

Job Satisfaction among College Student Volunteers

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Abstract

Job Satisfaction is an important element to attract college student's involvement in volunteer clubs. Most studies have looked at job satisfaction of employees and volunteers in developed countries and few studies of job satisfaction done for volunteers in developing countries. This study aims to survey job satisfaction among college student volunteers in Malaysia. A cross sectional survey was conducted among 310 college student volunteers from four regions of peninsular Malaysia. The participants were selected using stratified multistage sampling. Job satisfaction was measured using Job Descriptive Index (JDI). Results of the study revealed that job satisfaction in terms of colleague, leader/leadership, tasks, opportunities for promotion and overall job satisfaction were from moderate to high level. Mean for job satisfaction toward colleague was 43.16 (s.d = 6.63), leader/leadership 41.45 (s.d = 10.19), tasks 41.04 (s.d = 6.07), opportunities for promotion 33.26 (s.d = 10.88) and overall job satisfaction 158.90 (s.d = 25.55). Job satisfaction toward colleague was the highest mean meanwhile opportunities for promotion was the lowest. The implication of college student volunteer's systems and practices are discussed.

Keywords: college student, job satisfaction, volunteers, volunteerism

1. Introduction

Volunteerism gets recognition all over the world due to its importance and impact to the community. The government of Malaysia also put high concerns with the volunteerism and includes the value in Malaysian national education policies. Realizing the importance of volunteerism among college students, the government provides special grants for them to organize volunteering activities.

Instead of the positive outcomes of volunteerism, it is a dilemma for people in the developing countries to engage in volunteerism as their socio-economic status is unstable. People work to earn money is priority to fulfill their daily needs. The same thing goes to the college students as majority of them coming from poor family. In addition, they have to pay fees for their study. As a mechanism to cater such this matter, it is good to attract people's attention to engage in volunteering activities using psychological approach. People engage in activities not only for the sake of money but also to fulfill their psychological needs. Therefore, it is important to know why there are volunteers in developing countries. What are the psychological aspects that attract them to involve in volunteer clubs. Past literature shows that job satisfaction is important for the volunteers' commitment. However, volunteerism research and publication in Malaysia gets little attention (Chek Mat, 2004; Nazilah, Fauziah & Rozmi, 2014; Siti Nazilah, Fauziah & Rozmi, 2012a; Siti Nazilah, Fauziah & Rozmi, 2012b; Turiman Suandi, 1991) and information about level of job satisfaction among college student volunteers is unknown.

Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology defines job satisfaction as an overall feeling and evaluation of work. Someone who has high job satisfaction will experience positive emotions when they think about his work (Rogelberg, 2007). Meanwhile, Frederick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow state that job satisfaction is caused by individuals' desires to fulfill individual needs. Besides, job satisfaction is defined as a reaction on the job in terms of evaluation, cognition and affection and a fulfillment of someone needs (Baron & Branscombe, 2014). Based on Herzberg's theory (2010), there are two categories of factors, causes of

satisfaction and causes of dissatisfaction which influence job attitude. One set of factors is referred to as hygiene, referencing external circumstances that affect job satisfaction and the other set is motivational, referring to internal factors within a worker.

Job satisfaction has been discussed in many different contexts in the fields of psychology, sociology, human resource management, organizational behavior and volunteers (Chek Mat, 2004; Nelson, Hooker, DeHart, Edwards, & Lanning, 2004; Siti Nazilah et al., 2012b). Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) reported that 64.5 million people of U.S. population volunteered at least once from September 2011 to September 2012. However, turnover among volunteer presents a significant problem for nonprofits (Scherer, Allen & Harp, 2016). It seems crucial to provide volunteers not only with a direct interest but also to ensure their satisfaction in order to enhance their recruitment (Luzurier, Damm, Lion, Pellerin, & Tavolacci, 2015). Results showed that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between perceived investment in employee development and intention to stay for both volunteers and paid employees (Fallon & Rice, 2015).

Findings supported the relationship between satisfaction and organizational commitment among volunteers. Job satisfaction mediates the effects of organizational commitment, job involvement, perceived organizational support and motivation. Satisfaction with supervisors was identified as main predictors of intention to leave (Burakova, Ducourneau, Gana, & Dany, 2014). Besides, job satisfaction has direct effect on organizational commitment behavior (Chih, Yang, & Chang, 2012). Explainable variance for the prediction of job involvement from a combination of participation frequency, on-job training, achievement orientation and job satisfaction was 33.6% (Li, Lin, & Chen, 2007). Job satisfaction positively influenced intention and it acted as a full mediator in the relationship between intrinsic motivation and intention to continue volunteering (Luzurier, Damm, Lion, Pellerin, & Tavolacci, 2015).

Bennett & Barkensjo (2005) found strong connection between job satisfaction and a volunteer's personal commitment to providing high-quality services in a helping and caring charitable organization. Other related studies of volunteer satisfaction and commitment found that job satisfaction was the predictor of intention to remain (Galindo-Kuhn & Guzley, 2001). Starnes & Wymer (2001) points out that people continue volunteering their services when they experience job satisfaction such as finding it is interesting and challenging, experiencing new learning opportunities, allowing for independence and achieving personal or professional growth. A study among social work volunteers also found that satisfaction would be the best predictors of service duration (Chacon & Vecina, 2007).

Other study found life satisfaction of volunteers was negatively related to burnout (Jimenez, Fuertes & Abad, 2010). A Study among volunteers serving victims of sexual assault found overall satisfaction was positively related to the intention to stay (Hellman & House, 2006). Similar outcome has been reported by Macdonald, Kontopantelis, Bower, Kennedy & Reeves (2009) that overall satisfaction was a predictor of intention to continue tutoring in a new public health workforce in the United Kingdom. Chacon, Sueiro & Barron (2011) reported volunteer satisfaction was the key variable in explaining intention to continue in samples of volunteers from different non-profit organizations.

However, most studies have done in developed countries and overseas. This study extends the prior research to the developing country, particularly Malaysian context. Besides, volunteerism studies are highly recommended for the development of volunteerism in Malaysia (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2013 & Ministry of Youth & Sports Malaysia, 2013). This study aims; (1) to measure the level of job satisfaction among Malaysian college student volunteers; (2) to identify the dominant factor of job satisfaction.

2. Method

A cross sectional survey was conducted among 310 college student volunteers from four regions of peninsular Malaysia (east coast, west coast, north & south). The participants were selected using stratified multistage sampling. Questionnaires were distributed and completed by the participants in four selected venues. Out of the 310 respondents, 68.4% per cent were females and their mean age were 21.86 years. The average of their involvement in the current volunteer club were 13.55 months.

Job satisfaction was measured using Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Smith, Kendall, & Hullin, 1969). The JDI consists of 63 items that are rated on a numerical value to "Yes", "No" and "undecided/Unsure" responses. Aspects of job satisfaction addressed are: task, leader/ leadership, opportunities for promotion and co-volunteers. Reliability of all constructs were high. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for overall job satisfaction instrument (.81), task (.80), opportunities for promotion (.80), leader/leadership (.84), co-volunteers (.88). Back-to-back translation method was done by professionals as the original scale was in English.

3. Results and Discussion

Results showed that the average level of overall job satisfaction and all subscales were from moderate to high level. The level of job satisfaction towards colleagues had recorded the highest mean. Followed by the level of job satisfaction towards leader/leadership, tasks and opportunities for promotion. (Table 1)

Table 1. Level of job satisfaction among Malaysian college student volunteers

Scale/Subscales	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job satisfaction towards colleagues	43.16	6.63
Job satisfaction towards leader/leadership	41.45	10.19
Job satisfaction towards tasks	41.04	6.07
Job satisfaction towards opportunities for promotion	33.26	10.88
Overall job satisfaction	158.90	25.55

n = 310

The findings also showed majority of respondents (81.9 %) satisfied with their co-volunteers. Only 18.1 per cent were less satisfied and none of them dissatisfied with their co-volunteers. More than half of respondents (69.7 %) satisfied with their leader/leadership. Meanwhile 26.8 per cent less satisfied and 3.5 per cent dissatisfied with their leader/leadership. Besides, 77.4 per cent of respondents satisfied with their tasks, 22.6 per cent were less satisfied and none of them were dissatisfied with their tasks. More than half of respondents (54.5 %) less satisfied with opportunities for promotion, 35.2 percent were satisfied and 10.3 per cent were dissatisfied with the opportunities for promotion. The results found that majority of respondents (97.7 %) satisfied with the overall of job satisfaction. Only 2.3 per cent less satisfied and none of them were dissatisfied with the overall of job satisfaction.

The results of this study showed that job satisfaction was important to attract attention of college students to involve in volunteer clubs. Various aspects of job satisfaction also should be considered to attract more attention and interest. Meanwhile, satisfaction towards co-volunteers/colleagues plays an important role to sustain their commitment. In the developing countries, money becomes a priority needs. However, this study tells us that the fulfillment of psychological aspect is also important. Job satisfaction particularly satisfaction towards colleague is an instrument to attract college student's involvement in volunteer clubs. College students not only depends on material or incentive such as money and so forth. These mean in certain circumstances, psychological needs can take over the priority of human basic needs. Even though there are hierarchical orders of human needs and money represents as a basic needs but the urges to fulfill psychological needs do not determined by the fulfillment of basic needs in total.

Despite of the contribution of this study, there is a limitation of external validity. The data of this study only based on Malaysian college student volunteers. Therefore, it is worthwhile to extend the data across other developing countries with different cultures.

4. Conclusions

There are theoretical and practical importance in this study. The findings support the Herzberg's Two - Factor Theory (2010) that satisfaction can encourage someone to generate positive attitudes. It means that satisfaction is also important to develop a student college volunteer. This study also fill the knowledge's gap of college student volunteers especially in the developing country and Malaysia context. People works for money to certain extends and they also engage in certain activities to fulfil their psychological needs such as satisfaction. Besides, the results provide valuable information particularly for professionals who work in student affairs and development division of higher public educations. It is important to understand and recognize the role of job satisfaction to develop college student volunteers. Therefore, they should facilitate and include job satisfaction in volunteer clubs to attract and to sustain college student involvement in volunteer clubs. Related officers and advisors in universities should include the element of job satisfaction in their systems and management. The researchers suggest to do similar study to other developing countries to survey the trends as well as a comparison study of job satisfaction between college student volunteers in developed and developing countries.

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