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Factors affecting the job satisfaction levels of shift workers in the aviation sector: An
empirical study in New Zealand

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Business Studies

in

Management

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.

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2017

Abstract

People spend much of their lives at work and job satisfaction significantly contributes to their well-being. It leads to higher employee commitment, productivity and loyalty, which in turn contributes to superior organisational performance. Shift work may impact on employee job satisfaction, especially when organisations split working hours due to 24-hours service demands. Numerous studies have measured job satisfaction in relation to personal characteristics, organisational and environmental factors in various contexts. However, there are conflicting views at the individual level so this study will focus on individual employee characteristics. Furthermore, little is known about job satisfaction in the aviation sector despite its significance to the economy and employment of many shift workers. This research thus focuses on New Zealand aviation shift workers' job satisfaction. An online questionnaire explored the impact of personal demographic variables (e.g. gender, marital status) and risk factors (e.g. stress, isolation) on the shift workers' job satisfaction. Survey data were analysed using statistical techniques. Thematic analysis of qualitative survey material complemented the quantitative findings. The study revealed that job satisfaction varies according to the departments in which respondents work. Moreover, there is a low to moderate negative relationship between job satisfaction and stress, difficulty falling asleep and isolation; and moderate to substantially negative relationship between job satisfaction and health issues, fatigue and family conflict. Health issues, fatigue and family conflict were the three main predictors of job satisfaction. The findings inform implications for theory, practice and policy, particularly in Human Resource Management, are discussed with recommendations for further research.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the staff at Massey University, my supervisor Professor Jane Parker, for agreeing to supervise the thesis and for her continual guidance, support, knowledge and encouragement. As well as co-supervisor Associate-Professor Janet Sayers for her insightful comments and Doctor Nazim Taskin for his guidance with areas of the data analysis.

Secondly, I would also like to extend my appreciation to those shift workers who participated within the study; without their time and input, this study would not be possible. In addition, a sincere gratitude to the managers within the case organisation who provided their approval and support throughout the study - I hope this study proves beneficial to the well-being of the case organisation employees.

Lastly, I would like to thank my father, mother, sisters, brother, my dearest nephews and friends for their endless support, inspiration and care, throughout this challenging journey. This one is for you.

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