

Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction of Agricultural Sector Workers in Ghana

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Abstract

The Agricultural sector plays an important role in underpinning the economic development of a country. The study attempts to evaluate job satisfaction of workers in different agricultural organizations in the country. The focus of the study is the relative importance of job satisfaction factors and their impacts on the overall job satisfaction of employees. It also attempts to measure the impacts of the agricultural organization type, policies and culture on the attitudes towards job satisfaction. It is instructive to note that the overall job satisfaction of the agricultural sector is at unimpressive level. The study revealed that salary fringe benefits, motivation packages, accessibility to credits/loans and co-worker relation and availability of right tools to work with were most important factors contributing to job satisfaction. This paper highlighted some of these problems and presented a picture of level of job satisfaction among employees of agricultural sector and attempts to present a comprehensive diagnosis of job satisfaction indices of agricultural sector, the factors causing the dissatisfaction and suggestions to improve them. The study further revealed that job security, recognition and reward, compensation, salary and workers opinion were key factors to be considered by employers in improving job satisfaction of agricultural workers in Ghana.

Keywords

Job Satisfaction, Motivation, Job Dissatisfaction, Working Conditions

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which an employee expresses a positive orientation towards job. [6] argued that it is an attitude but pointed out that researchers should differentiate between the objects of cognitive evaluation which affect (emotion), beliefs and behaviors. Job satisfaction is often described as the quality of life at work as experienced by the employee, and the condition that could be promoted by social responsibility programs executed by the employer.

[23] refers to job satisfaction in terms of how people feel about their job and different aspects of their jobs. This view was strongly reinforced by [10] by defining job satisfaction as the extent to which employees are dedicated to their work. [18] concluded that job satisfaction is a multi-faceted concept, which is a combination of past and present

gratifying feelings when one evaluates his or her work role. Job satisfaction is an attitude towards one's job and it is basically the affective, cognitive and evaluative reaction towards their job [12, 13 14].

[11] categorizes factors that can have an influence on job satisfaction into three groups namely, organizational policies and procedures that have to do with the nature of the remuneration package, supervision and decision-making practices, and the perception of the quality of supervision. Aspects of the total workload, the variety of skills applied, autonomy, feedback and physical nature of the working environment and personal aspects such as self-image, ability to deal with stress and general satisfaction with life.

Business organizations that have been successful consider the average employees as the primary source of productivity gains. For such organization, satisfied employees are the key assets. Such employees are satisfied with their job and are inclined to be more energetic, ardent, inspired, and

committed to their work [25]. Studies on behavioral and social sciences indicated that job satisfaction and job performance are positively correlated [5]. Job satisfaction is a vital element of general satisfaction which offers employees energy to perform very well. [1] posited that job satisfaction refers to the attitudes and feelings people have about their work. Positive and favorable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction. Negative and unfavorable attitudes towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction. This was attested to by [19] by stating that job satisfaction offers a complete picture of completeness and accomplishment emanating from his work. Satisfaction is not the same as motivation. Job satisfaction is more of an attitude, an internal state. A feeling which is not based on monetary gains but a relief that the employee derives out of work itself.

In contributing to the discussion of satisfaction, [15] summed up satisfaction as a person’s feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations. Therefore job satisfaction being source of relief of tension caused by gap between the expectations of the individual and unmet needs. It takes care of the apprehension of job dissatisfaction and factors associated with it thus helping the managers to put light on employees in a desired direction. In an organization the morale of the employees is considered to be deciding factor in the organization’s efficiency [7].

It is justifiable to note that improving job satisfaction, managers, supervisors, human resources specialists, employees, and citizens in general should be concerned [9]. In order to evaluate the employee’s job performance, the manager must consider employee job satisfaction because employee job satisfaction is related to employee service quality and employee work performance.

Several factors attributed to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of workers. [3] identified the nature of work and sense of achievement from their work as some attributes of job satisfaction. [21] posited that working environment has a positive impact on job satisfaction of employees

The objective of the study is to examine the factors contributing to job satisfaction and identify the most satisfying and the least satisfying factor and suggest some improvement where necessary

Specific Objectives of the study were as follows;

- 1) To identify the factors which influence the job satisfaction of employees?
- 2) To identify the factor(s) which improves the satisfaction level of employees?
- 3) To assess the satisfaction level of agricultural workers

2. Materials and Method

A descriptive research design with survey method was applied in the study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 84 members of General Agricultural Workers Union of Trade Union Congress (GAWU of TUC).

The organization involved were CSIR-Plant Genetic Resources Research Institute, Cocoa Health and Extension Division and Seed Production Division all under Ghana Cocoa Board. The researcher visited the Institutions and administered the questionnaire to members to solicit their views on factors affecting job satisfaction.

3. Results and Discussion

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher picked on some key variables which are perceived to be determinants to the satisfaction level of an employee in most public sector organization including agricultural sector. They are;

- 1) I am happy with the recognition and rewarded of my outstanding works and contributions
- 2) I am happy with your overall job security
- 3) I am satisfied with the compensation I get and I think it matches with my responsibility
- 4) I am satisfied with the existing salary structure of the organization.
- 5) I am satisfied with the given right to put forward my opinions.

Responses of each questionnaire were analyzed using the descriptive analysis as indicated on the table below.

Table 1. Determinants of Job Satisfaction.

Item	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Recognition and Reward	Agree	9	11
	Disagree	60	71
	Strongly agree	2	2
	Strongly disagree	12	15
	Neutral	1	1
	Total	84	100
Job Security	Agree	9	11
	Disagree	51	61
	Strongly disagree	18	21
	Neutral	6	7
	Total	84	100
Compensation	Agree	10	12
	Disagree	53	63
	Strongly agree	5	6
	Strongly disagree	13	15
	Neutral	3	4
	Total	84	100
Salary	Agree	13	15
	Disagree	36	43
	Strongly agree	4	5
	Strongly disagree	29	35
	Neutral	2	2
	Total	84	100
Opinion	Agree	24	29
	Disagree	48	57
	Strongly agree	1	1
	Strongly disagree	9	11
	Neutral	2	2
	Total	84	100

3.1. Recognition and Reward

The frequency table above indicated the views of the respondents when it comes to the recognition and rewards of

employee's effort. Seventy one percent disagree and 14.3 percent strongly disagree to the recognition and reward given for outstanding works and contributions. 10.7 percent and 2.4 percent are the only respondent agree and strongly agree to the recognition given.

[24] believed that workers are satisfied when the job meets the values, expectations and standards and will stimulate their commitment and performance. This reinforces the fact that employees have the duty to recognize the contribution of workers and institute measures that will boost their morale to work hard to achieve the desired objectives of the organization.

3.2. Job Security

The paramount interest of every worker is job security. From the table above, most of the respondents were dissatisfied with the job security. Fifty one out 84 disagree and 18 out of 84 strongly disagree. A total of 82.1 percent are not happy when it comes to the security of their job.

Job security is the probability that an individual will keep his or her job, a job with a high level of job security is such that the probability for employees becoming redundant which will lead to unemployment is less

3.3. Compensation

Most of the respondents were not satisfied with the kind of compensation given, since according to them it did not match with their responsibility. From the table above it shows clearly that, 53 out of 82 disagree, 13 strongly disagree 2 did not declare their stands as to whether they were happy or not happy with the compensation given. A total of 17.9 percent of the respondent were those that agree which was insignificant judging from the total respondents.

[17] held the view that enhancing compensation is a vital incentive to workers job satisfaction.

Compensation is a vital ingredient for retention and morale booster of workers. It is also a motivator for workers which results in total commitment to the organization [26, 8].

3.4. Salary

Remuneration is a vital component in determination of workers satisfaction. In a bid to improve workers salaries the Government of Ghana has introduced a salary structure known as Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS). The aim of this salary structure was to correct discrepancies in the salaries of workers on government payroll. Despite this pay policy workers in the government sector still complain about salaries. It was not surprising that most of the respondents were not satisfied with the current salaries. Thirty six and 29 out of the 82 respondent disagree and strongly disagree respectively to the existing salaries. It appears workers in the agricultural sector felt marginalized in the single spine pay policy.

A study conducted by [4], concluded that poor pay and non-recognition often adversely affects workers retention. Dissatisfaction and discontent can be a factor if salaries are

not market related [20] also revealed that workers will compare themselves with their colleagues in terms of salary and their inputs to their job and may desert the organization if they are not satisfied.

In study conducted by [22], they concluded among the other things that one of the influential factors in career choice is salary and as such high salary plays a crucial role in workers job satisfaction.

3.5. Opinion

In any organization there should be channels for employees to ventilate their opinions and management should take into consideration opinions of employees in the decision making. From the above it was clear that employees felt that their opinions were not considered in the decision making of the organization. Fifty eight out of the 82 respondent were not happy about the way their opinions were not reflected in the overall running of the organization.

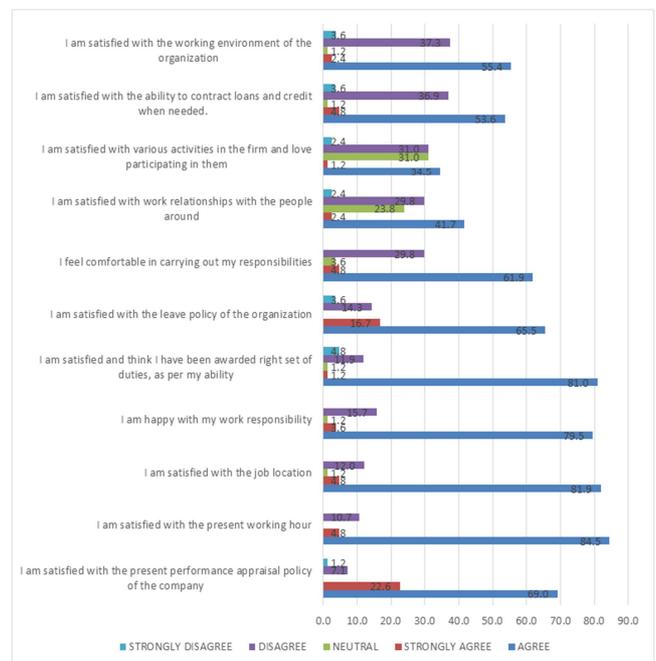


Figure 1. Factors which influence job satisfaction.

The graph above shows the factors that influence job satisfaction of employees. The results of the analysis indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with the factors that contribute to the job satisfaction of employees. The ten indicators that were identified by the researches are listed below;

Contributors for Job Satisfaction

69.0% said they were satisfied with the present performance appraisal policy of the company

84.5% said they were satisfied with the present working hour

81.9% said they were satisfied with the job location

79.5% said they were satisfied with my work responsibility

81% said were satisfied and think they have been awarded

right set of duties, as per my ability

65.5% said they were satisfied with the leave policy of the organization

61.9% said they feel comfortable in carrying out my responsibilities

53.6% said they were satisfied with the ability to contract loans and credit when needed.

55.4% said they satisfied with the working environment of the organization

41.7% said they were satisfied with work relationships with the people around.

3.6. Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

The perception of agricultural workers in terms working environment was largely positive as analyzed above. The respondents believed their working environment permitted to them to be productive.

Workers work time schedule has been accepted as an important non-financial incentive and good for overall motivation of workers. In this study it was established that the agricultural workers were not perturbed about work time schedule which is an indication that with other financial incentives properly aligned with the non-financial incentives workers satisfaction level would be boosted.

Evidence available points to the fact that the absence of recognition, respect and support at workplace may be a potential de-motivator and reduce workers efficiency and effectiveness

The last question on the questionnaire was to find out if employees are satisfied or not. The respondent shows an overwhelming NO. The graph below gives a clear picture of employee’s dissatisfaction.

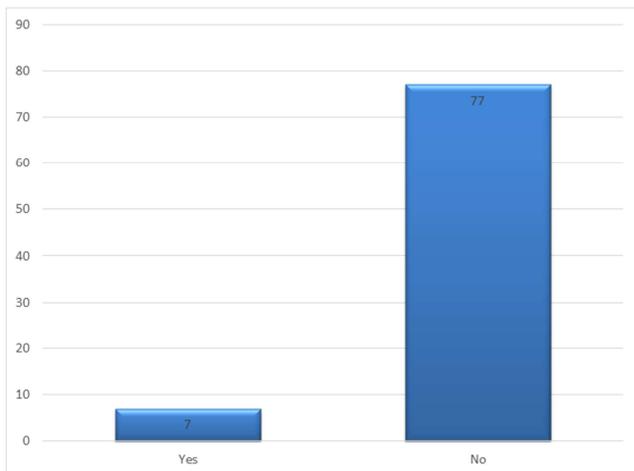


Figure 2. Bar chart representing if employee's are satisfied or not.

4. Effect of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has a direct bearing on various aspects of organizational life. Various studies conducted indicated that, there is no strong linkage between satisfaction and productivity; however one cannot rule out the effects of satisfaction on productivity. Satisfied workers will not

necessarily be the highest producers. According to [2], there were many possible moderating variables, the most important of which seems to be rewards. If people receive rewards they feel are equitable, they will be satisfied and this is likely to result in greater performance effort. Also, recent research evidence indicated that satisfaction may not necessarily lead to individual performance improvement but does lead to departmental and organizational level improvements. Finally there are still considerable debate weather satisfaction leads to performance or performance leads to satisfaction [16].

5. Conclusion

Employee job satisfaction is a vital element in the increase of productivity and growth in every organization. In this circumstance, policy makers and managers have invested their attention to provide different kinds of facilities to their employees in order to satisfy their employees. This study tested factors affecting job satisfaction for agricultural workers in Ghana. The results pointed to the direction that even though non-financial incentives contribute to job satisfaction, the financial incentives contribute immensely the job satisfaction of workers. Based on the results we are able to infer that work conditions, fairness, promotion, and pay, are key factors affecting agricultural workers job satisfaction. Money is a good motivator, actually all employees’ work for money, a good salary and good compensations are key factors in satisfying the employee. We can increase the employee salary and compensation to motivate the employee, the good pay back can be one of the key factors affecting job satisfaction, also in this way one can increase the service quality and organization performance. The factor of work conditions is also proven to have significant influence over the agricultural organizations. The physical design of the place does have certain impacts on job satisfaction. Because the work conditions in the agricultural sector include the employee relationships and work environment, all these factors relate to employee job satisfaction. A good work environment and good work conditions can increase employee job satisfaction and the employees will try to give their best which will increase the employee work performance.

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