in various aspect of their job. It is observed that the factors like people and present job, pay and present job has highest number of dissatisfied women managers.

**Relationship between age, education and job satisfaction:** The estimated correlation between age and work on present job, pay, promotion and overall job satisfaction are significant (Table 7). The negative sign of the correlation coefficient indicates that there is inverse relationship between age and these factors, i.e. more aged women managers have less level of satisfaction on these factors. However, except present job, all other factors do

not have strong correlation. There is a negative relationship between education level and pay, promotion, people on present job and job in general. Those relationships are statistically significant. It indicates that the highly educated people expect more from the above said factors. However, except for the people on the present job, other factors do not have any strong correlation with the level of education. On the other hand overall job satisfaction and supervision do not have any significant correlation with the level of education of the respondents.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the level of job satisfaction of the women managers in the automobile manufacturing sector in Malaysia. Further it investigates the relationship between specific aspects of job satisfaction and the personal characteristics of women managers in automobile manufacturing company. The results of the present study suggest that female manager were most satisfied with their supervisors followed by job-in-general, work on present job, present pay, the opportunities for promotion and lastly people on present job. In other words, they were relatively less satisfied with their co-worker, followed by pay and present job. The results do not support the Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and concluded that no separate and distinct factors lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but if they are together contributed to job satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

An important indication from this study reveals that there is lack of social capital in the organization and hence, the woman worker's level of satisfaction on people on present job is relatively less when compared to the other aspects of the job. Hence, there is a need for change in the organizational culture and the management should create the environment for social and organizational network. In addition those who are mostly dissatisfied will have greater impact on both improving the level of job satisfaction and reducing the level of job dissatisfaction of female managers than improving the most satisfied factors. The second factor which is relatively less satisfied is the pay and this can be improved only through dialogue or any other means which involve cost to the organization. However, the third factor i.e. the relatively less level of satisfaction on the present job can be easily improved by job rotation, providing challenging job and so on. This knowledge would allow top management to spend their limited resources wisely to get the best benefit for the organization by having a well-satisfied workforce there by leading to better labor productivity.

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