

The Relationship between Leadership, Quality of Working Life, Compensation, and Welfare Affecting Job Satisfaction of Hospital Employees

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Date Received: 5 May 2020 Revised: 8 July 2020 Accepted: 20 July 2020

Abstract

The structural relationship was investigated between leadership and the quality of the working life, compensation, and welfare of the employees affecting job satisfaction at Mission Hospital, Bangkok. Employees ($N = 330$) completed a questionnaire and the data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Square technique. Employees were of the opinion that leadership had a direct impact on their quality of working life (49.8%) and also had a direct effect on levels of compensation and welfare (68.7%). Apart from determining organizational direction, the leaders also determine the operational plans and various budgets. Employee satisfaction depended on the quality of working life (48.7%) and on compensation (9.1%). This indicated that employees paid more attention to the quality of their working lives than to income or welfare benefits, as long these were high enough to provide a reasonable living. Income and benefits are a part of a support structure that promotes employee quality of life, helps them reach their potential, and creates incentives for participation by performing their duties to their fullest capacity.

Keywords: *Work satisfaction, hospital leadership, factors affecting satisfaction*

Introduction

Leaders in an organization play an important role in determining its progress and the management style that will affect employee attitudes and job efficiency. The characteristics of a good leader will make the operations run smoothly, reduce conflicts, and motivate employees to perform their duties willingly at their full capacity, leading the organization to success. Having employees perform their duties to the best of their ability is due partly to their job satisfaction. If the employees are not satisfied with their work, then they will lack enthusiasm and morale at work, and that will affect organizational efficiency and increase the rate of employee turnover. In addition to environmental factors, job satisfaction is influenced by motivation factors such as career stability, receiving fair compensation and benefits, and career advancement. Administrators can use well-established principles known in human relations to supervise their subordinates by providing good welfare and making them comfortable at work (Herzberg, 1966). The employees are thereby encouraged and have increased confidence in the organization. This leads to commitment and effective utilization of their knowledge and skills to perform tasks to achieve the goals set by the organization.

Leadership

Leadership is the ability to persuade a group of people to carry out certain activities together in order to achieve goals (Robbins & Judge 2017). Kalsoom et al. (2018) and Othman et al. (2014) indicated that leadership is the most important component and skill in an organization which has direct and indirect impacts on the efficiency of employee performance. Leaders who possess foresight are able to steer an organization away from failure or towards success (Asrar-ul-haq & Kuchinke, 2016).

In studies of leadership that affects the job satisfaction of employees, scholars have divided leadership into four main categories which are:

(a) *Directive Leadership*: the leader holds the absolute highest power. The employees must comply regardless of whether they are willing or not.

(b) *Supportive Leadership*: the leader always supports the employees in various fields such as materials, equipment, consultation, and problem-solving together that leads to a decrease in organizational conflicts. Therefore, these result in operational efficiency where the employees love and respect such a leader.

(c) *Participative Leadership*: the leader focuses on the participation of all employees in performing the job, helping one another to achieve integration of ideas. The leader or executive is just the team leader who is helping to solve problems to achieve the most successes in the job.

(d) *Achievement-oriented Leadership*: the leader does not care about what they exchange their work for, as long as the work is accomplished and they achieve the goal. Many employees feel dissatisfied with this type of leader (Pongsriwat, 2015).

Employee Satisfaction

The Gallup Organization is one of the largest companies conducting management consulting. It is known for its analytical ability and knowledge of peoples' behavior, which enable it to help companies understand their employees and clients so that satisfactory solutions are realized to the problems encountered. A 2016 Gallup survey involving 1,032 individuals in 50 U.S. states indicated 13 significant areas in Workers' Satisfaction across various careers. According to Newport and Harter (2016), these were:

1. The physical safety conditions of your workplace.
2. Your relations with other coworkers.
3. The flexibility of your hours.
4. Your job security.
5. Your boss or immediate supervisor.
6. The amount of work that is required of you.
7. The amount of vacation time you receive.
8. The recognition you receive at work for your work accomplishments.
9. The retirement plans your employer offers.
10. Your chances for promotion.
11. The amount of money you earn.
12. The health insurance benefits your employer offers.
13. The amount of on-the-job stress in your job.

The researchers found that the highest satisfaction was with safety and relations with coworkers, and the lowest satisfaction was with stress, benefits, and pay.

Many scholars have different definitions of job satisfaction. Davis and Newstrom (1985) defined job satisfaction as the relationship between employee expectations and the benefits they receive. Job satisfaction also depends on the integration of the mental state, physiology, and the environment, which brings satisfaction to the work (Hoppock, 1935). Employee satisfaction is reflected in their behavior, which in turn is influenced by their attitudes and values. Cheerful employees enjoy and rejoice in their work. This helps improve the quality of the work experience. Job satisfaction is beneficial to organizations in many areas: it reduces complaints, employee turnover, and dismissal. This helps employees to display greater morale at work, such as coming to work on time, which then makes organizations more effective (Grover & Wahee, 2013). Organizational efficiency also depends on leadership attitudes, employee management, job satisfaction with different types of work, teamwork, and the self-awareness of leaders (Kuzey, 2012; Datta & Datta, 2013). According to a study by Chaulagain & Khadka (2012), job satisfaction of medical personnel was significantly influenced by factors such as career development opportunities, assigned responsibilities, patient care, and relationships among colleagues. Gilmer (1996) summarized the factors influencing job satisfaction, which involved security at work, the fairness of feedback received from supervisors, opportunities for advancement, wages, working conditions, benefits, retirement, medical care, and housing provisions.

Quality of Work Life

The quality of working life is one of the most important components of the overall quality of life, and it is one that links job satisfaction and performance efficiency. Every employee, in addition to working to earn a living, also wishes to have a good quality working life. Most people spend eight hours, or a third of their time each day, working. Many people understand that a good work-life balance consists in having a comfortable job and earning a high income; but in reality, people need more than this, especially in this era. According to a study conducted with Gen Ys (born from 1981 to 1991) by Fidelity Investments in the United States of America in 2016, most employees valued quality of life more than financial benefits. They were willing to receive reduced wages in exchange for a better working life, such as having a good work-relaxation balance (Christ, 2016). People with good working life quality are satisfied in their jobs, enabling their organizations to proceed with various activities and achieve the objectives set (Sungkapate & Srivichai, 2017). Good working life quality results from employers responding to appropriate employee desires to make their lives and work pleasant by providing fair and adequate compensation, enabling them to support themselves and their families, and furnishing a safe environment and atmosphere that is conducive to work (Pandey & Tripathi, 2018; Sirgy et al., 2001). This makes employees feel positive about their work on account of having good leaders and colleagues (Tosh, 2019). A study by Nayak and Sahoo (2015) found that improving employees' quality of working life enhanced their commitment to performing tasks, and this resulted in making their organizations significantly more efficient, which is also consistent with the findings of Vadivel and Velmurugan (2017).

Compensation and Welfare

Compensation represents all forms of payment in monetary form and services, including various benefits and other advantages received by employees in return for working for the organization. These benefits may include wages, support and encouragement for employees to improve themselves, supporting scholarships, time off for further study, ongoing training and seminars, bonuses, and prizes. It may also mean reimbursement that the employer pays as compensation for losses (Prugsasri, 2014). Welfare initiatives aim to provide employees with well-being, happiness, career security, certainty in life, or other benefits apart from their salary or wages that are regularly received. These may be provident funds, health service, comprehensive annual physical examinations, health and accident insurance for employees who work in high-risk departments, and other financial support, including financial assistance for families and children in certain matters (Assawarungruang, 2017; Patro, 2015; Manasa & Krishnanaik, 2015).

Study Background

The annual performance report of Mission Hospital, Bangkok for 2015 and 2016 found that many employees sought advice and help in solving their problems. Some problems were worked out, but many could not be resolved immediately because they involved emotional and morale issues. Therefore, the employees felt depressed, lacked motivation, and were unhappy in doing their work. This led to complaints and accusations. Patient satisfaction with the service provided decreased, and resulted in 2015 employee turnover rates as high as 34.4%; this increased to 57.0% in 2016 (Human Resources Committee, 2020). For this reason, the hospital director conducted training for employees at all levels to assist them in realizing their value and the value of others. From 2017 to 2019, the turnover rate gradually decreased to 28.6%, 26.9%, and 24.0% respectively. It is apparent that employee satisfaction depends significantly on leadership and motivation. Therefore, studying the factors that affect employee job satisfaction has the potential to lead to greater client satisfaction, development of professionalism, increased motivation in operation, reduction of the turnover rate, and increased job efficiency.

Research Objectives

To study the structural relationships between leadership and the quality of working life, compensation, and welfare of the employees that influences job satisfaction at Mission Hospital, Bangkok.

Expected Benefits

Organizations or institutions often encounter similar problems. When employees are not satisfied with their work, they become unhappy and are prone to perform poorly and change jobs. In hospitals, addressing these problems is very important because specialized personnel are limited. This is one of the problems that Mission Hospital Bangkok encountered as outlined above, and that it desired to solve.

Research Framework and Hypotheses

The chosen research framework consisted of four latent variables (Figure 1) and 14 observed variables that included:

Quality of Work Life (three variables)—(a) I can manage and balance my time among my work, family time, personal time, and time for the community, (b) the physical environment at my work is conducive to work, and (c) I feel safe in the workplace.

Leadership (four variables)—(a) Leaders are good role models for all employees, (b) leaders can lead the organization to achieve its goals, (c) leaders can clearly explain to me the vision and the mission of the organization, and (d) leaders take care of problems and conflicts in the department, and work together with me to find appropriate and fair solutions to the problems.

Welfare (three variables)—(a) I am satisfied with the income and benefits currently received, (b) I receive compensation that is appropriate for my knowledge, capabilities, and amount of work for which I am responsible, and (c) I have received a fair evaluation of opportunities for promotion to higher responsibilities/higher positions.

Job Satisfaction of Employees (four variables)—(a) I have sufficient equipment/tools which are suitable for the job, (b) the leader gives freedom in making decisions on the work based on the correct principles, (c) I am proud of the accomplishment of the responsibilities I am assigned, and (d) the workload that I do is in line with my knowledge and ability.

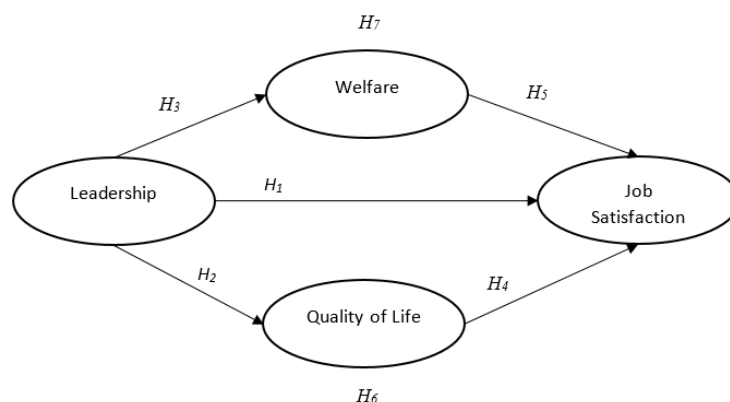


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses are illustrated in Figure 1 and are as follows:

H₁: Leadership has a direct effect on job satisfaction of employees.

H₂: Leadership has a direct effect on the quality of work life.

H₃: Leadership has a direct effect on compensation and welfare.

H₄: Quality of work life has a direct effect on job satisfaction of employees.

H₅: Compensation and welfare have a direct effect on job satisfaction of employees.

H_6 : Leadership indirectly affects the job satisfaction of employees through the quality of work life.

H_7 : Leadership indirectly affects employee job satisfaction through compensation and welfare.

Research Methods

Population and Sample

The questionnaire used in this research was developed from the “Job Descriptive Index (JDI)” developed by Smith et al. (1969). It was originally divided into five categories, namely job satisfaction, supervision, co-workers, pay, and promotion. After that, many other versions were developed. The questionnaire of Hassard et al. (2013) was edited for use in this research study by changing the questions to suit a hospital environment.

The questionnaire’s quality was assessed by five experts, who first checked the validity of the content and then took 30 questionnaires to test the Index of Item-Object Congruence (IOC), along with the reliability using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Each section of the questionnaire returned values between .71 and .83, which is greater than the acceptable value of .70 (Hair et al., 2010). The SmartPLS program was used to perform the analysis. Some questions were eliminated, leaving 14 questions remaining—there were four items each in the categories of leadership and job satisfaction of employees, and three items each in the categories of the quality of working life and welfare (compensation and benefits).

The questionnaires were given to 408 employees at Mission Hospital, Bangkok, during December 2019. Measuring the opinion level in the questionnaire was assessed at five levels on a Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*). A total of 330 usable questionnaires were returned.

Table 1. Sample Demographic Characteristics

Categories/ Details	Percent	Categories/ Details	Percent
Gender		Job Positions	
Male	25.8	Department Manager / with Subordinates	8.8
Female	74.2	Practitioner Level Employee	44.5
Age		Professional Nurse	15.5
>20	8.8	Nursing Assistant	24.2
20–25	26.1	LAB/X-ray/PT/Pharmacy Staff	2.7
26–30	10.9	Professional Assistant	4.2
31–39	20.6	Years of Work Experience	
40–49	15.8	0–2	45.2
50 and above	17.9	3–5	18.2
Education Level		6–10	8.5
Primary/Elementary School	9.7	11–20	11.2
Secondary School / High School	37.0	> 20	17.0
Vocational Certificate, Diploma/ Advanced Vocational Certificate	9.4	Performance Characteristics	
Bachelor Degree	40.6	Normal Working Hours	52.4
Master Degree	3.3	On duty from Morning-Afternoon-Late Night	47.6

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation. For the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the Partial Least Square (PLS) technique was used. This technique, developed by Wold (1966), shows both direct and indirect relationships between dependent variables and groups of independent or predictive variables. The software used was SmartPLS and SPSS.

Research Results

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the 330 people sampled: approximately three quarters were female and the remainder were male. The highest representation (26.1%) was for the age group of 20–25 years. Most of those surveyed (40.6%) had graduated with a bachelor's degree, and most were employed (44.5%) in practitioner level positions. The majority (45.2%) had minimal work experience of 0–2 years, and 52.4% of employees enjoyed normal working hours.

Structural Model Evaluation

The PLS structural model is shown in Figure 2. The model shows the relationship between observed variables and latent variables, and the relationship among latent variables.

Outer Loading

Table 2 shows the precision of the measurement of the observed variables, hence allowing evaluation of the measurement model. From the reliability analysis of the observed variables, the value of the outer loading was more than .70, so it can be used to measure the latent variables. Those less than .70 were eliminated and not included in the analysis (Hair et al., 2013). Since every question had an outer loading value greater than .70, this meant that each latent variable could be used to measure the same subject.

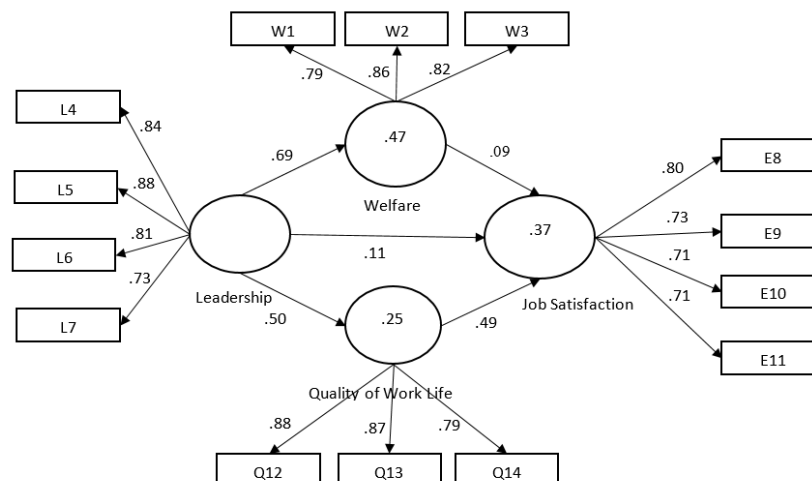


Figure 2. Structural Model

Reliability

The reliability test of a questionnaire assessed whether the tool was reliable. Regardless of the number of measurements, the results must remain the same. This was analyzed from Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of the reliability and validity values of the latent variables. All latent variables had Cronbach's Alpha and CR values greater than .70, indicating that all latent variables were reliable (Hair et al., 2010).

Convergent Validity

The testing of tool validity in the questionnaire represents a test indicating whether various questions can be used as a measure of the same construct. The statistics used to measure the convergent validity straightness was the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The AVE value must be greater than .50 (Hair et al., 2014). From Table 2, all AVE values were greater than .50, which showed that each latent variable can adequately explain the variance of the identifying variables, which are also the components. It can explain more than 50% of variance.

Table 2. Evaluation of Measurement Model

Variable	Outer Loading (> .70)	Cronbach's Alpha (> .70)	Rho A (> .70)	CR (> .70)	AVE (> .50)
Welfare					
W1	.87	.81	.82	.88	.72
W2	.86				
W3	.82				
Leadership					
L4	.84	.83	.84	.89	.67
L5	.88				
L6	.81				
L7	.73				
Job Satisfaction					
J8	.80	.71	.71	.82	.53
J9	.73				
J10	.71				
J11	.71				
Quality of Work Life					
Q12	.79	.80	.80	.88	.72
Q13	.88				
Q14	.87				

Table 3 shows the results of discriminant validity analysis, which tested whether one of the observed variables or measurement variables of the construct must be separated from the measurements of other constructs that were taken from the value of the square root of the AVE. The square root of AVE for each latent variable had a value greater than the correlation between that latent variable and the other latent variables, and the value of HTMT between the latent variables was less than .90.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Measured by Fornell-Larcker Criteria

Latent Variable	Job Satisfaction	Leadership	Quality of Work Life	Welfare
Job Satisfaction	.73			
Leadership	.42	.82		
Quality of Work Life	.59	.50	.85	
Welfare	.40	.69	.47	.85

*Note. The square root of the AVE value of each latent variable is arranged diagonally

As shown in Table 4, the measurements of each latent variable had sufficient discriminant validity with those of one of the constructs, and were separated from the other constructs.

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio among Latent Variables (< .90)

Latent Variable	Job Satisfaction	Leadership	Quality of Work Life
Job Satisfaction			
Leadership	.54		
Quality of Work Life	.78	.60	
Welfare	.52	.81	.58

Structural Model Assessment

After evaluating the measurement model by testing the outer loading, the reliability of the questionnaire, and the reliability of the tool that measured the questionnaire, the research

hypotheses must be tested by analyzing the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) and considering the coefficient determinant (R^2) and the research hypothesis test.

The analyses of the correlated latent variables within the group are shown in Table 5. They indicate that the VIF values were less than 3.3, indicating that there was no correlation among them within the group.

Table 5. Predictor of VIF Values (VIF < 3.3)

	Job Satisfaction	Quality of Work Life	Welfare
Leadership	2.04	1.00	1.00
Quality of Work Life	1.39		
Welfare	1.98		

From Table 6, it was found that the adjusted Coefficients of Determinant (R^2 Adjusted) of employee job satisfaction factors was .36. This means that factors such as leadership, quality of life, compensation, and welfare can explain 36% of the variance in employee satisfaction factors. Similarly the adjusted Coefficients of Determinant (R^2 Adjusted) can also explain 25% of variance in the quality of life and 47% of variance in the welfare component.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determinant– R^2

	R^2	R^2 Adjusted
Job Satisfaction	.37	.36
Quality of Work Life	.25	.25
Welfare	.47	.47

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing of the PLS-SEM structural model used the bootstrapping process to assess statistical significance. If the “Path coefficient” returned p -values more than .05 and t -values higher than 1.96, the values support the research hypotheses.

From Table 7, it was found that hypotheses H_2 , H_3 , H_4 , and H_6 were supported, but not hypotheses H_1 , H_5 , and H_7 . This indicated that leadership had a direct effect (49.8%) on the quality of working life (H_2), and it also had a direct effect (68.7%) on compensation and benefits (H_3). The quality of working life had a direct effect (48.7%) on employee satisfaction (H_4), while leadership had an indirect effect (24.2%) on employee satisfaction at work through the quality of working life (H_6), with a significance level of .05.

Table 7. Values of “Path Coefficient” and Hypothesis Test Results

	Hypothesis	Path		t -values	p Values	Conclusion
		Coeff. (β)	STDEV			
H_1	Leadership -> JS	.11	0.08	1.51	.066	Not Supported
H_2	Leadership -> QL	.50	0.05	10.10	.000*	Supported
H_3	Leadership -> Welfare	.69	0.03	20.59	.000*	Supported
H_4	QL -> JS	.49	0.05	9.81	.000*	Supported
H_5	Welfare -> JS	.09	0.07	1.24	.108	Not Supported
H_6	Leadership -> QL -> JS	.24	0.04	6.12	.000*	Supported
H_7	Leadership -> Welfare -> JS	.06	0.05	1.22	.112	Not Supported

* p -value < .05, t -value > 1.96

Summary and Discussion of Research Findings

From the research study, the results can be summarized as follows: employees expressed the opinion that leadership had a direct effect on the quality of working life (49.8%), and had a direct effect also on compensation and benefits (68.7%). Employees considered their leaders as ones who had authority in determining the direction, policies, operating models, and budgets of the organization. These directly and indirectly affected the quality of working life, and the compensation and welfare of employees. The satisfaction of employees depended on the quality of their working life (48.7%) and on salary and benefits (9.1%). This meant that the quality of the working life, on a daily basis, had a greater impact on job satisfaction than income or benefits received on a monthly basis. This is in accordance with the study done by Christ (2016). This researcher stated that job satisfaction does not depend solely on income. Employees pay more attention to the quality of working life, such as working in a happy environment, as long as the income is sufficient for living and raising a family. If these conditions are met, then they are satisfied.

Leaders play a very important role in planning, executing work, and solving problems so that employees have good quality of life, appropriate income, and welfare support. Leaders who listen to their employees regarding their problems and then help and support them in their work will encourage their employees. This is reflected in employees having good attitudes, satisfaction with their work, efficiency in job performance, and also a decrease in employee turnover rates. The study of Assawarungruang (2018) found that job satisfaction influenced the relationship between satisfaction with wages and the intention of doctors to resign.

The administration of Mission Hospital Bangkok organized training to increase knowledge, develop skills in various types of work, and increase work efficiency. This initiative also allowed the employees to express their opinions more freely, increased listening to their problems, and solved various problems in a timelier manner. This has created a family atmosphere in the workplace that helps to decrease problems and conflicts. Moreover, supervising the welfare of employees and providing them with a conducive environment to work, resulted in employees being more satisfied, and increased work efficiency. From a customer satisfaction survey, it was found that they were more satisfaction with the services rendered, and staff turnover rates from 2017–2019 decreased to 28.6%, 26.9%, and 24.0%, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that as important intermediaries, leaders drive organizations both directly and indirectly to achieve their goals through various factors. Employees pay considerable attention to good quality of working life. Compensation and benefits are a part of the motivation for employees to participate and perform their duties to the best of their ability.

Limitations and Recommendations for the Next Research

The sample group from which the data was collected came from one private hospital. In further research, data might be collected from many sources for comparison. Collecting data ideally would focus on employees' perspectives, their intentions to remain or resign, and the problems contributing to their decisions. In this fashion, employees could be assisted immediately. Other factors might also be considered in future studies that affect work satisfaction and the intention to resign.

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