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# BEYOND THE BASICS: UNVEILING HIDDEN GEMS IN EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

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### Abstract:

In the 21st century, employees possess a fundamentally distinct set of expectations compared to prior generations of workers. Employee satisfaction refers to the positive emotional state that employees experience towards their work, colleagues, and the overall work environment. It's essentially how content and fulfilled. Employee satisfaction is crucial to the success of an organization. Therefore, companies should focus on creating work environments that promote creativity, learning, self-expression, and autonomy to achieve self-actualization. This paper examines the importance of studying factors associated with employee satisfaction, highlighting their relationship with workplace well-being, employee development, employee retention, engagement, healthy workplaces, and trust. The surveys have six components and take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. A link to a Google Form survey was supplied to respondents. These questionnaires undergo the pilot test and were distributed to the employee of the private institutions. The IBM SPSS Statistics Software "Version 27" will be used in this study to test the validity and reliability of the instrument's items. The result of the study shows that all the independent variables influence the employee satisfaction. By understanding and prioritizing employee satisfaction, organizations can create a positive work environment that benefits everyone. Just like a well-cared-for plant, happy employees blossom and contribute to the overall success of the organization.

### Keywords:

Employee Satisfaction, Learning, Self-Actualization, Employee Development

## Introduction

Employee satisfaction is crucial to the success of an organization. As per Ostroff (1992), happy and motivated employees can provide amazing results to the company. Conversely, dissatisfied employees may feel they need to be more encouraged and could avoid work, leading to poor performance. Therefore, companies should prioritize employee satisfaction to ensure their business's success. Employees are the most significant asset to any organization since they possess the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the company's goals. They bring a wealth of experience, expertise, and knowledge to the company, which contributes to the company's success. They maintain the company's reputation, provide excellent customer service, and help develop and improve the products and services offered by the company (Sadashiva Reddy et al., 2022).

According to Mirzaee and Ghaffari (2018), knowledge and innovation are major driving forces for organizations. Employees contribute to the creation of new ideas and technologies that can help companies grow and improve their operations. By utilizing their knowledge, businesses can remain competitive and innovative, providing a solid foundation for future growth (Sadashiva Reddy et al., 2022). In "Expectations of a 21st Century Employee" by Michael Sica-Lieber (2022), it is stated that individuals desire more than just a job that provides financial stability. They seek a job that satisfies their profound existential desires, such as a sense of purpose, connection to a greater cause, and the ability to contribute to that cause without compromising their beliefs or identity. Therefore, companies should focus on creating work environments that promote creativity, learning, self-expression, and autonomy to achieve self-actualization.

Fulfilling employees' need for self-actualization satisfies their desire to fully use their abilities and helps them reach their full potential (Stoyanets, N. 2023). In summary, companies need to prioritize employee satisfaction, utilize their knowledge and expertise, and create work environments that fulfil employees' deeper needs to remain competitive, innovative, and successful in the long term. By investing in professional development programs and fostering a culture of continuous learning, organizations can empower employees to grow both personally and professionally. Additionally, recognizing and rewarding individual contributions not only enhances motivation but also strengthens loyalty and commitment to the company. Ultimately, when employees feel valued and engaged, they are more likely to contribute creatively and collaboratively, driving the organization toward greater achievements.

As conclusion, a satisfied workforce has greater potential to drive productivity and efficiency while leading to greater employee retention. Improving employee satisfaction means more than just monetary compensation but it requires the improvement of various factors that impact a person's overall well-being, engagement, and motivation

## Problem Statement

If workers are dissatisfied with their jobs, they are thought to be less productive and more prone to absenteeism and turnover. Both employees and employers care about job satisfaction (Mahamuda, 2021). This is because job satisfaction and dissatisfaction affect employee behaviour in every firm. The company's operations will suffer if most of its workers are unhappy. The organization's productivity or performance may deteriorate as a result. Management must ensure that the workplace is pleasant, morale is high, and employees have the tools they need to execute their jobs to increase employee job satisfaction (Johnson, 2020).

According to Maniram (2017), Job satisfaction evaluation is important because it might affect productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. According to the dialogue, firm employees' job satisfaction affects productivity. By giving, they will love their job more (Heneman, 2019). So, they have met their work satisfaction requirements and will now work to increase their performance.

Management can demonstrate thanks to their staff in several ways, but the results can be varied. Some employees may tolerate it, while others may feel humiliated by it (Waters et al., 2013). It is crucial to acknowledge that humans have a strong desire for acknowledgment (Colquitt et al., 2015). Over 80% of organizations in the U.S. utilize employee appreciation programs (White, 2015a). Expressing thanks to employees can reduce stress and foster a positive work environment, provided that employees perceive it as a genuine indication of their worth to the organization (Ahrens, 2016).

Employees who are motivated demonstrate higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness within the organization, especially when they receive appreciation. Conversely, employees who suffer reduced motivation and morale owing to a lack of recognition or inadequate employee appreciation are less productive (Shah & Asad, 2018). Employers can impact employee job satisfaction by utilizing external strategies, such as expressing gratitude toward staff (Pfister et al., 2020). In addition to verbal recognition, implementing structured recognition programs can further enhance employees' sense of value and belonging within the workplace. For instance, peer-to-peer recognition initiatives allow colleagues to acknowledge each other's efforts, fostering a supportive team environment. Furthermore, regular feedback and performance reviews that highlight accomplishments can reinforce positive behaviors and motivate employees to strive for excellence. By creating a culture of appreciation, organizations not only improve morale but also cultivate a more engaged workforce that is committed to achieving collective goals.

### **Research Objectives**

RO 1 To investigate the relationship between working hours and employee satisfaction.

RO 2 To investigate the relationship between working conditions and employee satisfaction.

RO 3 To investigate the relationship between salary and employee satisfaction.

RO 4 To investigate the relationship between workload and employee satisfaction.

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Job Satisfaction***

Job satisfaction is a complicated concept, and many kinds of connections may be derived from it (Alegre, Mas-Machuca & Berbegal Mirabent, 2020). It is common in the media business for workers to gain a great deal from their daily routines, and if they are dissatisfied with their jobs, the company will suffer a significant loss (Ileri, 2018). According to Markovits, Boer, and Van Dick (2015), to be successful, every company must guarantee that its workers are satisfied with their jobs. Job satisfaction is contingent on constructive interaction between employees and management, according to Javed, Balouch, and Hassan (2017). A high degree of job satisfaction demonstrates genuine passion, positive feelings, and a genuine appreciation for the profession, which results in highly emotional dedication (Sadiya & Maimunah, 2018).

Employees serve as the primary catalyst for an organization's aims and objectives (Egerová & Rotenbornová, 2021). Job satisfaction is a subjective response to the working conditions experienced by an individual (Hashim & Mahmood, 2011). It quantifies the level of job satisfaction among employees (Furnham et al., 2009). The phrases "employee satisfaction" and "job satisfaction" are frequently used synonymously (Wang, 2005). Employee job satisfaction is associated with positive attitudes and increased productivity, resulting in improved organizational performance (Petrova et al., 2020). The staff is a vital asset for any organization (Ali et al., 2021), and employee satisfaction plays a pivotal role in their capacity to carry out their responsibilities efficiently (De Clercq et al., 2019). Collective happiness is a key factor contributing to a company's ability to attain a high level of performance (Oteshova et al., 2021).

### ***Working Hours***

Maintaining a balance between work and personal life is crucial, and working hours play a vital role in it. Working hours signify the time duration for which an employee spends at work in a day or week. Overworking can lead to burnout, causing a decrease in productivity. Several studies have established a correlation between working hours and employee performance. According to Blunsdon et al., (2006:2), work-life integration is individuals successfully segmenting or integrating life and work so as to achieve a satisfying quality of life. There are many reasons for long work hours, for example, the need to earn a living, attachment to work, job commitments, job security, career advancements, an organisational, long work hours culture, an increase in workers expectations, and a growth in workload and work pressure.

### ***Working Conditions***

Working conditions refer to the surroundings and situations in which work is carried out. This involves physical elements such as safety protocols, ergonomic design, and sanitation, as well as intangible factors like company culture and maintaining a balance between work and personal life. Favourable working conditions are crucial for employee contentment and effectiveness. The work condition is something that is around employees so that it affects a person to get a sense of security, comfort, and satisfaction in doing and completing the work given by superiors (Anam, 2018).

The work condition is the entire set of tools and materials faced by the surrounding environment in which a person works, work methods, and work arrangements both as individuals and as groups (Sedarmayanti, 2012). Work conditions indicators include Lighting, Air circulation, Convenience, Layout (Sedarmayanti, 2012)

### ***Salary***

The salary obtained by the employee will affect work productivity, stability and employee work. Salary indicators include Incentives, Bonuses, Allowances, Facilities and Insurance (Badriyah, 2015). Wages is a financial reward that is paid to an employee on a regular basis, either annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly and even daily (Panggabean). The salary earned by an employee who works in an organization is an important factor in the success of achieving company goals, in addition to other factors.

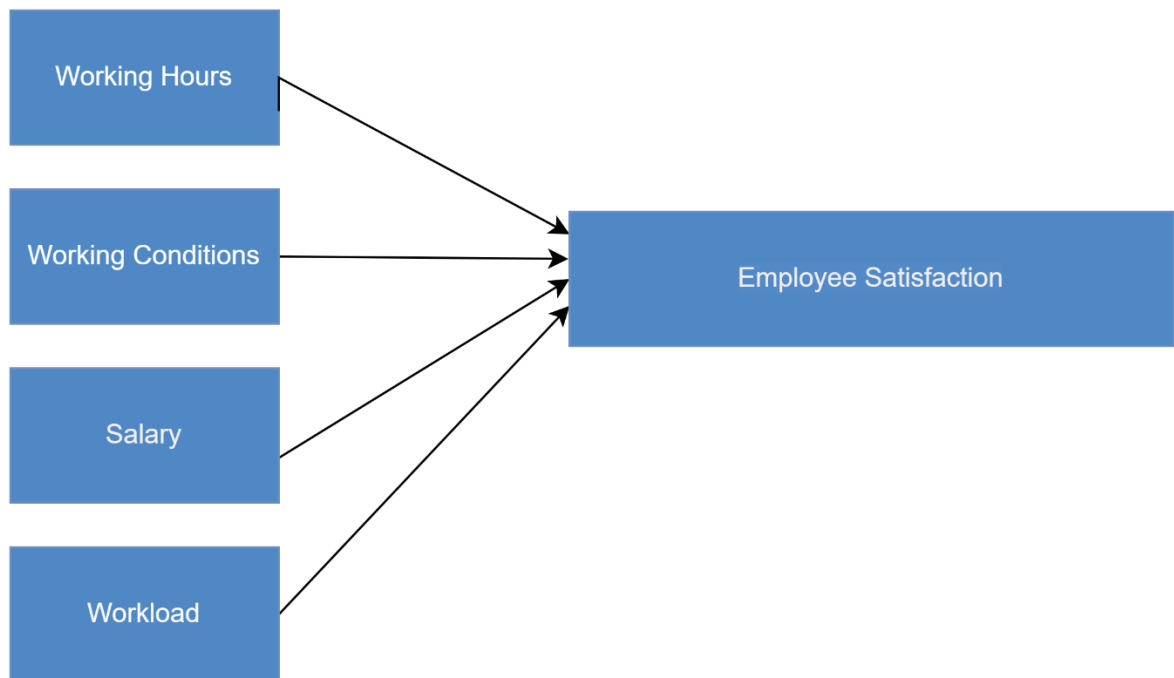
Employees are remunerated with a salary in exchange for the labour they render to an organization. It is an essential component of job fulfilment and motivation. Competitive remuneration plays a pivotal part in enticing and maintaining proficient individuals. Multiple empirical research studies have examined the relationship between income and work performance.

### **Workload**

According to Achyana (2016) states that there are two factors that affect the workload, namely external factors and internal factors. External factors are factors that come from outside the employees themselves, which consist of the tasks performed that are both physical and mental. While internal factors are factors that come from within the employees themselves, as a result of reactions to external workloads. Workload is the amount of work that must be carried out by a position/organizational unit and is the product of the work volume and the time norm

Within a specific period, workload refers to the amount of work assigned to an employee. A manageable workload is crucial for maintaining job satisfaction, preventing burnout, and allowing employees to complete their tasks efficiently.

### **Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1 – Conceptual Framework**

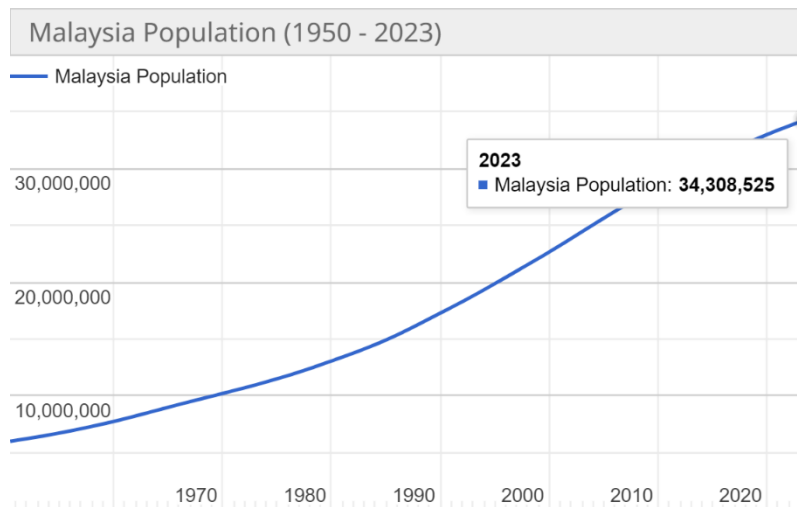
### **Research Methodology**

This study used quantitative research method for gathering and scrutinizing numerical data via surveys or questionnaires. We shall elucidate the methodology employed in utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis. In this study, the researcher interested in exploring the factors that influence employee satisfaction. Since each employee is considered a separate entity, the researcher chosen purposive sampling as the most appropriate technique. This will allow the researcher to select participants based on their relevance to the research question and ensure that the data collected is closely associated with each employee. By using purposive sampling, the researcher can control for potential sources of bias and ensure that the sample is representative of the Population being studied. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that involves selecting a sample based on the researcher's judgment and expertise. It is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective

sampling and is often used in cases where the Population being studied is difficult to define, locate, or access.

## Malaysia Population (LIVE)

# 34,432,046



**Figure 2: Malaysian Population in 2023 is 34,432,046**

### Results and Findings

This study has successfully demonstrated the substantial influence of working hours, working conditions, salary and workload on employee satisfaction. Salary emerged as the most impactful element, followed closely by working condition. Overall, the finding of the results for each variable were accepted, indicating that the pilot test was successful, and the measures used for each variable are suitable for further research.

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. A high value (close to 1.0) is a good indication that the items measure the same construct or idea. It is commonly used in social science research to measure the reliability of scales or tests.



Findings			
Items	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
Employee Satisfaction (DV)	13	0.942	Accepted
Working Hours (WH)	3	0.797	Accepted
Working Conditions (WC)	3	0.826	Accepted
Salary (S)	5	0.942	Accepted
Workload (W)	5	0.926	Accepted

**Table 1: Findings of Pilot test**

This data represents the results of a pilot test conducted using SPSS analysis on 426 respondents. The test examined five factors: Employee Satisfaction (Dependent Variable), Working Hours, Working Conditions, Salary, and Workload (Independent Variables).

**Employee Satisfaction (DV):** This dependent variable was measured using 13 items, and it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.942, which is excellent as it is close to 1. This indicates that the items used to measure Employee Satisfaction are highly reliable.

**Working Hours (IV):** This independent variable was measured using three items, and it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.797, which is also excellent. This suggests that the items used to measure Working Hours are reliable.

**Working Conditions (IV):** This independent variable was measured using three items, and it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.826, indicating the high reliability of the items used to measure Working Conditions.

**Salary (IV):** This independent variable was measured using five items, and it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.942, suggesting that the items used to measure Salary are reliable.

**Workload (IV):** This independent variable was measured using five items, and it achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.926. While this score is lower than the others, it is still considered good, indicating that the items used to measure Workload are reasonably reliable.

No	Hypothesis	T-statistics	P-value	Result
H1	There is a relationship between working hours And employee satisfaction.	-0.2010	0.045	supported
H2	There is a relationship between working Conditions And employee satisfaction.	10.602	0.000	supported
H3	There is a relationship between salaries And employee satisfaction.	11.270	0.000	supported
H4	There is a relationship between workload And employee satisfaction.	9.917	0.000	supported

**Table 2: Major Findings Of This Study**

The validation of hypothesis 1 as evidence by T-statistics of -0.2010 and a P-value of 0.045, substantiates a complex and nuanced conceptualization of the dynamics between working hours and employee satisfaction. This statistical evidence suggests a potentially inverse relationship implying that an increase in working hours does not uniformly correlate with an enhancement in employee satisfaction.

The empirical evidence supporting hypothesis 2 characterized by a T-statistics of 10.602 and a P-value of 0.000, robustly affirms the positive correlation between working conditions and employee satisfaction. This statistically significant result is consistent with a body of research.

The affirmative of hypothesis 3 as evidence by a T-statistics of 11.270 and a P-value of 0.000 significantly indicates that salary plays a crucial role in determining employee satisfaction. This finding aligns with the broader discourse within the academic literature that explore the relationship between financial remuneration and job satisfaction.

The robust empirical evidence supporting hypothesis 4 highlighted by a T-statistics of 9.917 and a P-value of 0.000, a significantly relationship between workload and employee satisfaction. It is evident that workload plays a crucial role in shaping employee satisfaction.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

As a conclusion, this study reveals a compelling narrative that each factor plays an important role, yet it is influenced by a broader constellation of variables. In addition, this study embarked on an exploratory journey in the relationships between various workplace factors for example working hours, working conditions, salary and workload and employee satisfaction. The study reaffirms the critical role of employee satisfaction in achieving an organizational success. The finding not only enrich academic discourse but also offer a practical guide for organization aiming to navigate the challenge of modern workplace.

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