

The Influence Of Individual Characteristics And Job Characteristics On Vocational School Teachers' Job Satisfaction In Province Of North Sumatera

Eka Daryanto, Syaiful Sagala¹ and M. Badiran²

¹Department of Mechanical Engineering Education, Faculty of Engineering, ²Department of Management Education, Post Graduate, State University of Medan, Medan, Indonesia

Abstract: *This study explores the relationship between individual characteristics, job characteristics with job satisfaction of teachers in vocational schools at the Province of North Sumatera, Indonesia. The sample size of this study was obtained using the proportional random sampling which further resulting a total number of 166 teachers who were found having the expected qualification in Mechanical Engineering subject. The hypotheses tests based on the path analysis on the research model revealed that individual characteristics and job characteristics. The results showed that : 1) Individual characteristics directly affect the job satisfaction of vocational teachers in North Sumatera, and 2). Job characteristics directly affect the job satisfaction of teachers of vocational schools in North Sumatera.*

Keywords: *Individual Characteristics, Job Characteristics, Job Satisfaction, Vocational School Teacher's*

I. Introduction

As the educator, a teacher plays an important role in building and developing students' intellectual capacity for their future needs. As this young generation will take the lead to continue the development of the nation, providing them with a high-quality learning process must be taken into consideration by respective bodies in the relevant government structure. Accordingly, the capability of teacher, like any other profession, needs to be continuously upgraded to fit with the most current condition and stakeholders' needs, hence reserving them with a pride as an educator. They will also grant a respect from the stakeholders valuing the teacher's professional job as a connerstone in the development of a nation.

Hence, the description illustrates that the work of teachers is a collection of daily activity is done in order to achieve educational goals. Teachers are required to work with to provide the best service to students, parents, and community. One of the factors that support teachers to work with the best is job satisfaction. The job satisfaction has been a pivotal issue in defining the organizational effectiveness. It reflects an individual feelings' towards work that affects both the individual's and organization performances (Locke, 1976).

The vocational school atmosphere is a unique condition as this is the place where various social interests are integrated. The characteristic of this social interactions also varies across educational levels, from elementary to post-graduate, or educational systems.

The arguments to decide which side to be more emphasized have been remained unsolved (Hanushek et al., 2011; Covers et al., 2010). For instances, such schools establish their particular role in different societies. In a more details, these authors illustrate that the Germany's system – which involves fully vocational schools as well as those mixing vocational and general education – is highly regarded and consisted over half of the country's upper secondary students. In other countries, however, vocational schools serve as markers of a students' lower socioeconomic status: in Hungary, 54% of pupils in vocational schools were from the bottom socioeconomic quartile, and in South Korea the figure is 52%. In other countries still, these schools are simply treated as a last port for students who are unable to succeed in more academic environments. As the consequence, these phenomena underline the creativity of the teachers involved within particular educational systems to maintain the broader success of their students.

The Indonesian education system has also faced quite challenges in equipping the students for the succesfullness of their further academic paths. In particular, Hendayana et al. (2010) highlight the disproportion number of qualified teachers between secondary schools (including vocational schools) and primary schools as one of the major concern affecting the low quality in the teaching process. Accordingly, Daniel (2013) emphasizes that the importance on teachers' training to improve teachers' performances to strengthening the teaching and learning process in theactual classrooms. Thus, it will further create the dynamic growth and elevate the knowledge index of local students in the Asian region.

As mentioned earlier, job dissatisfaction among teachers, if not addressed seriously, will further affect the education of the young generation. To the best of the author's knowledge, very limited studes have been demonstrated the influence of individual characteristic, job characteristic, and career development on job

satisfaction of educational workers, particularly on teachers in the vocational schools. Given the importance of the study, this research aims to analyze the influence of individual characteristic, job characteristic, and career development on the job satisfaction of vocational school teachers in the Province of Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. This study provides significant insights resulted from different type of organization extensifying the important of valuing individual characteristic, job characteristic, and career development to increase job satisfaction of vocational school teachers

II. Material and Methods

The sampling frame used in this study was obtained from the Directorate of Elementary Teachers Education (Direktorat Pembinaan Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan Pendidikan Menengah, 2012) focusing on total number of vocational school teachers from state and private vocational schools in the Province of North Sumatera, Indonesia. The population of this study was all teachers who are specialized on the subject of Mechanical Engineering Skills amounting 238 teachers in total. The sample size of this study was gathered based on the proportional random sampling which further resulting a total number of 166 teachers who were found having the expected qualification.

For the purpose of data collection, a questionnaire was developed as the main instrument of this study and distributed to all samples. All of items questioned within the instruments were constructed relevant to research objectives, research questions, and literature review references. The research questionnaires consist of number of Likert-scaled queries following the four variables within this study: individual characteristics, job characteristics and job satisfaction.

To test the hypotheses, this study used a path analysis method. According to Asher (1983), the path analysis approach is suitable to determine the magnitude and significance of the causal relationship between the observed variables (see Figure 1. Research Framework). The author also underline that the path analysis is more powerful to measure the causal relationship using the mediating variable(s) in a single model without segregating several regression testings. The testing result will estimate the structure of the main path from the independent variable(s) to a dependent variable. The main path will be indicated from a standardized regression coefficient, demonstrating whether there is a direct effect or indirect effect occurred within the research model. ASpecht's Goodness of Fit Estimate was used to examine that the model fits the data based upon how well the model reproduces the observed correlation matrix (Specht, 1975). The author suggests a perfect fit would give a Q of one; less than perfect fits yield Q's less than one.

III. Theory

Extant literature suggests that individual job satisfaction is determined by individual characteristic, and job characteristic (see for example Monis and Sreedhara, 2011; Franěk and Večeřa (2010), Said and Munaf, 2010; Samad (2006), Hackman and Oldham, 2005; 1975; Chen et al., 2004; Hickson and Oshagbemi, 1999). The basic premise of the relationship between individual characteristic, and job characteristic, with job satisfaction is derived from the trait and factor theory highlighting that the individual is different, and their different capacities may influence their professional occupations (Patton and McMahon, 2006). Furthermore, Brown (1990) also emphasize that the decision on an occupation from an individual involves the individual desire and expectation on the job thus can make his/her performance become satisfactory. According to Sharf (1992) in Patton and McMahon (2006, p.17), traits are determined by individual characteristics and factors are measured by particular expectation required by an individual to achieve his/her successful job performances. In this study, traits are determined by Individual Characteristics and Job Characteristics. And these traits and factors variables' are partially and simultaneously influence Job Satisfaction.

Implementation of development job characteristics in educational institutions will be able to increase the job satisfaction of teachers because he thinks his job is very meaningful. This happens because: (1) teachers are empowered to have a level of skill variation, task identity and task significance peker-jaan would assume they mean, (2) a high degree of autonomy that would evoke a sense of responsibility towards teachers greater job and (3) when provided adequate feedback, a teacher will develop an understanding of the role and functions useful they are better. Furthermore, a sense of significance, responsibility and understanding of the work will affect job satisfaction. Thus, the greater the levels of the five characteristics of the tasks in a job, the greater the likelihood that teachers will be more motivated and feel satisfaction in carrying out the work personally on the results of his work during assigned in school.

The Individual Characteristics variable is extracted from Hackman and Oldham theory of job characteristic which focusing on personal characteristics that determine their job motivations (Hackman and Oldham, 2005; 1975). Previous studies from Franěk and Večeřa (2010), and Hickson and Oshagbemi (1999) reveal that personal characteristics such as age, tenure, gender, educational level, and strong work ethics of an individual are factors that influence individual perceiveness on his/her job satisfaction.

The job characteristics model has been used as a platform for managers in designing jobs that will further satisfy the individual needs (Said and Munaf, 2010). The authors also highlight that job characteristic proxies of the Hackman and Oldham's consisting of autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance influence the job satisfaction. When employers are suited with the appropriate autonomy, relevant feedback, sufficient skill variety, clear task identity and significance; they will be more firm psychologically. Thus, it is important for employees being occupied with these characteristics as it will affect their perceiveness on the job they are attached with, increasing their responsibly and significantly enhancing their vision on every task they should be working (Fried and Ferris, 1987; Hackman and Oldham, 1974). Furthermore, the employee will be more satisfied with their job and in turn, it will reduce the employee absenteeism and turnover (Said and Munaf, 2010).

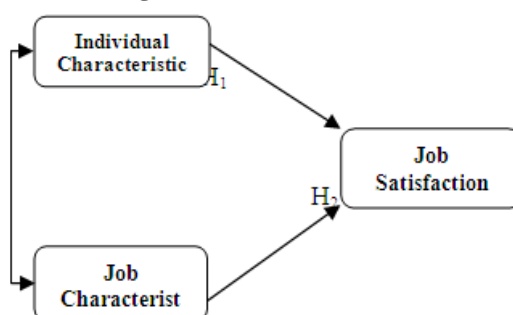
However, in conducting their educating duties, the teachers face many challenges that influence their efforts in achieving the objectives as earlier mentioned. These challenges are vary among educators which also influenced by particular factors coming from both internal and external conditions of the teacher (Porter, 1989). More specifically, according to Seniwoliba (2013), Filak and Sheldon (2003), Tietjen and Myers (1998); factors related to the individual psychological condition e.g. individual satisfaction, work condition, pride, and motivation are considered as the determinants for internal factors of individual to maximize their performance. Externally, the teachers' job satisfaction can be reflected in the work-place condition, the social-relationship among the teacher, colleagues and stakeholders, and the provision of job-related training that beneficial to maintain teacher's professionalism (Leithwood, 2006).

The school atmosphere is a unique condition as this is the place where various social interests are integrated. The characteristic of this social interactions also varies across educational levels, from elementary to post-graduate, or educational systems, between general and vocational schools. The arguments to decide which side to be more emphasized have been remained unsolved (Hanushek et al., 2011; Covers et al., 2010). For instances, such schools establish their particular role in different societies. In a more details, these authors illustrate that the Germany's system – which involves fully vocational schools as well as those mixing vocational and general education – is highly regarded and consisted over half of the country's upper secondary students. In other countries, however, vocational schools serve as markers of a students' lower socioeconomic status: in Hungary, 54% of pupils in vocational schools were from the bottom socioeconomic quartile, and in South Korea the figure is 52%. In other countries still, these schools are simply treated as a last port for students who are unable to succeed in more academic environments. As the consequence, these phenomena underline the creativity of the teachers involved within particular educational systems to maintain the broader success of their students.

As described in the previous section, the basic premise of this study underlines that individual characteristic, and job characteristic, on job satisfaction of educational workers, particularly on teachers in the vocational schools. It is derived from the trait and factor theory complemented with the Hackman and Oldham's job characteristic models to further rationalize the research framework of this study. If there are aspects of the job characteristics can be met by each teacher then so they will feel satisfied with his work. So it can be assumed that the characteristics of the job are one of the strategic factors that may affect the job satisfaction of teachers.

The influence of individual characteristics consisting of age, years of service, level of education, gender and work ethic on job satisfaction may occur because teachers carry out the work according to his ability, level of education, as well as the work experience that impact on teachers' skills and abilities to do the job with well that will accelerate the achievement of the goals of the school. Based on the description, the characteristics of strong individuals can encourage a person to behave in the work that will have an impact on job satisfaction of teachers. Figure 1 provides a visualization of the relationship between individual characteristic and job characteristic with job satisfaction.

Figure 1 Research Model



For the purpose to explain the objective of study set earlier on, this study develops two major hypotheses focusing on the direct relationship between all independent variables (individual characteristics and job characteristics) and job satisfaction. The overall hypotheses are described as follows:

- Hypothesis 1. The individual characteristics directly influence the job satisfaction.
 Hypothesis 2. The job characteristics directly influence the job satisfaction.

IV. Results

Based on the theoretical perspective earlier mentioned, this study expects that personal characteristics and job characteristics are determinant factors of the teachers' job satisfaction in vocational schools in the Province of North Sumatera Utara. Before conducting hypothesis testings, we examined bivariate correlation between two different variables and the results are in-line with the hypothesized relationships (see Table 1). Accordingly, path coefficients in the path analytical method are extracted using Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation (see figure 2).

Table 1 Path Coefficient and significance levels for initial model

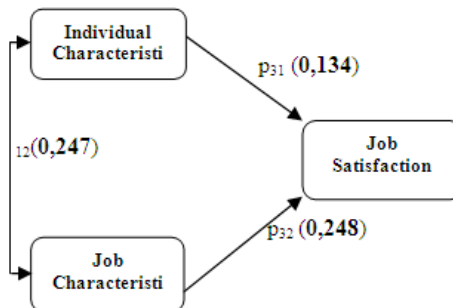
Hypothesis	Correlation Coefficient	Path Coefficient
1	0,389	0,134*
2	0,581	0,248*

*Significance at the 0.001 level (2-tailed)

The results from hypotheses tests reveal that all hypotheses ($H_1 - H_2$) are accepted. In a more detail, the results indicate that:

- 1- Individual Characteristics directly influence Job Satisfaction ($p=0.134$, significant at 0.001)
- 2- Job Characteristics directly influence Job Satisfaction ($p=0.134$, significant at 0.001)

Figure 2 The Result of Path Analysis Model



V. Discussion

The results of hypotheses tests indicates that Individual Characteristics and Job Characteristics partially (as well as simultaneously) influence Teachers' Job Satisfactions in Vocational Schools in the Province of North Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. In brief, the findings of this study reinforce the enactment Expectancy theories and models that have made Porter & Lawler (Mullins), Feldman and Arthur (1983), in explaining individual characteristics influence on job satisfaction of teachers. Means that if the individual characteristics are developed as expected tend to lead to job satisfaction. Implicitly this study's findings also reinforce the enactment of need fulfillment theory, and the equity theory. This implies that teacher job satisfaction depends on whether or not the requirements are met as well as whether there is justice in the working conditions in schools. These findings are consistent with the results of research conducted by Okpara (2001) and Koustelios (2004) which states that the effect of individual characteristics on job satisfaction.

The results of hypotheses tests indicate that Job Characteristics partially (as well as simultaneously) influence Teachers' Job Satisfactions in Vocational Schools in the Province of North Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. In brief, the results of this study support the empirical facts encountered in the field indicates that the variable characteristics of the work through a policy of giving full authority by the leadership of the teachers to make their own decisions on its work, the division has been able to fulfill the task of teaching the principles of justice provide a sense of satisfaction at the discretion of the leadership of the results obtained above teaching and research work as well as hard work without the supervision of the leadership and efforts to improve its own performance created a direct influence on the improvement of teacher job satisfaction. It was found that the most important factor of job characteristics that greatly affect the improvement of teachers' job satisfaction is an attitude of leadership in helping to resolve any problems faced by the teachers' work and immediate feedback

factor of the achievements that have been achieved where most of the teachers felt the attitude of the leadership that takes into account the assessment and awards to teachers who excel as the biggest factor contributing to the positive direct effect significant variables and job characteristics on job satisfaction of teachers in North Sumatra.

In general, the overall findings also consistent, Franěk and Večeřa (2010), Samad (2006), Chen et al. (2004), Ellickson, M.C. (2002) and, Hickson and Oshagbemi (1999) studies highlighting that individual demographic, job characteristics variables are considered as significant determinants for employees' job satisfaction. It can be concluded that the larger the gap within the teachers' individual characteristics, and job characteristics; the higher the levels of both job dissatisfaction and yet resulting the higher level of job turnover intentions. Accordingly, the findings of this study confirm the traits and factor theory highlighting the differences in individual preferences and capacities that influence their perception on the satisfactory of their professional occupations (Patton and McMahon, 2006; Brown, 1990). Traits are signified from the internal attributes of individual characteristics, and Factors are derived from external drives as reflected in job characteristics and career development. The results of this study which found that job characteristics include task significance, task identity, task variation, autonomy and feedback effect on job satisfaction of teachers, supported by research Kahan Na-Nan and Peerapong Pukkeeree (2013), Olorunsola (2012), Morris and Venkatesh (2010), Scott et al. (2005), Thomas, A., Buboltz, W.C and Winkelspecht, C.S (2004), Jansen, et al. (1996), which states that the characteristics of the job shown to affect the job satisfaction.

VI. Conclusions

The results of this study are ; 1) Individual characteristics directly affect the job satisfaction of vocational teachers in North Sumatra, and 2). Job characteristics directly affect the job satisfaction of teachers of vocational schools in North Sumatra. The findings from this study also underline the importance on minimizing the gap among personal characteristics and improving the clarity of job assigned relevant to teachers' competencies through proper and continuous career development. Thus, it can maximize teachers' commitment and motivation to achieve the goals of their respective educational institution. Respectively, it will also assist the accomplishment of the general objectives of national educational system.

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