

# THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION

Nurazlin Binti Sulaiman<sup>1</sup>  
 Nurul Ain Jasmin Binti Mohd Jailani<sup>2</sup>  
 Nurhidayatul Jannah Binti Saari<sup>3</sup>  
 Nur Najiha Safia Binti Zanal Abidin<sup>4</sup>  
 Siti Nur Hamizah Binti Zainal Abidin<sup>5</sup>  
 Noorhafizzatul Ain Binti Mohd Norizan<sup>6</sup>  
 Nurhafizah Binti Mohd Zolkapli<sup>7\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020944359@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020710475@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020922831@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>4</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020901463@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>5</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020303477@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>6</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: 2020367165@uitm.edu.my)

<sup>7</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka,  
 (E-mail: nurhafizahzolkapli@uitm.edu.my)

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**Abstract:** *In today's business world, committed employees become a pillar of a successful organization, and this commitment usually comes from employee motivation and job satisfaction. It usually creates energy to drive employees towards organizational objectives and goals. Without an employee's commitment, it would be impossible to achieve an organization's performance. Thus, this paper has been written to purposely explore the link between two important variables, which are employee motivation and job satisfaction. In accomplishing the objective of this review paper, a comprehensive review has been carried out on the empirical study papers or articles cited in online databases such as the UiTM database system, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The articles that have been chosen and reviewed ranged between 2016 and 2022. Although various studies have been conducted on the relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction, the extent to which the two are linked has continued to be a source of intense debate among scholars. Hence, this paper aims at presenting reviews of the existing and past literature on employee motivation and job satisfaction. The review will give a holistic understanding of the employee motivation and job satisfaction concept for future researchers and aid them in recognizing the research gap.*

**Keywords:** *Employee Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance*

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## Introduction

Being motivated at work and attaining high job satisfaction level in the desired profession are some of vital aspects that employees seek in their job. According to General Employee Motivation Statistics, employees are 87% less likely to leave their job, and companies with highly motivated employees will experience approximately 27% increase in profits. Therefore, these will be the reason why many of the companies in Malaysia are trying to figure out what would be the best ways to overcome these issues that basically could affect their organizations day by day. Because employees are the company's most valuable asset, it is crucial to study and understand the factors that can motivate and enhance job satisfaction.

The company's performance will be enhanced if the employees are vigorously involved in motivating and satisfying their job. Nevertheless, it is hard to obtain and maintain high level of employee engagement and performance. Based on data from Gallup Institute, globally, the percentage of employee engagement is only 15%, with the remaining 85% not engaged or inactive. (Riyanto, Endri & Herlisha, 2021). Consequently, the company will not be able to achieve their vision and mission that might cause lose big sums of money. Due to that reason, active employee participation in company's programs should be encouraged in order to provide job satisfaction and motivation in accordance with employee expectations, resulting in a high level of passion for work and optimal performance achievement.

## Literature Review

In this section, several prior literatures related with employee motivation and job satisfaction will be reviewed and explained.

### Employee Motivation

Motivation is a one of the terms that has been conceptualized and reviewed by numerous numbers of scholars. In the early years, motivation has been defined as an individual's willingness to carry out something that intentionally serves to satisfy his or her needs (Whiseand & Rush, 1988). Later, motivation has been described as something that invigorated a person to act that relating with the options the person creates as a piece of his or her goal-oriented behaviour (More, Wregner & Miller, 2003). Then, Fuller et. al (2008) described motivation as an individual direction, intensity, and persistence of efforts in achieving a particular goal. Whereas, Saraswathi (2011) had defined motivation as an eagerness to deliver high-level of effort, toward goals of organization, conditioned by the effort's capacity in fulfilling certain need of individual.

Generally, employee motivation known as an inclination that exists in an individual consciously or unconsciously that usually require action with certain objective. The energy of motivation usually can help to drive any job faster and easier. Motivation can be considered as a vital stimulator that can influence human behaviour. Every person has different behaviour or attitude, thus, in middle of this diversity, organization should form practices that will be able to satisfy not only individual but also the group of people (Varma, 2017). Hence, organization should be able to recognize and assess internal motivation that employees gain from satisfaction of their job and further improve it with external motivation that critically needed by organization in which they can take notes about those motivation from various motivation theories (Varma, 2017).

There have many motivation theories that basically can be categorized as either content or process motivation theory (Campbell et. al, 1970). Content theories help to highlight on the needs and factors that motivate and encourage behaviour and performance of the employees. These motivation theories are concentrating on employees' internal factors which help to invigorate and influence their working behaviour (Whatmore, 2012). Moreover, content theories are known as the outcomes of internal forces that drives employees to move or act towards their job satisfaction. According to Whatmore (2012), several content theories that can be useful to the organization includes Herzberg Two Factors Theory, Maslow's Hierarch of Needs, McClelland's Theory of Needs and Alderfer's ERG.

On the other hand, process theories are known as the motivation theories that basically focused on behaviours of the employees that influence by their individual needs. Motivation will be gain by the employees when their values and expectations are satisfied in their job. These theories involved the process by which several variables such as employees' comparisons, needs and values as well as expectations relate with job tasks in determining motivation (Whatmore, 2012). Besides, in these theories, attention is given on the motives that influence the direction and intensity of employees' behaviours as well as the sources and causes of those behaviours. Additionally, Kian, Rajah and Yusof (2014) were indicated that the well-known process theories of motivation include Adam's Equity Theory, Skinner's Reinforcement Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory and Locke's Goal-Setting Theory.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is well known term that basically has very broad definition contributed by numerous numbers of researchers. Based on Permana et. al (2021), job satisfaction can be defined as positive or happy feelings resulting from assessment of individual's work and experience. Whereas Tnay et. al (2013) indicates that job satisfaction is known as a combination of psychological conditions and environmental styles that can make a person reliably acknowledge satisfaction with the job done. Job satisfaction basically can be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Refer to Spies (2006), intrinsic job satisfaction comprises of responses that affect individual's emotions and feelings towards job features associated to the job itself, such as autonomy, variety, and expertise while extrinsic job satisfaction comprises of traits outside of the job itself, such as the way the company is managed and salary.

The employees who satisfy with their job more possibly to speak well about the organization, they usually are more aligned with task decisions and more sensitive to help co-workers (Vizano et. al, 2021; Husin & Nurwati, 2014). While dissatisfied employees are unwilling to accept the values and goals of the organization (Wu et. al, 2019). Today, many organizations have acknowledged the importance of satisfied and motivated employees as crucial contributors towards long term goals. Furthermore, Risambessy et. al (2022) were discovered that motivation also can affect performance not only at individual but also group level that finally influencing the organizational performance.

There is a growing body of literature that recognizes the importance of employee motivation and job satisfaction. Consequently, the summary of research findings from previous scholars on Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of Work Motivation and Job Satisfaction**

Author	Year	Title	Country
Danica Bakotić	2016	Relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance	United Kingdom
Kuranchie-Mensah, Elizabeth Boye, Amponsah-Tawiah, Kwesi	2016	Employee motivation and work performance: A comparative study of mining companies in Ghana	Spain
Revenio Jalagat Jr.	2016	Job Performance, Job Satisfaction and Motivation: A Critical Review of their Relationship	Oman
Suriati Osman Siti Halijah Shariff Mohamad Nor Azali Lajin	2016	Does Innovation Contribute to Employee Performance	Malaysia
Faisal N. Al-Madi Husam Assal Fayiz Shrafat Dia Zeglat	2017	The Impact of Employee Motivation on Organizational Commitment	Europe
M. A. Bawa	2017	Employee motivation and productivity: A review of literature and implications for management practice	United Kingdom
Naser Hoboubi Alireza Choobineh Fatimah Kemari Ghanavati Sareh Keshavarzi Ali Akbar Hosseini	2017	The Impact of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction on Workforce Productivity in an Iranian Petrochemical Industry	Iran
Patrick Kampkotter	2017	Performance appraisals and job satisfaction	Germany
Suharno Pawirosumarto Purwanto Katijan Sarjana Muzaffar Muchtar	2017	Factors affecting employee performance of PT. Kiyokuni Indonesia	Indonesia
Thokozani S B Maseko	2017	Strong vs. Weak Organizational Culture: Assessing the Impact on Employee Motivation	Arab
Abdul Haeba Ramli	2018	Compensation, Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance in Health Services	Indonesia
Shiela A.Boamah	2018	Effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and patient safety outcomes	Canada
Irwan Pancasila Siswoyo Haryono Beni Agus Sulistyo Le Thanh Tung	2020	Effect of Work Motivation and Leadership toward Work Satisfaction and Employee Performance	Indonesia
Le Thi Minh Loan	2020	The influence of organizational commitment on employees' job performance: The mediating role of job satisfaction	Canada

Maartje Paais Jozef R. Pattiruhu	2020	Effect of Motivation, Leadership, and Organizational Culture on Satisfaction and Employee Performance	Indonesia
Rafia Hasan Taheri, Md. Shipon Miah, Md. Kamaruzzan	2020	Impact of Working Environment on Job Satisfaction	Europe
Yeti Kuswati	2020	The Effect of Motivation on Employee Performance	Indonesia
Setyo Riyanto, Endri Endri, Novita Herlisha	2021	Effect of work motivation and job satisfaction on employee performance: Mediating role of employee engagement	Ukraine
Ismail Hajiali, Andi Muhammad Fara Kessi, Budhi andriani, Etik Prihatin, Mukhlis Sufri	2022	Determination of Work Motivation, Leadership Style, Employee Competence on Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance	Indonesia
Saihu Akla, Rhian Indradewa	2022	The Effect of Soft Skill, Motivation and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance through Organizational Commitment	Indonesia

Source: The Authors

### Growing Interest

In recent years, the quantity of published articles on the issue of employee motivation and job satisfaction has steadily declined. There were ten publications published between 2016 and 2017. From 2018 to 2020, the trend dwindled to just seven articles. The number of articles produced then dropped to three in the years 2021-2022.

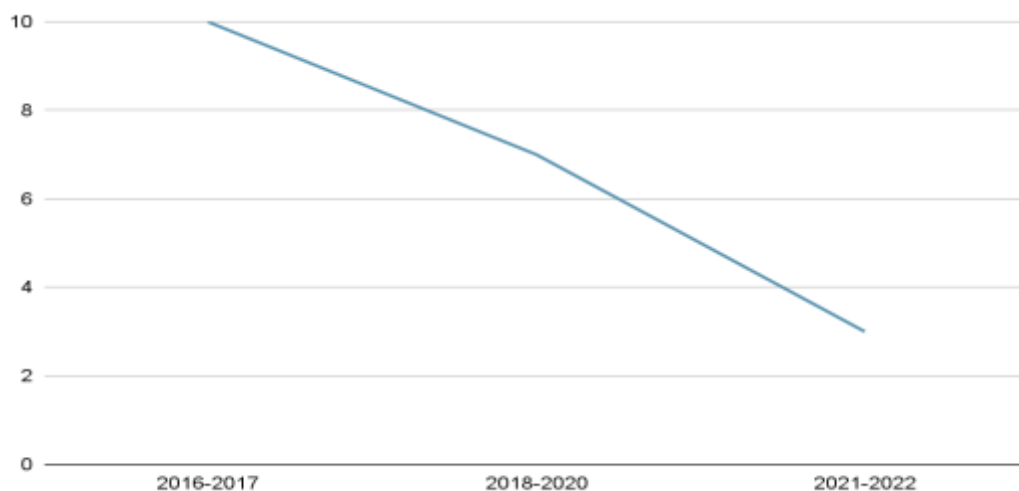


Figure 1: Number of Articles Published



## Methodology

In completing this review paper, the methods that have been applied were conducted by conducting a literature review. Several literatures have been used in which the discussion and deliberations about employee motivation and job performance were reviewed and assessed during the writing process. Moreover, in accomplishing the objective of this review paper, the authors comprehensively assessed and reviewed the empirical study papers or articles cited in online databases such as the UiTM database system, ResearchGate and Google Scholar. The articles that have been chosen and reviewed ranged between 2016 and 2022.

## Discussion and Directions for Future Research

Various studies have been done on the topic of Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction. Based on the findings from prior study in Table 1, few factors and variables used to boost employee motivation at the workplace. To perform well, employees require encouragement and support from a positive work environment. (Kuswati, 2020; Thokozani & Maseko, 2017; Pawirosumarto & Sarjana, 2017). However, according to a study performed by Akla and Indradewa (2022), motivation theory assumes that work factors related to job content, such as task characteristics, are the most important predictors of employee well-being and motivation. Consequently, motivation has the ability to significantly increase employee performance.

Furthermore, a person's success and performance in a field of work are defined by their level of skill and professionalism in respective field, but if success is achieved without the presence or lack of attention and acknowledgment, motivation will be decreased (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Additionally, according to equity theory, motivation is a function of equity in social exchange. Employees can actively participate in the company if they comprehend organisational truth (Riyanto, Endri, & Herlisha, 2021). As a result, a motivated employee is an asset that may help the company maintain and increase their revenue.

Furthermore, job satisfaction is linked to the working environment. Job satisfaction is mostly a psychological trait. It is dependent on the employees and differs from one person to another. Essentially, it refers to the emotional consequences that allow employees to succeed at work (Taheri, Miah, Kamaruzzaman, 2020). Furthermore, effective motivation at all levels of the business is critical in order to keep personnel satisfied and devoted to their employment (Madi, Assal, Shrafat and Zeglat, 2017). Employee satisfaction, as a result, has a favourable and considerable impact on employee performance.

Furthermore, work-related stress is a significant contributor to job satisfaction. When used as a motivator, work-related stress promotes creativity, which eliminates boredom and monotony. When stress is act as a negative influence, it causes hostility and low job satisfaction (Hoboubi et. al, 2017). Furthermore, offering a reward is merely a tool for measuring a person's motivation at work, not the primary reason for an employee's desire to stay with the organization (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). As a result, each employee's satisfaction must be emphasized for the company's benefit in order to have productive employees.

Based on the finding, it reveals that many study has been conducted on the topic of Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction in Malaysia. However, since motivation and job satisfaction are important predictors in ensuring employees and organizational productivity and performance, more study should be encouraged to be conducted in these areas. This paper shed the light that firstly, future researchers could further investigate the others antecedents' factors regarding Employee Motivation at the workplace. Second, future research can investigate the

theories related to Job Satisfaction at work which can enhance the contribution of the knowledge in this area. Another potentially area for this research is to identify the association between Employee Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Job Engagement and Job Performance particularly in several different field or environment.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, concern should be given to the Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction issue in the workplace since it is less highlighted in by the scholars in the past few years. This article review will enhance the body of knowledge of Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction that the organizations will benefit from with a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship of those variables especially in Malaysia. It seems obvious that there is no single definition of job satisfaction, therefore it is a complicated phenomenon with numerous definitions and views. Although research has shown that motivation at work and job satisfaction are all associated and interconnected, the relationship is circular rather than linear. According to the integrated model of individual motivation to work, the two factors of motivation and job satisfaction interact and are interconnected on a holistic level. However, when assessed in terms of group member satisfaction, it is common that work groups served as open systems with member satisfaction as the primary output. As a result, member satisfaction has been one of the most important factors in establishing long-term work groups. To achieve improved job satisfaction many factors must be considered, including task definition, clear goals, and membership diversity. These aid the manager in determining that these inputs are required for the group to achieve desired results.

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