

# **Job Motivation among Employees in Construction Companies in Selangor, Malaysia**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Job motivation is one of the substantial challenges faced by employees. Past studies have proved alarming impact on companies' growth due to lower levels of motivation among the workers. Since the levels of motivation affect productivity, they sway the performance of business organizations. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the critical factors influencing job motivation among employees in selected constructions companies in Selangor, Malaysia. The result showed work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are

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significantly related to job motivation. This article aims to deliver a medium among employers and employees to find common ground for the motivation levels to ensure a pleasant working environment.

**Keywords:** Motivation; construction; work-life balance; flexibility; job security; pay satisfaction

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## **1. Introduction**

Motivation is a process that starts with psychological deficiency or the need that drives employees to strive to do better with a promise of return in extrinsic form, which relates to rewards in form of salary, benefits or security or intrinsic form relates to the sense of challenge or achievement (Mullins, 1996). According to Susanna Kultalahti and Riita Liisa Viitala (2014) Job motivation defines as “a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration”. From personal understanding, job motivation is what drives employees strive to be better, and work better in terms of task or team play (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014).

Work motivation can bring alarming negative effects such as increased rate of absenteeism among employees. Hence, the organizations must ensure to motivate their employees towards achieving their mission and vision. (Abdullah, 2013). Less motivation among employees in construction industry in Malaysia, will lead to an abandonment of construction projects (ACP). Yap Eng Hoe (2013) state that ACP is considered as one

of the most common and serious problems affecting the Malaysian construction industry where it influences not only the immediate purchasers but also the project players and the public. This article focuses on selected workers in construction companies and their job satisfaction. Main objective for this research is to investigate the factors influencing job satisfaction among the employees in selected construction companies in Selangor, Malaysia. This research is important to the construction companies whereby it will help the management to realize the effects on lack of job motivation towards the company. The remainder of this paper is organised as follows: we start by looking at literature on selected variables in Section 2, while the method is described in Section 3. The results are described in Section 4 and Section 5 concludes.

## **2. Review on Selected Variables**

### *2.1 Work-life balance*

Kultalahti and Riita Liisa Viitala (2014) define work life balance as where work that should apparently not take over one's life. This shows how work-life balance influences the job motivation and work performance. The lack of work-life balance influence employees' health and wellbeing which is affected by factors such as work stress, degree of job control and conflict between work and life (Zheng et al.,2015). Work-life balance means the harmonious interface between different life domains. It

emphasizes on concept of a person resources such as time, energy and money, to have both satisfaction in personal life as well as performing well upon delivering excellent result (Koubova & Buchko, 2013). In addition, work-life balance is a relationship between employee and employer where it strikes the right balance between the two of them. Achieving the balance requires factors such as employees should be open about their needs and be transparent about it and to have an open dialogue with their employer or manager. Adding to being open with each other, balance can never be achieved without the respect on boundaries (Cincotta, 2016).

## *2.2 Flexibility at work*

Flexibility at work or flexi-time improves employees' attendance and performance as it provides control over the employees' working environment. In addition, flexible working contributes to employees' happiness and positivism (Atkinson & Hall, 2011). According to Dirk Hofacker and Stefanie Konig (2013) flexibility at work place is beneficial for both employee and employers as they have the option to care of their family. Furthermore, flexibility in terms of working hours including shift work, non-Monday to Friday schedules, work on call, and location of work influence the individuals' motivation in working environment. Sussanna Shagvaliyeva and Rashad Yazdanifard (2013) echoed this by saying flexibility at work place benefits women more, as work flexibility does not only implies on

variation in time and place of the job, but also career breaks in terms of maternity leaves. Flexi-time offers convenience in planning, not in reducing the working time. Thus, flexibility in work might be summarized as the ability of employees to control their working time duration as well as location of work which many prefer to conduct their work at home or outside of the office (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Adding to flexi-time as define by Lou Lu (2011) reveals that flexibility is the most important factor to influence job motivation that leads to job satisfaction which also brings large effects on family and social commitment. Therefore, taking into careful consideration on employee individual needs and desires effects on the arrangement of flexible working time (Lu, 2011). Flexible working time appears to be the most valued management privilege as according to Vathsala Wickramasinghe (2012) flexible work as a form of contributory support received formally through organisational advantages to lessen job stress that can create more positive working environment (Wickramasinghe, 2012).

### *2.3 Job security*

Job security is an assurance for the employee where it is about the continuity of employment. Job security usually arises from the terms of the contract of employment, collective bargaining agreement, or labour legislation that prevents random termination and layoffs. (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). According

to Ali Bassam Mahmoud and William D. Reisel (2014) security is a need which relates to the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. It describes that the employees' job position in the company is secure. Hence, employees are not facing termination any time soon and this contributes to job motivation (Mahmoud & Reisel, 2014).

Furthermore, Fazil Senol (2011) state that it is a part of external motivators among employees as job security plays an important role in both social and working life, as it helps people not to concern about their future, provides sustaining labour peace, increasing organizations' productivity and keeping social balance and values. Therefore, job security is one of the most substantial variables of employee satisfaction which states the overall attitudes of the employees towards their job and it also contributes to the way of achieving organizational aims. The concept of job security has arisen with the goal of guaranteeing steadiness of employment and avoiding arbitrary/random terminations (Senol, 2011).

#### *2.4 Pay satisfaction/reward*

Pay satisfaction comes in many forms and one of it is by giving bonuses to the employee. Bonuses are given to the workers based on their performance and how much efforts they have contributed to the company. According to Ayuninnisa Rizqi N. and Saptoto Ridwan (2015), since the beginning of the concept of pay satisfaction, there have been some arguments and studies

improving this concept until a concept of its dimensions developed. The researchers believe that pay level is a dimension of pay satisfaction. Later, it was found that besides pay level, there are other causes contribute to pay satisfaction, namely benefits and pay raise. The two dimensions together affect pay satisfaction level (Rizqi N & Ridwan, 2015).

However Jonathan C. Shrader and Luke Singer (2014) determine pay satisfaction as a question on how companies consent about incentivizing talents of their employees where one of the key aspects is by compensation. Even more of a driving factor of pay satisfaction, it starts off with the assumption that pay satisfaction is multidimensional with four dimensions consisting of benefits, level, raises and structure/administration (Shrader & Singer, 2014). Jai Prakash Sharma and Naval Bajpai (2011) describe salary as a form of periodic payment from an employer to an employee. It is weighed in with piece wages, while each job, hour or other component is paid separately, rather than on a periodic basis. From the point of view of running a business, pay satisfaction can also be observed as an important reward to motivate the performance of employees. All other behavioural factors are important for enhancing job satisfaction of employees but satisfaction from pay is a must (Sharma & Bajpai, 2011).

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Research Design*

In this study, a sample of 60 workers consisting of 30 male and 30 female from Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd, Perunding Eagles Engineers and Pure Projects Management Sdn Bhd are selected. This proportion is selected in a balance gender to reduce bias in the analysis. Employees come from various position.

#### *3.2 Method of Data Selection*

Stratified sampling has been used in this study. An efficient sample can be collected with this sampling method. The sample replicates the population exactly on the basis of the criterion used for stratification. Each stratum has an equal size which is 30 samples for male and 30 samples for female. A simple random sampling is used to collect the data for each stratum means that in each stratum will have an identical chance of being included in the sample.

#### *3.3 Technique Used*

Data is gathered by distributing the questionnaire. Closed ended question is used whereby the respondents have specific limited alternative response and they are asked to choose the closest response to their own opinion. Self-administered questionnaire is used where the respondents take the responsibility for reading

and answering the questions. This exercise encourages more objective compare to other methods. In addition, it is also fast and easy to gather information from respondent.

4. Results

4.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression assumes all variables have a normal distribution. Distribution of variables that are not normal (highly skewed or kurtosis variables or variables with substantial outliers) can affect relationships and significant test.

Table 1. Model summary for multiple regression analysis.

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.691 <sup>a</sup>	.478	.467	.35545	2.014

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pay Satisfaction, Work life balance, Flexibility Work, Job Security

b. Dependent Variable: Job Motivation

The model summary in table 1 is an analysis between the dependent variable (Job Motivation) and the independent variables (Job Security, Work-life Balance, Flexibility at Work and Pay Satisfaction). The key factor in this summary that can give further interpretation is the R square and the Durbin-Watson value. R-square explains the total variation in the dependent variable with usage of the independent variable (Hamilton, 2015). The data is a perfectly linear model when the R squared is equals to 1.0, moreover, when R squared is less than 1.0 shows

that some variability in the data failed to be describe by the model. R-square value for this research is 0.478 which can also be understood as 47.8% of the overall variation of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. On the other hand, the Durbin-Watson values in between 1 to 3 indicate that there is no autocorrelation. Hence, autocorrelation is absent in this study as the Durbin-Watson value is 2.014.

Table 2. Regression Coefficient of Multi Linear Regression Analysis of a Dependent Variable and Independent Variables.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.388	.283		4.902	.000		
Work life balance	.097	.034	.156	2.841	.005	.893	1.120
Flexibility Work	.461	.059	.517	7.774	.000	.606	1.651
Job Security	.142	.058	.192	2.456	.015	.439	2.276
Pay Satisfaction	-.047	.076	-.042	-.614	.540	.576	1.736

The significant value was used to determine whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected. When the significance value is less than or equal to 0.05, the value is significant therefore rejects the null hypothesis. There are three independent variables with significance value less than or equal to 3 which is work-life balance (0.005), flexibility at work (0.000) and job security (0.015). However, pay satisfaction with value 0.540 is more than

0.05 therefore fail to reject null hypothesis. Based on the table above, the equation of the research can be derived with the results achieved by the multiple regression analysis.

Job Motivation = 1.388 + 0.097 (Work-life balance) + 0.461 (Flexibility at work) + 0.142 (Job security) – 0.047 (Pay Satisfaction).

According to the equation, work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are positively related with job motivation. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to analyse the severity of multicollinearity in the model. Based on theory, the accumulated VIF should be less than 10 in order to conclude that there is no multicollinearity. Based from the table above, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for this model is 6.783 and can be concluded that multicollinearity is absent.

## **5. Conclusion**

The findings of this study can perform as medium for the employers and employees to determine the level of motivation in order to enhance company's growth. Based on the findings, company can plan for the effective strategy to become more competitive. This information may influence employee absenteeism, productivity and staff turnover. Work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are the most significance to job motivation among employee. In addition, the result showed that there is no significance difference between the job motivation and pay satisfaction. This finding is the same with

Claude Ferneta et al. (2012) research, which state that job motivation may differ reliant on the working environment. In an autonomy-supportive environment, which raises motivation, individuals assume that they have the rights to choose and to make decisions and that they are supported in their work by their superior. Employees who assume that their supervisor adopts autonomy-supportive behaviours demonstrate greater job satisfaction and higher psychological well-being than those who feel controlled by their supervisor. This shows that to some of the employees, pay satisfaction (reward, monetary, salary, bonuses) does not bring a huge impact towards motivation rather than the rights to choose and to make decisions. Furthermore, due to the time and resources, the researcher decided to conduct a small scale of 60 respondents from employees on various construction firms in Malaysia. This mean that the number of respondents may not be strong enough to fully represent the majority of employees in the construction industry in Malaysia. Thus, for future studies, researchers can conduct a comparative analysis among each of the construction firms to achieve more appropriate results. Also a longer span of time can be conducted to eliminate the time constraint that can result in more reliable findings.

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