

A COMPARISON OF PERCEIVED JOB PERFORMANCE PREDICTORS FOR DIFFERENT EMPLOYMENT MODE EMPLOYEES IN FACILITY MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to investigate the factors influencing the perceived job performance of employees in facility management. The research applies a quantitative approach. A structured questionnaire was employed comprising questions on the predictor variables of training and development, experience, organizational commitment on perceived job performance. The nine dimensions of perceived job performance developed by Viswesvaran, Schmidt and Ones (2005) and the training and development scale developed by Tracey & Tews (2005) consisting of three dimensions are also assessed. Furthermore, the three dimensions of organizational commitment identified by Allen & Meyer (1990) are measured. Experience is counted by the number of working years in the facility management industry. The research also explores the association between training and development, organization commitment and experience and the perceived job performance of employees in facility management. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the path model between the internal and external employment mode choices. The total number of the sample was 213 employees in facility management. The internal and external employment mode choice for respondents was 79 and 134 employees, respectively. The results confirm that training and development, experience and organization commitment are predictors of perceived job performance for the external employment mode choice. For the internal employment mode choice, training and development is a predictor of perceived job performance.

Keyword: *perceived job performance, facility management, employment mode employees*

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INTRODUCTION

The performance of employees has been the focus of organization study for both practitioners and academic researchers. Employee performance largely determines firm performance. Human resources have a vital role in firm performance. The study of the predictors of firm performance is also well-established. Research on firm performance also includes employee performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Quiñones, Ford & Teachout, 1995; Sonnentag, Volmer, & Spsychala, 2008). The multiple dimensions of job performance have also been investigated by researchers and practitioners because it is important to industry. One of the predictors that most researchers focus on is training and development. It is believed that effective individual training and development enhances the abilities and knowledge of employees (Mathieu, Tannenbaum & Salas, 1992; Brown, 2002; Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011). However, it is not only training and development that is studied by researchers. There are also other influential factors that are often studied in the field of job performance. One of the popular predictors is work experience, which is linked to firm performance (Quiñones, Ford and Teachout, 1995). Experience can be described in terms of skills and professional advancement. Sonnentag et al. (2008) employed working duration as an indicator of experience, which, in turn, influences job performance. Organization theory also includes commitment to the firm and presents the dynamic predictors of job performance with a focus on organizational commitment. Allen & Meyer (1990) and Riketta (2002) stated that a positive commitment to the firm brings positive outcomes in terms of performance. Commitment has multiple dimensions. Somers & Birnbaum (1998) and Siders, George and Dharwadkar (2001) suggested that the job task is a form of commitment that is able to

forecast positive performance outcomes. Employees who know what they have to do will have the motivation to perform better. The enhancement of the quality of the job will result in better job performance. Sider et al. (2001) divided commitment into internal commitment (within the organization) and external commitment (to the customer), which yield different job performance outcomes. Research has revealed that the goal of a job is significant for employees to varying degrees. Therefore, the study of commitment has been conducted across several industries because of its multi-dimensional nature. In addition, the individual characteristics of employees are also the focus of many studies and can predict the likelihood of association between personal traits and employee performance. Not surprisingly, study has been undertaken in a variety of research (Major, Turner & Fletcher, 2006; Sonnentag et al., 2008; Judge, Rodell, Klinger, Simon, & Crawford, 2013). In addition, factors, such as work environment, as a predictor of job performance were also suggested by Sonnentag et al. (2008); Tracy and Tews (2005). As job performance concepts and meanings vary with context, the study of job performance remains challenging and offers opportunities for further study.

The firm's ultimate goal in performance is also underlined in both theoretical and empirical approaches which indicate that enhanced job performance yields enhanced long term firm performance. Porter (1985) proposed generic competitive long run strategies for corporations known as "sustainable competitive advantage". Cost advantage is used to indicate high levels of performance for a business. Relative functional activity in business has a benchmark cost. A firm that is able to reduce the cost of each activity more than competitors has better performance. The concept of cost advantage is also involved in determining business planning strategy. Competitive advantage is a core issue in generating a long-run advantage for a firm. Thus, competitiveness theory encourages the firm to focus on core business competencies.

The concentration of organizational analysis is illustrated in terms of the organizational structure.. Organizational structural development is represented by the complexity of the organization. Lenz and Engledow (1986) presented the optimum model for organizational environment analysis, which can reflect the real situation. The results indicated that organizational change influences organizational structure, allowing the firm to adapt to change and to survive in the real world (Pugh, Hickson, Hinings, Macdonald, Turner and Lupton ,1963; Daft ,1980). Functionalist theory explains the structure of organizations by employing the concept of vertical integration and employment contracts. In other words, the structure of the organization is determined by the operation's function. Lonsdale and Cox (2000) supported the concept of the outsourcing of transaction cost, the classical implication. The concentration in core competencies was highlighted to encourage the firm to focus on the core competencies of the corporation.

New ways to do business and the new concepts of organizational structure are reviewed. Service providers often provide non-competency services to support the core business (Manning, Rodriguez & Roulac, 2009). However, the concept of organizational structure has not been reviewed recently. Coase's paper (1937) suggested the concept is based on relevant issues, including economic theory on the price mechanism in regard to the resources, with the entrepreneur as a coordinator. Vertical integration was found to support the price mechanism in the industry and firm categories. However, size efficiency was also identified as a significant determinant of firm performance. There are diminishing returns for management when the firm becomes larger. Consequently, a firm that has well-coordinated resources also minimizes transaction costs. The effect of core business practices allocated to a

conglomeration aim at divestment while vertical integration and the internal integration of supporting activities aim at outsourcing (Lonsdale & Cox, 2000).

For outsourced service providers, better job performance is directly associated with user satisfaction. Bowers and Akhlaghi (1999) found that better performance is indicated by higher levels of customer satisfaction. The facility management field is also a service that most firms decide to outsource. The concept of support unit in the organization gives facility management a significant role for service providers. Most of the factors identified in research on firm performance outcomes are relevant to the field of facility management because they indicate the relationship between the organization and its employees (Grimshaw, 1999). Lonsdale and Cox (2000) identified four main dimensions, which are conglomeration, horizontal integration, vertical integration and the internal integration of supporting activities. Thus facility management is classified as an internal integration of supporting activities. To clarify this point, facility management is also defined as the operational support unit that plays significant direct and indirect supporting roles in the core business (Chotipanich, 2004).

This research aims to investigate the factors that influence job performance in the facility management industry. In addition, a comparison of the internal and external modes of employment in facility management is also undertaken. In this research, the predictors are training and development, organizational commitment and the number of years in the industry, which indicates experience. There is a lack of research on job performance effectiveness in the particular field of facility management in an Asian context. Supporting activities in facility management (e.g. cleaning, security, garden landscaping and building support) are required in the industry. However, most research has been conducted in western contexts, especially in developed countries where the facility management industry has clear roles and responsibilities. Therefore, it is advisable to examine an Asian context, which is the first research on manpower in the facility management industry in Thailand. This could be extended in future research and more empirical study in this field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job performance has various dimensions in different organizations (Sonnentag et al., 2008). The human resource management system is involved in the recruitment process. Particular jobs require particular skills, and people who are enthusiastic to learn new things tend to have better performance (Brown, 2002). Korsten (2002) confirmed training and development encourages a more intense and dynamic facility management industry. Human resource experts focus on the nature of people and individual characteristics in various ways (Major et al., 2006). Experience has also been found to be one of the significant factors that determines employee performance. That is also why many firms require employees who have experience and make it a consideration in the selection process (Quiñones et al., 1995). Experience is measured by the number of years in the industry. The greater the number of years, the more effective and efficient the employee could be (Wright & Bonett, 2002). In facility management, research is limited in regard to job performance expectations. Research was only found in respect of conceptual and proposed frameworks (Bowers & Akhlaghi, 1999; Chotipanich, 2004). Thus, empirical research is still needed. However, the literature review revealed that the experience of the employee is an important contributor to job performance. In addition, one of the major factors is the association between job performance and organizational commitment

The flexibility of employment mode

Outsourcing is an issue when the firm's core competencies are focused. Supporting or related activities need to be considered to minimize cost. Kulkarni and Ramamoorthy (2005) attempted to match resource commitment and uncertainty in order to determine what influences the choice of employment contract. Competitive uncertainty refers to unpredictability in the actions of potential or existing competitors. Behavioral uncertainty increases the difficulty of anticipating all possible contingencies in employment contracts, thereby increasing overall transaction costs. The flexibility of the contract is related to technology and the environment and can manage the requirements of workers of different types (Lepak, Takeuchi & Snell, 2003). Sheehan and Cooper (2011) identified the factors that determine the outsourcing decision. Organization size or firm size and HRM strategic involvement were found to be significant factors. Furthermore, Sheehan and Cooper (2011) also investigated the relationship between outsourcing and organizational effectiveness and perceived financial performance by employing firm size and HRM strategic involvement. The predictor moderators of outsourcing and organizational effectiveness are supported by HRM strategic involvement whereas organization size is not. Manning et al., (2009) found the advantages of outsourcing are economies of scale, greater effectiveness resulting from economies of scope, and lower transaction cost. Coase (1937) discussed the price mechanism which is determined by demand and supply. In addition, market (transaction) costs for businesses who enter the market early include price discovery costs, contract and negotiation costs, regulation costs (taxes) and uncertainty costs, which have been highlighted as costs that affect firm performance. However, the disadvantages of outsourcing include the loss of the power of negotiation, the loss of the key controllers, inefficiency in outsource performance control and the loss of internal relationship (Manning et al., 2009). The most important part of human resource management is investment in human capital. (Lepak & Snell, 2002; 2003; Kulkarni & Ramamoorthy, 2005). Human capital is classified as the capital of the firm that needs to be studied in detail. In particular cases, good human capital can generate more income and profit for the firm. Consequently, evidence of good returns in terms of firm performance justifies the investment in human capital (Lepak & Snell, 1999). Economic feasibility is also discussed at top management levels in regard to the benefits that the firm would receive once human capital is developed.

Training and Development Predictor

Training is an influential factor that has a direct relationship with job performance. Training and development concepts have been discussed in terms of the design of training, and on-the-job training that supports the organization (Klan et al., 2011). The motivation for training and development is also an interesting topic that researchers often investigate. Training and development can bring about better job performance. Mathieu et al. (1992) investigated motivation in career planning and job involvement. Employees will try to perform better in their job if they know they will get promoted or receive a reward. Consequently, clear objectives and goals for a job are always necessary. Training and development that includes goal setting is important for employees in training sessions (Latham and Kinne, 1974). In previous research on job performance, the rating of job performance has been carried out in various ways. (Sonntag et al. 2008). Perceived job performance can be rated by peer rating or supervisor rating (Hunter & Hunter, 1984). However, Major et al. (2006) argued that not all kinds of people are willing to learn to enhance performance. The results revealed that a proactive personality, extraversion, openness and conscientiousness are positive predictors of the motivation to learn. Maurer and Lippstreu (2008); Mathieu et al. (1992) also conducted

research into those who are eager to learn and develop their skills. The most effective training and development resulted in better performance by employees. In contrast, mismatched training was not so effective as the wasted time and money is a burden to the firm. Maurer and Lippstreu (2008) identified two kinds of learner, learning-oriented and performance-oriented learners, who require different types of training and development. The learning-oriented learner is eager to learn as they really want to improve and develop their skills. In contrast, performance-oriented learners do not appreciate the learning opportunities. Mathieu et al. (1992) argued that training opportunities are suitable for people who plan their careers. They would respond positively to training opportunities. Moreover, if the training enhances their ability to perform their current job and is able to increase opportunities in the long run, employees would react positively to training. Learning and development is classified as individual behavior. The Big Five model of motivation in learning aims to provide the right training and development program for the right people. The results reveal that extraversion, positive emotion, openness and ambition are directly associated with the motivation to learn new things (Major et al., 2006). Not only do personal characteristics influence the capability to learn, the situation, current position and environment also influence it. Tracy and Tews (2005) found that direct relevance to the work environment was important in learning, and multi-level support from the organization determined the opportunities in the organization as well.

The review reveals that organizations should carefully consider training and development programs. Firms must be confident that their investment in the training and development of employees will bring positive returns in terms of performance. Training and recruitment are costs that most firms consider (Whiting, 1978). However, facility management is classified as a dynamic industry that needs ongoing training and development. Korsten (2002) argued that it brings positive outcomes for both internal and external mode choices of employees in facility management. The impact training and development on perceived job performance is categorized into two employment mode choices as follows;

H1: Training and development has a positive influence on the perceived job performance of employees in facility management for the internal mode

H2: Training and development has a positive influence on the perceived job performance of employees in facility management for the external mode

Experience Predictor

Experience can be measured in terms of quantity. The number of years is also a widely-accepted measurement. The greater the number of working years, the more experience a member of staff has at work. However, experience is difficult to measure. Some researchers pointed out that the greater the number of working years, the lower the performance because the employee loses their motivation while employees who work with specific tasks have better performance. Quiñones et al. (1995) studied the moderator effect of work experience on job performance. Wright and Bonett (2002) and Sonnentag et al. (2008) also suggested that experience is a factor with various outcomes. The hypotheses regarding the influence of experience on perceived job performance are divided into two employment mode choices as follows;

H3: Experience has a positive influence of on perceived job performance for employees in facility management for the internal mode

H4: Experience has a positive influence on perceived job performance for employees in facility management for the external mode

Organization Commitment Predictor

Organization commitment has multiple dimensions. The meaning of commitment was reviewed by Meyer et al. (1989); and Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982). There has been much discussion about commitment in regard to the strength of an individual’s identification with an organization. Meyer et al. (1989) surveyed first level managers in the food industry to assess the impact of affective commitment, continuance commitment and job satisfaction on job performance. The results confirmed that affective commitment is positively associated with job performance. Wright and Bonett (2002) and Riketta (2002) concluded that a strong emotional attachment represents attitude commitment to the firm. In contrast, a decrease in commitment was also revealed for those with longer tenures. Commitment can predict positive individual performance. Positive affective commitment leads to strong continuance commitment to the organization (Meyer et al., 1989). Most research has been conducted in industrial experiments. There is little research on service industries, especially research that is directly related to job performance. Consequently, organization commitment is employed in much research in regard to various issues and different outcomes are evident. To apply the theory of organization commitment in other industries also requires different measurements. The hypotheses in regard to the factors that influence the impact of organization commitment on perceived job performance are divided into two employment mode choices as;

H5: Organization commitment has a positive influence on the perceived job performance of employees in facility management for the internal mode.

H6: Organization commitment has a positive influence on the perceived job performance of employees in facility management for the external mode.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

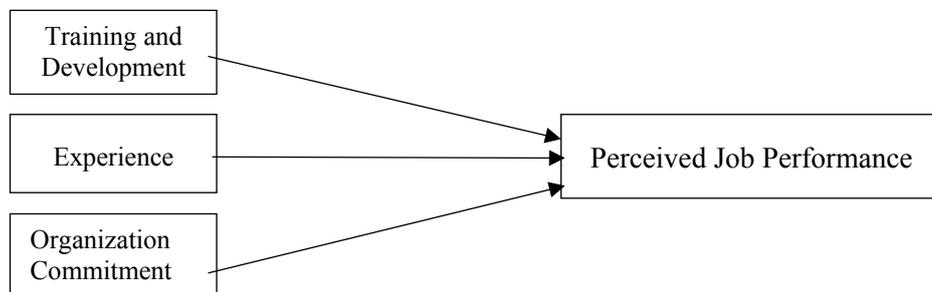


Figure 1: The model of the influence of training and development, experience and organization commitment on perceived job performance in facility management

The structural questionnaire comprises questions related to the predictor variables of training and development, experience, organizational commitment and their effect on perceived job performance. Nine dimensions of perceived job performance measurement were developed by Viswesvaran, Schmidt and Ones (2005). The components of perceived job performance consist of interpersonal competence, administrative quality, productivity, effort, job knowledge, leadership, compliance and communication competency. Training and development scales were developed by Tracey & Tews (2005) and consisted of three dimensions. The components of training and development are managerial support, job support and organizational support. Three dimensions of organization commitment measurement by Allen & Meyer (1990) are measured while experience is counted by the number of working years in the facility management industry. The research also explores the association between training and development, organization commitment and experience and the perceived job performance of employees in facility management. Multiple regression

analysis was used to test the path model for the internal and external employment mode choices.

The total number employees in facility management was 213. The number for the internal and external employment mode choices were 79 and 134 employees, respectively. Firstly, 50 sets of the questionnaire were initially distributed at the meeting of representatives of the Property Management Association of Thailand (PMA) and all of them were completed. The members of the PMA then requested that the questionnaire be conducted online because it was more convenient (Maurer and Lippstreu, 2008). Therefore, an online questionnaire was developed which was well-accepted and completed by the respondents in facility management in a subsequent process of data collection. Finally, an additional 163 respondents were acquired. The objective of the questionnaire is to gather information about both the internal mode of employment and the external mode of employment. However, it was necessary to ensure that the right respondents were targeted by cooperating with the PMA to obtain membership details and contact information. To be more precise, the internal mode of employment refers to permanent workers in various sectors of the organization whereas the external employment mode refers to outsourced service providers in facility management.

RESULTS

Table I presents the predictor variable results for perceived job performance for both the internal and the external employment mode choices. *H1* and *H2* are supported as it was revealed that that training and development influences perceived job performance for both the internal and the external employment mode choices ($\beta = 0.582$ and $\beta = 0.294$; $P < 0.001$). *H3* was not supported as experience was not positively associated with perceived job performance in the internal mode ($\beta = 0.052$ $P > 0.001$). *H4* is supported. Experience was found to influence perceived job performance in the external mode ($\beta = 0.139$; $P < 0.001$). Also *H5* was not supported as commitment was not positively associated with perceived job performance in the internal mode ($\beta = 0.024$ $P > 0.001$). Finally, *H6* is supported. Commitment was found to influence perceived job performance in the external mode ($\beta = 0.463$; $P < 0.001$).

Table I: Results of regression analysis predicting Perceived Job Performance for employees in facility management

Predictor	β	
	Internal	External
1. Experience	.052	.139
2. Organizational Commitment	.024	.463
3. Training and Development	.582	.294

Note $\beta =$ standardized regression coefficient $p < 0.001$.

In addition, the descriptive statistics of means, standard deviations and correlations are shown in Table II and Table III for the different groups. These findings reflect the correlations between variables for the internal and external employment modes. In general, the variables in the study were correlated in the internal employment mode choice. Interestingly, for the

external employment mode choice, there was no association between training and development and experience.

Table II: Means, standards and correlations between study variables for the internal mode choice

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4
1. Perceived Job Performance	4.03	.51	-			
2. Experience	5.64	5.58	.08**	-		
3. Organizational Commitment	4.23	.42	.29**	.03**	-	
4. Training and Development	4.03	.62	.59**	.06**	.46**	-

Notes: N = 79; *** $p < 0.001$.

Table III: Means, standards and correlations between study variables for the external mode choice

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4
1. Perceived Job Performance	3.90	.58	-			
2. Experience	7.29	7.06	.21**	-		
3. Organizational Commitment	4.03	.42	.62**	.20**	-	
4. Training and Development	3.73	.72	.49**	-.07**	.46**	-

Notes: N = 134, *** $p < 0.001$.

DISCUSSION

Both the internal and external employment mode choices require training and development. The facility management industry is a dynamic industry (Korsten, 2002). Employees in the industry believe that training and development can enhance job performance. Human resource management experts focus on the process of recruitment to find the right people for

the organization. However, once working, employees require ongoing training. Judge, et al. (2013) suggested that policy for human resource management should focus on individual persons who are willing to learn (Judge, et al., 2013). Even though experience is a significant predictor of employee performance, it is not the only factor. The results for the internal employment mode choices did not support the hypotheses. Experience is able to predict perceived job performance for the internal employment mode choice while it is not a predictor variable in the external employment mode choice. The outcomes support previous findings in regard to experience (Wright & Bonett, 2002 ; Sonnentag et al. 2002). In this research, the unit of measurement is the length of tenure (years). When work experience is considered, more detail is necessary. Sonnentag et al., (2002) strongly recommended to specify the level of expertise for a particular task as an indicator of direct experience. The external employment mode choice is an outsourced service provider that performs specific tasks. It is clear that employees in this sector who are confident about their expertise will have enhanced job performance.

In addition, organization commitment cannot be counted as a predictor of perceived job performance in the internal employment mode choice as overall commitment contributes to affective, normative and continuance commitment. The longer the period that employees work with the organization, the lower the commitment to the organization (Wright & Bonett, 2002). These findings also support the experience and commitment measurement. (Somers & Birnbaum, 1998; Siders et al., 2001). These findings indicate that employees should acquire some experience before the selection process. Nonetheless, commitment can also be a predictor for the external employment mode choice. In the context of the facility management industry, the more experience and expertise an employee has in a specific company, the more likely it is to be able to predict job performance.

Training and Development is an important way to enhance the capability of the firm in a similar way to other industries. Training courses enhance the employee's ability to contribute better performance that meets the objectives of the task. Employees who are able to foresee the outcomes and the direction of work can perform independently in some situations. However, these findings confirm that training and development is also important. There is a negative correlation between experience and training and development in the external employment mode. Maurer and Lippstreu, (2008) divided the need for training and development into two categories. An employee who is classified as learning-oriented is always willing to learn. In contrast, a performance-oriented employee who is confident about their abilities might not be interested to learn. Consequently, human resource management requires a development plan to enhance the knowledge and skills of employees (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008; Mathieu et al., 1992).

LIMITATIONS

This research employed predictor variables only for facility management employees. The results reveal the factors that influence perceived job performance only for employees in the facility management industry. In addition, there are only three predictor variables, training and development, experience and organization commitment that are used to investigate perceived job performance in this research. In addition, the study only focuses on different groups in the same study and model. Respondents should clearly understand their position in the company. For both the internal and external employment mode choices, the respondents could only reply in regard to their own organization. Experience in this research is mentioned in terms of the duration of work in an organization. However, experience is multi-dimensional and there are other considerations in regard to the level of specificity in a job

task rather than number of years in the organization to create an accurate measurement of experience (Quiñones et al., 1995; Sonnentag et al., 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

This research identified the factors that influence perceived job performance in facility management in Thailand. In addition, a comparison of perceived job performance predictors for different employment mode employees in facility management was also undertaken. The conceptual framework and definitions were adopted from Chotipanich (2004). Most of the previous literature was conducted in a Western context. Research on employees in facility management is also lacking. This research also confirms the significance of facility management in a dynamic industry. (Grimshaw, 1999; Korsten, 2002). This study highlighted the variables that influence perceived job performance. In addition, training and development was confirmed as the key element of job performance for both the internal and external employment mode choice employees in facility management. Lepak and Snell (2002; 2003) and Kulkarni and Ramamoorthy (2005) suggested that human resource management needs to monitor the cost of training and development.

Implications and future research

This research highlighted training and development as the key influencing factor in perceived job performance for all types of employee in facility management. This research strongly indicates that not only the core competencies of the organization need attention and involvement in organizational operations. Facility management also plays a significant role as a supporting unit in many firms. Consequently, it is necessary to pay attention to the people who work in this unit. Human capital investment in the facility management industry also requires training and development (Korsten, 2002). The current study reveals the current situation of the factors that influence perceived job performance for employees in facility management by employing training and development, experience and organization commitment as dependent variables. The findings revealed a positive relationship between training and development and perceived job performance for both internal and external employment mode choices. Future research might also indicate other relevant influential variables in regard to perceived job performance such as the characteristics of people (Judge et al., 2013).

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