Job Satisfaction Among Executives: Case of Japanese Electrical And Electronic Manufacturing Companies, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on responses by Malaysian executives from Japanese electrical and electronic manufacturing companies on the level of job satisfaction amongst executives in Selangor, Malaysia. 35.1% of the executives were found to be highly satisfied, 31.8% moderately satisfied and 33.1% dissatisfied with their jobs. The study finds that relationship between age groups, duration of service and gender versus job satisfaction are significant at 95% confidence level. The older executives who have more work experience showed a higher level of job satisfaction compared to the younger executives. In terms of gender, male executives experienced a higher level of job satisfaction compared to female executives. This could be attributed to the Japanese work culture that emphasizes the seniority-merit wage/promotion and masculinity work culture. We suggest that promotion and salary increment policy should be geared towards a performance based system thus creating a healthy competitive environment that promotes excellent performance.

Keywords: Malaysian executives, Japanese electrical and manufacturing companies, Job satisfaction, Social cultural values, Work performance

INTRODUCTION

The term job satisfaction refers to an individual's general attitude toward his or her job (Robbins, 1998); a person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive attitudes toward the job, while a person who is dissatisfied with his or her job will hold negative attitudes about the job. Some factors like mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions and colleagues are significant contributors to job satisfaction (Smith et al., 1969; Cooper et al., 1988). Lawler (1973) sees job satisfaction as the discrepancy between what individuals expect to receive out of their jobs and what they actually received.

Job satisfaction has always been correlated to an increased work performance or productivity of a firm (Argyle, 1988, Dunnette et al., 1967). It is also used to predict the employees’ retention in an organization. Employees’ retention has becoming an important issue because the amount of losses to an organization due to the lost of tacit knowledge when employees resign and the cost incurred to an organization to recruit and train new employees are getting higher. Thus organization should identify their employee’s level of satisfaction and determine the factors that could contribute to it. With such knowledge, management will be able to formulate strategies to ensure that their employees are satisfied hence reducing the possibility of resigning due to dissatisfaction. To the Japanese managers operating in Malaysia, managing their Malaysian employees is not an easy task since they come from two different cultures. Although both of these two countries are located in Asia, their cultural dimension indices vary greatly whereby the Japanese index of masculinity (95) and uncertainty avoidance (92) are much higher than the Malaysians (with index of 50 for masculinity and 36 for uncertainty avoidance) as proposed by Hofstede (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/). Similarly the Japanese have a long term orientation (index of 80) compared the Malaysians (nil). On the other hand, the index of power distance is very much higher among the Malaysians (104) compared to the Japanese (54). Hence Japanese managers operating in Malaysia need to understand the needs and wants of their Malaysian employees, while their Malaysian employees need to adjust themselves to the expectations of their Japanese managers in order for them to work in harmony.
The distinctive Japanese style of human resource practices in Malaysia and other developing countries in most studies suggest that high degree of control exerted by parent companies over major areas of decision making (Elger and Smith, 1994; Ichimura, 1981). Furthermore, the Japanese expatriates stationed in subsidiaries control major decisions (Negandhi et al., 1987). Given this dual culture environment, are Malaysian executives experiencing job satisfaction in a Japanese management style environment? This research will be very useful for the Human Resources Managers and Management in the Japanese manufacturing companies especially to the Electrical and Electronic industry. Result of this research will give an idea for the top management in strategizing and take necessary actions or precautions on their Malaysian executives whose main task is to translate Top Management goals into implementation and execution. Result of this research also will give ideas on what are the major factors to look into in order to increase job satisfaction level among Malaysian executives. It will give the Management (the Japanese) more knowledge in order to set up effective and efficient strategies to ensure that their Malaysian executives are satisfied and thus retain them in the organization. This indirectly helps the organization to keep all the tacit knowledge and reduce lost of recruitment and training costs. Similarly, this research can assist executives to know some factors that might contribute to their job satisfaction.

This research is also expected to make contributions to the knowledge of attitudinal behaviour specifically in job satisfaction amongst Malaysian executives who work in Japanese manufacturing companies, which has a vast difference in terms of cultural background. Is the top management level (the Japanese) able to satisfy the needs and wants of their employees (the Malaysians) and how to motivate these employees in achieving the targeted objectives of their firms? Though this research cannot give definite answers, however it will be able to give some ideas to the top management of the foreign companies especially the Japanese companies to motivate their Malaysian employees particularly their executives.

BACKGROUND

As a developing country, Malaysia depends on foreign direct investment (FDI) in stimulating its economy. In terms of investment, Japan was the second largest investor in ASEAN, with FDI inflows of US$7.2 billion and US$10.8 billion in 2005 and 2006, respectively (MITI, 2008). Japan is also an important source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for Malaysia. In 2007, Malaysia approved US$1.9 billion (RM6.5 billion) investments from Japan. While in 2006, approved investments amounted to US$1.2 billion (RM 4.4 billion).

JAPANESE INVESTORS IN MALAYSIA

Japanese manufacturers were among the first to invest in Malaysia. They have invested in Malaysia as early as 1960’s. Among the pioneer is the Matsushita Group, which has invested more than RM6 billions. Since then, Japan continues to be one of Malaysia’s major sources of foreign direct investment for the manufacturing sector. As at December 2007, Japanese investment amounted to RM47.2 billion involving 2,215 projects in the manufacturing sector (MITI, 2008). In 2007, Japan was the largest foreign investor with 60 approved projects worth RM6.5 billion. Between January and April 2008, a total of 21 projects were approved with investments amounting to RM373.3 million. Major areas of investments by Japanese companies in the manufacturing sector include electrical & electronic products; transport equipment; wood and wood products; fabricated metal products; chemicals & chemical products; and machinery equipment (MITI, 2008). Currently, there are 1447 Japanese related companies operating in Malaysia (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Japanese Related Companies in Malaysia (as at Feb. 2008)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverages</td>
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<td>Textile &amp; textile products</td>
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<td>Wood &amp; wooden products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petroleum &amp; chemical product</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steel &amp; non-ferrous metal products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic &amp; electrical products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport machinery &amp; parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other manufacturing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>93</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>143</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-manufacturers</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing rep./sales office</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture &amp; forestry</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishery &amp; marine products</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign trade &amp; commerce</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banking/finance &amp; insurance</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; warehousing</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-manufacturers</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total non-manufacturers</strong></td>
<td>286</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>617</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>1447</td>
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Source: JETRO, Kuala Lumpur

Herzberg (1968) in his earlier study found that employees at all levels of the organisation were interested in two facets about their work: the quality of the work itself and the benefits or rewards of the job (money, status and so forth). Of the two, the quality of work leads to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction occurs when the employees experienced work situations that entail increases in achievement, recognition, challenging work, responsibility, and advancement. When jobs match with the needs, preferences, and abilities of the employees, they are more likely to be happy and satisfied with their work and lives, and workplaces are apt to function fairly smoothly and effectively. On the other hand, when there is mismatch, or lack of fit, a variety of difficulties are likely to result for workers and their families as well as for employers and society, which could lead to poorer work performance (Kalleberg, 2008).

Yankelovich (1974) explained that job satisfaction can be in the form of economic or psychological satisfaction. Examples of economic satisfaction are good salary, secure retirement and job security. While psychological satisfaction is an opportunity for advancement in the job, better pay, interesting work, satisfying work, ability to win more recognition, commitment and interest in the decision making process. On the other hand, Hackman and Oldham (1976) measure satisfaction including several other factors like nature of job, pay, promotion, recognition, working conditions, benefit, supervision, co-worker, company and management.

According to Herzberg (1968), organization should categorize rewards into intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. These two rewards are not directly related to job satisfaction because the relationship is moderated by how equitable these rewards are to individuals. It is argued that in attaining quality performance, the intrinsic rewards are more important than extrinsic rewards as they influence higher order needs of individuals like work it self. The extrinsic factors can be classified into two factors, socio-demographic factors and job factors. Examples of socio-demographic factors are age, gender, race, duration of service, marital status, skill categories and education. Examples of job factors are work, pay, promotion, supervision and co-worker.

The relationship between age and job satisfaction is inconsistent and depends on the controlling factors such as job security and experience (Gruneberg, 1979). However, most researchers found a positive relationship between age and job satisfaction (Bass and Barret, 1981; Maghribi, 1999). Similarly, the positive correlation of job satisfaction with respondents’ age and duration of service could be due to reasons as explained by Locke (1976) and Kalleberg et al. (1983). Older executives or those executives with several years of working experience in their current companies are most likely to acquire more confidence from their superiors thus in return they will be given more variety of tasks, more autonomy and control over their work. This will increase the level of satisfaction towards their present job.

Peter and Stephen (1978) suggested that promotional opportunities could be a motivational factor for high
achievers and perceived as a reward for their good performance. However, according to Imaoka (1986) Japanese firms in Malaysia emphasized seniority-merit wage and promotion systems, which could impede the progress of younger workers that in return could result in dissatisfaction among younger employees. Tsuda (1981) referred to the special features of Japanese management practices such as life-time employment, seniority based wage system, enterprise welfare and enterprise unions as a tightly coherent organic system, stressing that each of the special features does not exist in isolation or as separate entities. Latiff (1979) and Abdullah (1986) argued that limited promotion opportunities will lead to lower satisfaction. While satisfaction level towards supervision is a very subjective aspect and it depends mostly on the individual ways of supervision (Gruneberg, 1979). Different superiors will have different styles of leadership and supervision approach. It also depends on individual preferences. Some executives prefer higher level or close supervision while others would prefer the opposite. However, Pascale et al. (1980) suggested that supervisors may motivate and improve their subordinates’ performance through practicing considerate leadership, which is supported by Lem (1983) on his research in a plywood and sawmill factory.

Intrinsic rewards like given more autonomy to employees are expected to increase their level of job satisfaction. Employees with several years of working experience are most likely to acquire more confidence from their superiors thus in return they will be given more variety of tasks, more autonomy and control over their work (Locke 1976; Kalleberg et al.1983). Similarly social interaction also could alleviate employees’ level of job satisfaction as suggested by Gruneberg (1979), Hellriegel and Slocum (1973).

SOCIAL CULTURAL VALUES

Although both Japan and Malaysia are located in Asia, there are some differences in their cultural dimensions as proposed by Hofstede (1984 & 1985). Culturally, the Japanese tend to be somewhat introverted in their ways. They generally are not receptive to outsiders and loyalty to the group is critical for success. Masculinity is the highest characteristic of the Japanese (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/). The lowest ranking factor is individualism, which coincides with their high ranking in uncertainty avoidance. Japan is a more collectivist culture that avoids risks and shows little value for personal freedom. In high need for certainty countries such as Japan, loyalty to an employer is seen as a distinct advantage. The Japanese managers would need to appreciate the need for compliance with procedures and the "normal" approach, and understand that they are likely to expect the same of their employees. Overemphasis on a preference towards a "just do it" attitude on the part of the employees may lead to resentment and withdrawal of cooperation, rather than the intended impact of "empowering" their employees in achieving the objectives. Similarly, the Malaysians placed a great deal of importance on relationships. The building of long lasting relationships is tantamount for business success in Malaysia. The concept of "saving face" is inherent in this country. They will go to great lengths to save face and avoid embarrassment. The loss of face is not easily forgotten nor is it easily forgiven.

JOB SATISFACTION AND WORK PERFORMANCE

In this highly competitive world, success of any organization depends on its human resource. A satisfied, happy and hard working employee is the biggest asset of any organization. Workforce of any organization is responsible to a large extent for its productivity and profitability. For example in the service profit chain (SPC) model, employee satisfaction can improve employee productivity (Milliman et al., 2008). Low employee morale can lead to poor service and less investment in employees, creating a repeating cycle. The SPC model involves providing employees with better training, salaries and job designs to improve performance.

Efficient human resource management and maintaining higher job satisfaction level in a big organization determine not only its performance but also affect the growth and performance of the entire economy. So, for its success, it is very important to manage human resource effectively and to find out whether its employees are satisfied or not. Only if they are satisfied, they will work with commitment and project a positive image of the organization. However, if employees with key skills or potentials leave, this could have a detrimental impact on effectiveness of the organization as found by Eldridge (2008) in Practitioners Survey. 81% believed that staff turnover had a detrimental
impact on effectiveness. Interestingly, a contradiction also uncovered whereby two thirds of the organisation said that they wanted to reduce employee turnover, but three out of four had no explicit strategy or budget in place to achieve this. Part of the problem is that the received HR wisdom appears to clash with reality when it comes to understanding why staffs leave. HR practitioners presume that people leave because of "lack of promotion opportunities" (61 per cent), "inadequate pay" (49 per cent) and "poor relationship with manager" (26 per cent) but the results of anonymous exit data revealed that although promotion prospects and pay are indeed factors for leavers, they are not as important as HR practitioners perceive. Employees say other reasons like “uninteresting work boredom” and lack of training and development opportunities (both 25 per cent), “lack of teamwork and co-operation” (19 per cent) and “promises not kept by management” (17 per cent). Hence this could suggest that satisfaction and work performance are related because both are the results of employee personality characteristics (Industrial Engineer, 2007).

Roberto et al. (2007) explore the determinants of perceived job performance in a sample of shop-floor employees in a manufacturing plant in northern Mexico. They hypothesised that job satisfaction, age and education levels are significant predictors of job performance. It was found that the two variables that measure job satisfaction are positively and significantly associated with job performance. This result is consistent with previous studies. Nevertheless, age and education levels do not show a significant association with job performance. Interestingly, it was also found that education levels are negatively related to job satisfaction.

The conservation-of-resources theory (Hobfoll et al. 2001) provided the theoretical underpinning for the relationship among HR practices perceived by employees, emotional exhaustion, and work outcomes (job satisfaction and job performance). To fully understand the underlying mechanism of the relationship, Sun et al. (2008) examined (1) the main and interactive effects of HR practices and employee age on emotional exhaustion and (2) the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and job performance in the People's Republic of China. The research result indicated that the relationship between low-commitment HR practices and emotional exhaustion was stronger for older employees than for younger ones. This contrasting finding demonstrated the criticality of an organization's commitment to employees, particularly to older employees, which further supported and enriched the conservation-of-resources theory in the Chinese context.

METHODOLOGY

A set of structured questionnaires were distributed to solicit response from executives working in Japanese companies. Questionnaire was divided into two sections. First section deals with respondents’ demographic data like age, gender, marital status, ethnic background, highest education level attained, duration of service and monthly salary. While second section focuses on the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) as developed by Smith (1974). It consists of 72 statements, whereby the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement (agree or yes, not sure, and disagree or no) on five different facets of job satisfaction in relation to the respondent’s present job, co-workers, supervision, income and promotion. They were asked for an agreement (either agree, not sure or disagree) on 18 statements each with regard to their present job situations, co-workers, supervision and 9 statements each with regard to their income and promotion.

A pilot study was carried out among 20 randomly selected respondents in ensuring that the instrument used is reliable. The result of the Cronbach’s Reliability Test is 0.922, which confirms that the set of questionnaires is reliable. A total of 250 sets of questionnaires were equally distributed to ten Japanese electrical and electronic manufacturing companies in Selangor. However, only a total of 154 sets of questionnaires were duly completed giving a response rate of 61.6%.

RESULTS

Profile Of Respondents

Respondents vary from 21 years old to 45 with 53% being in their thirties. Almost 70% of respondents are male. 73% are married with 62% being Malays and the balance equally distributed among the Chinese and Indians, have
bachelor degree, have worked with the company five years or more and earned monthly salary between RM3500 to RM3999. As executives the respondents have a minimum of a diploma level qualification whilst 95% are university graduates. Salaries paid range from under RM2000 to RM4500 per month with duration of service being between less than a year to five years or more.

Level Of Job Satisfaction

We have categorised level of job satisfaction into five categories. From Table 1, the levels of job satisfaction are distributed almost evenly from low job satisfaction to high job satisfaction. Majority or 35.1% of the respondents were highly satisfied with their job and 31.8% of the executives were experiencing moderate job satisfaction. However, there were 33.1% of the executives experiencing low job satisfaction. None of the executives experienced very low or very high job satisfaction. We could say that none of these executives were having extremely high or low with their overall job satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall job satisfaction</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low satisfaction</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>31.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high satisfaction</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level Of Job Satisfaction Based On Respondents’ Demographics

Job satisfaction appears to differ among age groups. Young executives (age 21-30) experience the lowest job satisfaction (49%) with those in the 30’s experiencing the highest job satisfaction. sloping down (a negative relationship), while the curve for the middle-aged executives (31-40) forms a U-shaped Curve and the curve for older executives (41-45) sloping up or forms a positive relationship. This could be due to the work culture of the organization. It takes time for the younger executives to adapt with the organizational culture. As the executives get older, getting more experience and able to adapt with the Japanese work culture, hence their level of job satisfaction will increase. As discussed by Imaoka (1986) Japanese firms in Malaysia emphasized in seniority-merit wage and promotion systems that could impede the progress of younger workers and in return could result in dissatisfaction among younger executives or otherwise. As time pass by, the worker learns to tolerate with the Japanese work culture, adapts to it and able to satisfy with the system. Hence after a certain period, there is a positive relationship between age and job satisfaction that supports the work of Locke (1976), Kalleberg et al. (1983), Bass and Barret (1981) and Maghrabi (1999).

Positive Correlations Between Duration Of Service, Gender And Job Satisfaction

The pattern of job satisfaction with the duration of service is about similar to the pattern of job satisfaction versus age. Most of the executives who have worked for the company for 2 years or less tend to experience low satisfaction and none of them experienced high satisfaction. On the other hand, those who have worked more than four years experienced more towards high or moderate job satisfaction and none of them experienced low job satisfaction. This could be due to the seniority-merit wage and promotion systems as practiced by the Japanese companies in Malaysia. This could be as explained by Locke (1976) and Kalleberg et al. (1983). As for those who have worked for more than 2 years to 4 years, the curve forms a U-shaped Curve. A test of association between duration of service and job satisfaction was found to be significant at 95 percent confidence level. There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and gender at 95 percent confidence level. There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction amongst the male executives and the opposite is true amongst the female executives.
Level Of Job Satisfaction Based On Five Facets Of Job Satisfaction

The level of job satisfaction based on five facets of job satisfaction such as the employees’ opinions regarding their present job, co-workers, supervision, income and promotion are also analysed. 37% are highly satisfied with their present job, 34.4% moderately satisfied and the remaining of 28.6% experienced low satisfaction towards their present job. None of the executives experienced very low or very high satisfaction towards their present job. The result suggests that executives in the Japanese electrical and electronic manufacturing companies are facing several stages of satisfaction level towards present job throughout their career. The positive correlation of job satisfaction with respondents’ age and duration of service could be due to reasons as explained by Locke (1976) and Kalleberg et al. (1983). Older executives or those executives with several years of working experience in their current companies are most likely to acquire more confidence from their superiors thus in return they will be given more variety of tasks, more autonomy and control over their work. This will increase the level of satisfaction towards their present job.

Majority or 49.4% of the executives are moderately satisfied with their co-workers, 32.5% highly satisfied the balance 18.2% experienced low satisfaction towards their co-workers. None of the executives experienced very low or very high satisfaction towards their present job.

Executive in Japanese manufacturing companies generally often get involved in group activities such as Small Group Activities (SGA) and Group Reward Incentive Program (GRIP) which required them to work together with their co-workers in achieving the given target. Even though these executives involved quite actively in group activities, still most of the executives experienced moderate level of satisfaction towards co-workers. This could be the time spend with co-workers was only for formal work activities, which cannot create satisfaction towards their co-workers. Employees need social interaction such as someone to joke and share with their personal matters as suggested by Gruneberg (1979).

41.6% of the executives are highly satisfied with the level of supervision, 26% of the executives moderately and 32.5% experienced low satisfaction towards the level of supervision. This finding shows that number of executives with low satisfaction towards the level of supervision is higher compared to the moderate satisfaction. However, 41.6% of the executives experienced high satisfaction towards supervision. None of the executives experienced very low or very high satisfaction towards the level of supervision.

The satisfaction level towards supervision is a very subjective aspect and it depends mostly on the individual ways of supervision (Gruneberg, 1979). Different superior would have different kind of leadership and supervision approach. It also depends on the individual executive preferences. Some executives prefer higher level or close supervision while others would prefer the opposite. In Japanese manufacturing companies, generally the level of supervision is very high whereby the communication and reporting between a superior and his subordinates takes place very frequently. This can be looked from the way they design the office and table layout whereby the managers and executives normally were located side by side. This method of supervision might satisfy some executives and might being dislike by others.

40.9% experienced low satisfaction with their income. 31.2% of the executives were moderately satisfied with their income, while only 27.9% of the executives experienced high satisfaction towards their income. This finding shows that most of executives in the Japanese electrical and electronic manufacturing companies have low satisfaction towards their income. However, none of the executives experienced very low or very high satisfaction towards their income. The level of income among executives in Japanese companies is generally correlated positively with the duration of service in their company. This is because of the Japanese work culture whereby executives which have served the companies for longer period of time were considered loyal to the company and appreciated by the management. Therefore this could explain why executives who have been working in the company for longer period of time received higher income. Furthermore, most Japanese companies also exercise conservative salary and increment policy. Management always prepare the companies for the bad economic time. This means that the percentage of increment received are small and almost the same regardless the companies’ performance for that particular year. However, employees preferred to be rewarded instantly and always compare between what they perceive they are paid and their perception of the amount of pay they should received (Lawler, 1980). This might be the reason why most
executives in Japanese electrical and electronic manufacturing companies in Selangor have experienced low satisfaction towards their income.

Majority or 40.9% of the executives experienced low satisfaction towards promotion. 34.4% of the executives were moderately satisfied towards promotion and only 24.7% experienced high satisfaction towards promotion. This finding shows that most of the executives have low satisfaction towards promotion policies in their companies. However, none of the executives experienced very low or very high satisfaction towards promotion.

Generally, most Japanese manufacturing companies have a very strict control on their promotion policy. This is probably due to most of their executives practice lifetime employment work culture, especially in Japan, therefore the management always ensures that only those who are highly qualified will be promoted. As a result, promotion opportunity is very limited. Latiff (1979) and Abdullah (1986) argued that limited promotion opportunity will lead to lower job satisfaction. This could explain the negative relationship of job satisfaction versus promotion.

**CONCLUSION**

This study reports on job satisfaction among Malaysian executives working in a Japanese management environment. The study finds a positive correlation between job satisfaction with respondents’ age and duration of service. In terms of promotion, there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and promotion. Malaysian executives working in Japanese companies in Malaysia appear not satisfied with work culture of seniority-promotion based and lifetime employment work culture as practised by their Japanese employers. It is suggested that Japanese companies should implement promotion and salary increment policy based on performance since employees are the assets to the company. Hence it is important for these companies to retain their employees by improving their companies’ policies.

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