Applicability of Herzberg’s Theory in Assessing Teacher’s Job Satisfaction

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Abstract: Many studies have been done in the developed countries due to the importance of job satisfaction; however, only a limited number of studies have been conducted on teachers’ job satisfaction. The core objective of this study is to find out the applicability of Herzberg’s Theory on teachers. This study is an empirical based study to understand how important is to understand the teachers attitude influences their job satisfaction and having its impact on teaching. The rationale behind theories of motivation and job satisfaction is to provide a framework for organizations to be able to influence their employees, to motivate and increase the level of their enthusiasm about their job. The two most famous theories are Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and two factor theories. Two-factor theory or Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory developed by Frederick Herzberg introduced the two factors namely “Motivators” and “Hygiene”, which lead job satisfaction at work place including Teachers. The model for evaluating Teachers job satisfaction is constructed based on Herzberg’s theory.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; teachers; Herzberg’s Theory; Higher Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Job Satisfaction in a Higher Education Context

In a higher education context, faculty job satisfaction has been the primary focus of research (Austin and Gamson, 1983). Hagedorn (1994) tested a causal model among faculty at different stages of career development and found that satisfaction with salary, total work hours, and support of colleagues affected the level of stress. The level of stress, in turn, impacted satisfaction. Volkwein and Zhou (2003) tested a model of administrative job satisfaction and found that organizational, environmental, and individual traits proved to be less influential than features such as teamwork, job security, and interpersonal harmony. They concluded that “the model suggests that overall satisfaction is the product of a complex balance of many ingredients” (166).

Job satisfaction studies in higher education, Johnsrud (2002) reviewed the recent literature devoted to both faculty and administrative work life and grouped the studies into three categories: those that describe and explore differences in the quality of work life by personal characteristics (e.g. by sex, race/ethnicity, or tenure); those that determine the impact of the quality of work life on attitudes (e.g. stress, morale, satisfaction, and commitment); and those that attempt to explain behavioral outcomes caused by the quality of work life (e.g. turnover, productivity, and performance). In sum, the higher education literature does not have a conclusive notion of what comprises job satisfaction among administrators in a college or university, and this study helps build our understanding of this phenomenon.

In higher education, job satisfaction, particularly among administrators, has been lightly examined, and cumulatively the studies in this area suggest there is little unity in understanding job satisfaction in a college or University context. Motivation and job satisfaction are often discussed side by side as it is expected that the extent that an individual is satisfied with his/her work directly depends on the presence of some motivational factors such as pay, bonus, perks, and other circumstances that motivate him/her (Furnham and Eracleous, 2009). Motivators include recognition, achievement, possibility of growth, advancement, responsibility, and the work itself. On the other hand, hygiene factors include salary, interpersonal relations at work, supervision, company policies and administration, working conditions, factors in personal life, status, and job security (Tietjen and Myers, 1998).

Herzberg’s Duality Theory of Job Satisfaction

Over the course of twelve investigations in similar organizations, Herzberg classified the work dimensions into motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators were the satisfying events described in the interviews. They included achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. When employees recalled a story where they felt “exceptionally bad” they often spoke of the following factors: company policy and administration, supervision, relationship with supervisor, work conditions, salary, relationships with peers, personal life, relationships with subordinates, status, and security. Herzberg classified these ten events as hygiene factors and he noticed that they were primarily disruptions in the external work context, while the motivators dealt with internal states of mind.
Thus, Herzberg concluded his duality theory of job satisfaction which contrasted with the traditional notion of factors impacting employees on a unicolor continuum. For example, traditionally it was thought you could increase salary, supervision, or company policy and that would increase an employee toward greater job satisfaction. In Herzberg’s mind you could not improve job satisfaction by improving any of the 10 hygiene factors; you could only improve job satisfaction by increasing the six motivators. Furthermore, the absence of the motivators would not lead to job dissatisfaction, just not job satisfaction. For example, if an employee did not have recognition or achievement this would not lead to job dissatisfaction, but they were unlikely to be motivated either. Essentially, the six motivators and ten hygiene factors were working in two different realms in affecting job attitudes. Herzberg’s concept was a radical departure from current thinking (Behling et al., 1968) and is summarized in Herzberg’s statement that, “The opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but, rather, no job satisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction” (1987, 4).

**Objective of the Study**

The prime objective of the study is to understand the relevance of Herzberg’s Theory on attitude of teachers and their job satisfaction. The study examine whether Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory has relation to teachers’ attitude and job satisfaction.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The two-factor job satisfaction theory of Herzberg et al., (1959) has affected many organizations to build opportunities for personal growth, enrichment, and recognition for their employees and that is why nowadays many managers use job promotion and entitlement techniques to motivate their employees rather than the conventional salary and benefit tools. However, in the 60’s and 70’s, many empirical studies did not support Herzberg’s et al., (1950) job satisfaction theory (e.g. Hulin, 1971; Wernimont, 1966; Korman, 1971) and some studies even criticized this theory (e.g. Locke, 1969; Locke, 1976) as impractical because distinguishing between hygiene and motivator factors is very hard as they are highly related.

In addition, Waters and Waters (1972) who performed an empirical study to support Herzberg’s two-factor theory concluded that fulfilled motivator needs have more tendencies to result in job satisfaction and that job satisfaction can be more easily predicted than job dissatisfaction. Meanwhile Kerr, Harlan, and Stogdill (1974) have claimed that Herzberg’s theory is more than an error in attributing satisfaction to motivator and dissatisfaction to hygiene factors. Some studies indicated that job satisfaction is connected with teachers’ sense of efficacy (Currall, Towler, Judge, & Kohn, 2005). Therefore, when teachers have high perception of their professional job quality, they also have positive attitudes towards teaching, as an achievement factor. As Drake (2002) assumed, teachers’ skills and effectiveness are likely to be changed over time so that providing more professional development opportunities to increase teachers’ skills and self-efficacy can be helpful to reduce the level of job stress and as a result increase satisfaction from teaching.

Cranny, Smith, and Stone tried to find out the various ways that job satisfaction was define in 1992. Their analysis, finally, help the researchers define job satisfaction as “an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to one’s job, resulting from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired (expected, deserved, and so on)”.

Contrary to many studies done, Hackman and Oldham (1980), Maslow (1954), and Herzberg et al. (1959) are pioneering studies that provoke more studies in the field. The employees’ organizations are the beneficiary of having a positive influence on work outcome such as increasing the level of job satisfaction, motivation and work effectiveness. Based on Hackman and Oldham’s results if teachers find their work meaningful or beware of results of work, their work efficiency would increase.

**Conceptual model for evaluating job satisfaction**

A conceptual model was built to visualize the interrelationships of the variables and is based upon the preceding literature review (Spencer, 1997; Vander Putten et al., 1997; Volkwein and Zhou, 2003). The model, reflecting the literature review, contains the major constructs: personal characteristics, job characteristics, perceived work environment (intrinsic and extrinsic) and job satisfaction (see Fig. 1). Variables within each construct are identified later. Overall, the conceptual model frames the three research questions driving the study: How influential are personal characteristics and job characteristics on job satisfaction of teachers? What are the greatest predictors of job satisfaction? And is Herzberg’s duality theory of motivators and hygiene factors verified in this higher education context?
Figure 1: Model for evaluating job satisfaction

The dependent variable in the model is job satisfaction which is comprised of (1) whether a job meets expectations, (2) is close to an ideal job, and (3) how satisfied a person is with their job. To conceptualize the impact on this dependent variable, the framework delineates the influence of personal characteristics on job satisfaction by addressing the impact of gender, minority-status, age, and length of service. Additionally, the effect of each of the personal characteristics is assessed on the perceived work environment dimensions. Second, the influences of job characteristics (work unit and union-status) are examined on both job satisfaction of teachers and the perceived work environment. Finally, controlling for the influence of personal and job characteristics, the conceptual model partitions the work environment dimensions into Herzberg’s motivators and hygiene factors to examine their relative influence on the outcome variable. One limitation of the model is that the effects of environmental conditions such as state policy and economic climate are not considered.
III. CONCLUSION

Herzberg’s duality theory is intriguing precisely because it is simple and general, but in this context it was not accurate in predicting a clear delineation of job satisfaction determinants of teachers. The model for job satisfaction is formulated that forgo the simplicity of Herzberg’s theory.

IV. REFERENCES


