Influence of Job Characteristics and Job Satisfaction Effect Work Adjustment for Entering Labor Market of New Graduates in Thailand

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study both direct and indirect influences of factors of job characteristics, personality characteristic, and job satisfaction with work adjustment of new graduates. The research sample consisted of 310 new graduates of Rajamangala UniversityofTechnology Thanyaburi. The employed research instrument was a questionnaire with 5-level rating scales. Statistics for data analysis were the confirmation factor analysis, and structural equation model. Research findings were as follows: The results showed that the personality characteristics and job satisfaction factors showed direct effect to work adjustment factor and then also showed that the personality characteristics had indirect effect to work adjustment though job satisfaction affected statistical significant. The overall factors as stated above could forecast the work adjustment with an accuracy of 40 percent. Consequently, the Structural Equation Model was tested who the researcher as the best fits model with empirical data.

Key words: Work adjustment, Job characteristic, Job satisfaction

Introduction

Awareness of developing and maintaining new comers joining the organization is significantly important for unleashing their capabilities. One approach that organizations use to let them work and learn with diversity groups in organization with having variety of backgrounds (Adler, 1984;Hsin-Kuang&Cherng-Ying, 2007). However,there was a reportregardingto work adjustment indicatingapproximately by 20 to 40percentwho have suffering difficult to adjustment inthenew experience or environment(Black, 1988; Mendhall & Oddou, 1985;Tung, 1981). Thailand has faced with this problem as well. The survey of Nation Online (2012) with the group of new graduates working in 305 small, medium, and large enterprises found that the issues of adjustment is the key that made new graduates change or resign workplaces or new jobs. So the work adjustment issue is the key which many organizations have intensively concerned.

If employees can adapt mental or physical to their new environment, they will deliver the high performance to organizations, on the other hands, employees who get poor adjustment or performance will not meet the standard performance, organizational goals and decline satisfaction and motivation on their work; additional, they will have bad attitude and relationship among co-workers. This result can bring them to face many problems to work such as anxiety, indecision, not accept the truth, and detach from society, desperation, self-destruction, or etc. (Phukpan, 1997) Intrasupa (2008) states that students who just graduated or even though aperson whochanged his/her job need to make adjustment for alleviating frustrated feelingand helping them to maintain a balance in life. If staffcannotadjust to different environments that they face, it will lead to result in the absence, being late, being frustration, and getting low performance as respectively.

From the literature review, the influences of factors on new comers adjustment have been recognized. For instance, job characteristics (Bhuin&Menguc, 2002; Bhuian, Al-Shammari&Jerfri, 2001; Morley & Flynn, 2004; Naumann, 1993; Nauman, Widmier, & Jackson, Jr., 2000), job satisfaction (Breiden, Mohr, &Mirza, 2006; Srivastava, 2002; Wang & Pierre, 2005; Peltokorpi, 2008) had been tested in variety of circumstances with expatriates who come to work in other countries, but the result is a little known about how new graduates can adjust to their new task responsibilities. In addition, Thailand has few researches to investigate regarding new graduates' adjustment by the way they will force to big change for joining Asian Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 which means foreign company, known as multi-national company, will come to operate in Thailand and the new graduates need to adjustquickly to styles of working in organization (Tongkanya, 2012). From the reason, the researcher aims to test the influence of job characteristics and job satisfaction to work adjustment in the context of new graduates of Thai university. The findings of the empirical study may have useful applications toward human resource management and development or university to provide the ways of developing or helping them to adjustment for new life working as employees.

Literature Review

Work adjustment is the psychological state of person about feeling of comfort or relaxes with a variety of environment that experienced (Black, 1988; Nicholson, 1984). Literature of work adjustment can occur in three aspects: Firstly, adjust to work(Arkoff, 1968; Black & Gregersin, 1991) is a level of ability or potential that people can perform to their responsibilitiesperfectly based on the knowledge and skills and personality to meet the needs and expectations of the organization (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) Secondary, adjust to the rules and environment(Ashforth, Alan, & Lee, 1998; Black & Gregersin, 1991; Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash 2012; Shimoni, Ronen, Roziner, 2005) is the personal ability to accept or adapt the organizational rules, structure, communication system, commanding, and decentralization that people must face in their work. Finally, adjust to colleagues or networking(Andrew & Roy, 1991; Ashford & Black, 1996; Raghuram, et al, 2001) is the personal ability to work or independency among others in workplace which is considered to be a basic need of people who maintain social stability.

Job Characteristics

Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976) have introduced the concept of the study and development of the model of job characteristics which consists of five dimensionsas follows; Firstly, a skill variety refers to the degree to which a task requires a variety of different activities in worker's responsibilities to be accomplished. Secondly, task identity refers to the degree which task requires performing the whole process from beginning to the end with visible outcome. Thirdly, task significance refers to level to which task has impact to live and others including the continued existence of the organization. Fourthly, Autonomy refers to the degree which task allows the operator the freedom to control and make decisions about his own work processes. And finally, feedback from job refers to the degree which task enables practitioners have the opportunity to get feedback on the effectiveness of their task. Many empirical research papers identify the concrete affection between job characteristics and work adjustment. For instance, researchers have linked or studied job characteristics and work adjustment e.g., Bhuin&Menguc(2002); Bhuian, Al-Shammari&Jerfri (2001); Morley & Flynn (2004); Naumann (1993); Nauman, Widmier, & Jackson, Jr., (2000) were to study and experiment with a variety of samples which the results showed job characteristic has positive influenced to work adjustment. There are empirical researches on job characteristics that indicated a solid correlation between job characteristics and work adjustment. In the paper of Samad (2006) examining the job characteristics relationship between job satisfaction, the theory of Hezberg (1966), and the result indicated that job satisfaction was associated with a high statistically significant at the .05 level for all variables of job characteristics and was consistent with the research of Thomas, Buboltz, and Winkelspecht (2004) who have studied affection of job characteristics to work adjustment with a sample of new graduates the result showed that the job characteristic influence job satisfaction with statistically significant at the .05 level. From these aforementioned studied results, it can be clearly seen that the positive job characteristics has direct influence to job satisfaction and work adjustment.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the attitude of personnel concern with job which is the result of perception of job performing and the level of cohesion between individual and organization (Ivancevich, Olelelns, & Matterson, 1997).

In addition, Odom,Boxx, and Dunn (1990) stated that job satisfaction is a context of employees' feeling that can be positive or negative to their responsibilities. There are many theories of job satisfaction that use examination by the way job satisfaction theory of Herzbergeis used widely studied by scholars to explain personwhat does he/she wantsduring working in the organization. Job satisfaction theory can divide in to two catalogs; first,job content satisfaction refers to a factor that makes personnel satisfied and the motivation to perform such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advance, and work itself. Second,the job context which refers to factors external components preventing job dissatisfaction, such as company policy and administration, supervision, relationship with peers, salary and benefit, security, and working condition. Job satisfaction is the one that uses to study the effect of work adjustment (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998).

There are empirical researches on job satisfaction that indicated a solid effect to work adjustment. The work of Wang and Pierre (2005), studied the relationship between work adjustment and satisfaction with the Philipinos who migrated to work in Canada, the research found that job satisfaction was positively related to work adjustment with statistically significant. Consistent with the study of Peltokorpi (2008) studied a group of expatriates in Japan found that job satisfaction related to the adjustment with significant. Srivastava (2002) also found that the job satisfaction had influenced significantly the work adjustment with consistent with the work ofBreiden, Mohr, and Mirza (2006) tested on the variable job satisfaction and work adjustment with samples as manager of foreign workers in Germany, the researchers found that job satisfaction have positive influenced on work adjustment with statistical significance. The findings found clearly the positive influences of job satisfaction on work adjustment.

Conceptual Framework

In this research, the researcher tests the effect among factors injob characteristics and job satisfaction to predict work adjustment. The research model can be explained by the following figure;

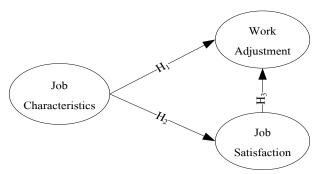


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Research Hypothesis

In this research, the researcher hypothesizes that the work adjustment is best fitted with observed data collected from the samples, in which;

H₁Job characteristics have positive effect to work adjustment.

H₂Job characteristics have positive effect to job satisfaction.

H₃Job satisfaction has positive effect to work adjustment.

Participants

The sample in this research comprised 310 new graduates from Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand; the majority of which were female (70%) with an average age of 23 and working in private company was majority about 79 percent.

Research Instrument

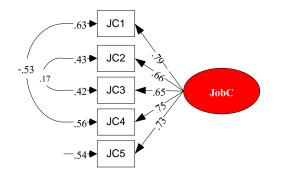
- 1. The feature of Job characteristics questionnaire was adopted from job diagnostic survey questionnaire of Haman and Oldham (1975). Measurement was used to 5 levels of Likert-scale, with labels raging from "not at all accurate" to completely accurate". For example, I have opportunity to work with variety of tasks; I have freedom to plan for working. The questionnaire wasa strong reliability of the scale range between 0.25 and 0.79, the confidence coefficient of the series was 0.911
- 2. The feature of job satisfaction questionnaire was created by the researcher based onthe theory of Herzberg (1966). For example, I have enough materials and equipment to work; I have opportunity to advance in career. The measurement was used to 5 levels of Likert-scale, with labels raging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The questionnaire wasstrong reliability of the scale range between 0.22 and 0.85 and the confidence coefficient of the series was 0.910
- 3. The feature of work adjustment questionnaire was created by the researcher following the concept of adjustment to work of Dawis andLofquist (1984), adjustment to the rule and environment of Andrew and Roy (1991), and adjustment to college of Ashforth, Alan, and Lee (1998) for example, I understand the methods and ways to work; I follow the organization rules or disciplines; I feel not pressure to work with others. The measurement was used to 5 level of Likert-scale, with labels raging from "not at all accurate" to completely accurate". The questionnaire was a strong reliability of the scale range between 0.21 and 0.82 the confidence coefficient of the series was 0.898

Data Analysis

The researcher used the confirmatory factor analysis to examine the job characteristics, job satisfaction, and work adjustment model. The linear structural equation modeling was used to investigate the relationship model of variables with goodness of fit considered from various goodness of fit indexes. The statistical application program was employed to analyze of hypothesis.

Validity of job characteristics and work adjustment model

To determine the validity of structural by confirmatory factor analysis method with using the recommendation of Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008) to consider Chi-squaremust not statistically significant; goodness of fit index--AGFImust begreater than 0.90, root mean square error of approximation--RMSEA must be less than 0.5, and Chi-square/degree of freedom should be less than 2. The criteria for selecting of variables to measure the structure factor must be higher than 0.30(Kim & Mueller, 1978) before testing the structural equation modelingwas created by the researcher. For job satisfaction, the researcher did not bring to determine the validity of structural model because there were two observed variables which the result could be a saturated model.



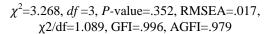
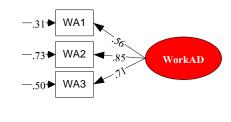


Figure 2 the result of validity of job characteristic model



 χ^2 =1.690, df=1, GFI=.996, P-value=.194, RMSEA=.047, χ^2/df =1.690, GFI=.996, AGFI=978

Figure 3 the result of validity of work adjustment model

The result of structural validitywas found consistent with empirical data as showing in table 2 below

Table 2: Goodness of fit index of job characteristics and work adjustment model

Model	χ^2	df	<i>P</i> -value	χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA
Job Characteristics	3.268	3	.352	1.089	.996	.979	.017
Work Adjustment	1.690	1	.194	1.690	996	978	.047

Results

The results come out that the relationship among job characteristics, job satisfaction, and work adjustment and the predictable factors affect work adjustment of the hypothesized model; the research first, presents the relationship of observed variables, second, presents the confirmatory factor analysis and finally, presents results of the structural equation modeling analysis to investigate relationship of structural model.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and correlation between observed variables

	Mean	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. JC1	3.94	.583	1.00									
2. JC2	3.88	.641	.53**	1.00								
3. JC3	3.88	.558	.52**	.52**	1.00							
4. JC4	3.82	.652	.37**	.48**	.46**	1.00						
5. JC5	3.82	.348	.56**	.45**	.50**	.56**	1.00					
6. ST1	3.89	.556	.31**	.25**	.25**	.19**	.25**	1.00				
7. ST2	3.88	.620	.25**	.20**	.19**	.12*	.23**	.68**	1.00			
8. WA1	3.69	.499	$.14^*$.12*	.20**	.16**	.20**	.30**	.35**			
9. WA2	3.77	.526	.15**	.07	.18**	.11*	$.14^*$.34**	.41**	.49**	1.00	
10. WA3	3.83	.618	.20**	.09	.13*	.22**	.18**	.33**	.40**	.35**	.59**	1.00

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, JC1 = skill variety, JC2 = taskidentity, JC3 = task significance, JC4 = Autonomy, JC5 = Feedback from Job, ST1 = job content, ST2 = job context, WA1 = adjust to work, WA2 = adjust to the rules and environment, WA3 = adjust to colleagues

Table 1 shows various mean of observed variables used to measure other variables; it was found that mean score of job characteristics were high approximately 3.82 to 3.94. Job satisfaction variables were high at 3.88 to 3.89; the same as the observed variable of work adjustment whichwere high at 3.69 to 3.83 as well. In consideration of relationship among observed variables, there were found that the majority of variable were correlated at the statistical significant of .01, but the rare exception of two pairs was found no statistical significant of .05. This correlation matrix will be subsequently employed to study the structural relations to test the hypothesized model.

Analysis of work adjustment structural Equation Model

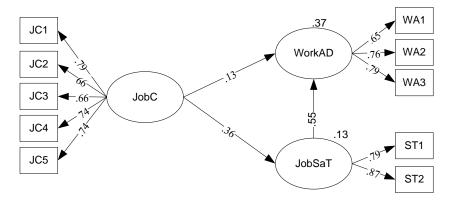
The researcher analyzed data acquired from questionnaires by using the structural equation modeling analysis to estimate the parameters of the hypothesized model for the fit with empirical data. The model comprises variables of research; job characteristics, job satisfaction, and work adjustment after the parameter estimation of path coefficient was analyzed. Total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect obtained from the model analysis were in Table 3.

Table 3: Total effect, indirect effect, and direct effect of the work adjustment structural equation modeling

Causal variables		JobSaT	1	WorkAd			
	DE	IE	TE	DE	IE	TE	
JobC	.358***	-	.358***	.127*	.196*	.323***	
JobSaT	-	-	-	.547***	-	.547***	
R^2		.13			.37		

^{***}p<.001, *p<.05

The structural equation modeling showed the best-fit criteria's with empirical data which found goodness of fit index that was good at chi-square = 30.589 (df = 1.133, p = .288), RMSEA = .029, GFI = .981, AGFI, .961. The results from fit model were able to identify the path coefficient of job characteristics, job satisfaction, and work adjustment factors which presented in figure 4



 χ^2 =30.589, df =27, P-value=.288, RMSEA=.029, χ^2/df =1.133, GFI=.981, AGFI=.961

Figure 4: the standardized coefficients of the adjusted modeling

Considering the total effect it showed that direct effect, and indirect effect in the table revealed the model's latent variables, they were found that the job characteristic latent had direct effect to job satisfaction and work adjustment and job satisfaction latent and it had indirect effect to work adjustment latent through job satisfaction latent . Job satisfaction latent had direct effected to work adjustment as followed:

- 1. Job characteristics had direct effect to work adjustment at the statistical significance level of .05, with standardized path coefficient at .13.
- 2. Job characteristics had direct effect to job satisfaction at the statistical significance level of .001, with standardized path coefficient at .36.
- 3. Job satisfaction had direct effect to work adjustment at the statistical significance level of .001, with standardized path coefficient at .55.
- 4. Job characteristic had indirect effect to work adjustment through job satisfaction at the statistical significance level of .001, with standardized path coefficient at .32.

From the model, job characteristics predicted or explained that there was variance in work adjustment and job satisfaction at 37 and 13 percent respectively.

Discussion, implication, suggestion, and limitation

Clearly, many efforts have been supported to understanding new graduate's adjustment, the influence factors of job characteristics and job satisfaction that affect to work adjustment. The research revealed several interesting findings.

Result of this study which supported the research hypothesisfound that job characteristics had direct effects on work adjustment, in coherent with many researchers who found and advocated that job characteristics are the one factor that have influence on work adjustment (Bhuian, Al-Shammari&Jerfri, 2001;Bhuin&Menguc, 2002; Morley & Flynn, 2004; Naumann, 1993; Nauman, Widmier, & Jackson, Jr., 2000). The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (2012) stated that good job design can maximize and support organizational efficiency and effectiveness because job characteristics can impact employee motivation, a necessary component for performance and adjustment to their responsibility. This finding also supports the previous work of Ashforth, Saks, and Lee (1998) that studied the model of job characteristics of new graduates who have recently worked in organizations was positively affect to work adjustment with statistical significant.

The result finds that job characteristics had positive effect to job satisfaction which support hypothesis 2 that is consistent with theory of Hackman and Oldham (1976)statingthat ifthe employee's responsible for his work, he must needtask identity, and task significancewhich make psychological states of employee to satisfaction and motivation for effectively performance. Autonomy and feedback from job will allow employees to control or choose their own working method and will increase sense of belonging or ownership for the organizational result. This is coherent with research paper of Bhatti, Syed, and Shaikh (2012) whoused job characteristics model to study influence with job satisfaction of 200 bankers of Pakinstan and found job characteristics had positive significance which directly affects job satisfaction. Consistent with the research of Thomas, Buboltz, and Winkelspecht (2004) found that job characteristics significance influence to job satisfaction (beta = .24, p. 001) Research also found that job satisfaction had positive effect to work adjustment which support hypothesis 3. Job satisfaction of new comersshows the feeling of perception about their task responsibility which lets them fulfill or allow fulfillment what they have or want. Greenberg and Baron (2000) stated that job satisfaction is a sense or feeling using assessment the responding toward a person's positive or negative attitude.

Research findings consistent with a study of Wang and Pierre (2005) found the positive relationship between job satisfaction and expatriate's adjustment of Filipinos who immigrate to work inToronto and the research of Breiden, Mohr, and Mirza (2006) that tested with a sample of foreigner managers working in Germany, found that job satisfaction had positive influence to work adjustment with a significant coefficient.

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in term of job characteristics and job satisfaction had effect to new graduates adjustment in Thailand. The finding that job characteristics which had direct effects on work adjustment and job satisfaction. Therefore, the functions of human resource management or development may apply or design job characteristics in approximate the employee's responsibilities to work in organization. Forfurther new graduates, the entry and adjustment to the new experiences are a challenging period. For this result study helps the new graduates make conscious choices about how to behave. This may be particularly useful for HR department to provide sufficient encourage or guidance with new graduates to be able to choose the ways that help them to win adjustment and meet organizational goals (Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2012). In addition, the universities should provide or concern about the program that make graduates be able to adapt quietly their abilities to work in organization.

Besides the factors that the researcher brought to test new graduates' adjustment, there are other predictable variables or factors, such as self-efficacy (Selmer & Renner, Jr, 2009), perceived organizational support (Chen & Eldridge, 2011), clarify in career, management, compensation, or post-arrival training (Black et al, 1991), etc. in order to construct a structural complex of factors that influence new graduates' adjustment.

Like most researches, this study has limitation to be considered in sample groups of one government university in Thailand, thus the future research should expand collecting both private and government universities, perhaps by comparative studies of model invariance between those universities. Furthermore, the next research should examine with new employees who have changed their work.

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