

Chapter 23

Gap Analysis: Comparison of Job–Related Attributes Between Importance and Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Employees have their own perceptions or attitudes about many aspects of work itself, and their own satisfaction with job or non-work-related attributes. Job satisfaction has been widely studied by many researchers and practitioners. This study surveys selected work-related attributes to help hoteliers improve work environments. This study initially identifies the level of importance on work-related attributes and the level of satisfaction with those attributes among hotel workers. Whether differences exist between the levels of importance of work-related attributes and satisfaction with those attributes is also explored. The purpose of this study is to identify how hotel workers perceive their work environments and identify areas that need more attention from hotel managers. Based on the purpose of this study, work-related attributes are measured according to the level of importance and the level of satisfaction. The study indicates that hotel workers consider their work environments, in terms of who they work with; to be well provided; however, work-related expectation, in terms of what they receive for their work, has not met their expectations. This study finds supervisor's friendliness, job security, and pay are top three most important.

INTRODUCTION

The quality of a hotel's products and services relies heavily on its employees, and improving service quality has become a prominent factor in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive global hospitality market (Augustyn & Ho, 1998). The hotel industry has been facing the problem of finding motivated employees to provide services that could meet the standards of hotel guests. Because hotel workers are diversified in terms of gender, age, job status, and experiences in the hotel industry (Szivas, Riley & Airey, 2003), it is even more difficult for hotel managers to manage employees with various

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characteristics. Employees' preferences on work-related attributes might vary according to individual or group characteristics.

It is important for hoteliers to understand what to improve in work environments to meet employee expectations. Branham (2005) states that retaining valuable employees is critical for organizations, despite the challenges in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, because employees are an organization's foundation. A workplace with highly productive employees is most desirable for many organizations, while a pleasant and pleasing workplace is desirable for many employees. The organization that provides desirable work environments tends to experience fewer problems with disruptions (Bai, Brewer, Sammons, & Swerdlow, 2006), and gets better chances to increase productivity (Rusbult, Farrell, Roger, & Mainous, 1988). In order to create a desirable work environment, the climate of the organization and the perception of employees need to be examined.

Employees have their own perceptions or attitudes about many aspects of work itself, and their own satisfaction with job or non-work-related attributes. Job satisfaction has been widely studied by many researchers and practitioners. Analysis of job satisfaction may provide how employees perceive certain aspects of the nature of the hospitality industry (Clark, 1996). For this study, job satisfaction is defined as an employee's affective reactions to a job based on a range of elements (Fields, 2002). Assessing the perceptions of workplaces from perspective of employees can help managers understand how their employees feel about their jobs and other work-related environments.

This study surveys selected work-related attributes to help hoteliers improve work environments. This study initially identifies the level of importance on work-related attributes and the level of satisfaction with those attributes among hotel workers. Whether differences exist between the levels of importance of work-related attributes and satisfaction with those attributes is also explored. The purpose of this study is to identify how hotel workers perceive their work environments and identify areas that need more attention from hotel managers. Based on the purpose of this study, work-related attributes are measured according to the level of importance and the level of satisfaction. By measuring differences between importance and satisfaction, current status of work environments is revealed in this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A quality work environment is closely related to work outcomes, and it has been a critical issue in all organizations (Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2008). The hotel industry sells intangible products and these products are outcomes of employees. When hospitality employees are satisfied with what they do, then their service performances exceed customers' expectations (Dienhart & Gregoire, 1993). Exceeding customer expectations can positively influence guests' perceptions on the hotel (Spinenli & Canavos, 2000). Understanding factors that change the level of satisfaction with a work environment is critical in maintaining and sustaining quality services (Lee, Nam, Park, & Lee, 2006; Karl & Peluchette, 2006; Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 1998).

Various studies show that job satisfaction serves as a significant predictor in organizational commitment and retention (Hartman & Yrle, 1996; Kim, Leong, & Lee, 2004). Positive relationships between employee job satisfaction and employee retention (Choi, 2006; Lee & Lee, 2003; Sledge, Miles, & Copping, 2008; Feather & Rauter, 2004) are also revealed. Oliver (1997) also indicates that customer perception on products is affected by the performance of service attributes associated with the product.

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