



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EXTENSION COMPETENCIES,
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION WITH
PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS IN
YEMEN**

ALI HASSAN OBAID KHALIL

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ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION WITH
PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORKERS IN
YEMEN**

By

ALI HASSAN OBAID KHALIL

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduates Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2008



DEDICATION

*To my loved homeland the Republic of Yemen and every one who is honestly
working to maintain Yemen united, peaceful and developed*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in Fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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August 2008

Chairman: Professor Maimunah Ismail, PhD

Faculty: Educational Studies

This study aimed to determine the relationships between selected variables, namely extension competencies including human development competencies, leadership development, extension communication methods, programme development, programme implementation and programme evaluation; organisational commitment as well as job satisfaction and job performance of agriculture extension workers. The study also sought to identify the best predictors of job performance of the extension workers.

The total population of the extension workers was 1364. The sample size of this study was 300 which were determined by using Cochran's formula (1977). The study



used stratified random sampling technique in which 300 respondents from the agriculture extension services organisations in Yemen were chosen. A complete list of agriculture extension workers across the three agriculture regions, namely, coastal, highlands and desert regions was obtained. The research design of this study was a descriptive correlational study. Self-administered questionnaire was used as the research instrument to collect data from the respondents of this study. The quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive statistics such as mean and standards deviations. The parametric statistics such as Pearson correlation, multiple regression analyses, t-test and ANOVA also were used.

From the descriptive analysis, the result show that the overall extension workers performance illustrated with mean score ($M = 2.88$) and standard deviation ($SD = 0.69$), that more than a half (60.7 %) of the respondents experienced a moderate level of job performance, while 23.8 % of them indicated a low level of performance and 15.5% considered a high level of performance.

Furthermore, the findings from parametric analysis indicated that there were significant relationships between the independent variables and job performance of extension workers. The independent variables are as follows: extension programme implementation competencies, extension programme planning competencies, extension programme evaluation competencies, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction.

Multiple regression analysis was used to identify the best predictors of extension workers' performance. The variables according to descending order are job

satisfaction (Beta = 0.431), extension programme planning competencies (Beta = 0.239), extension programme implementation competencies (Beta = 0.147), extension programme evaluation competencies (Beta = 0.145), and organisational commitment (Beta = 0.102). The predictors explained 60.6 % variance ($F = 54.008$, $p = 0.0001$) of job performance.

The study is important as it would become a platform for future research to consider aspect of performance and its variants. The implementation of human resource development initiatives is very important to consider by the relevant agencies in order to improve extension workers' competencies and performance. This study also signals the importance of ensuring good and motivated work environment for extension workers for achieving a high performance. Extension services should also realise the various contributors of job performance, some of them are based on the individual factors as found in this study. By knowing these factors, they would be used as inputs in the recruitment, selection and succession planning processes in order to get the right extension workers. This will make extension workers know clearly their duties, tasks, and how to act in rural community. To support the findings of this study in the country, it is recommended that future studies are conducted across employees from other rural development organisations including agricultural and community development organisations by taking into considerations other work behaviour and social factors that might help more to understand the individual performance phenomenon.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERKAITAN ANTARA KOMPETENSI KERJA PENGEMBANGAN,
KOMITMEN ORGANISASI SERTA KEPUASAN KERJA DAN PRESTASI
PEKERJA PENGEMBANGAN PERTANIAN DI YEMEN**

BY

ALI HASSAN OBAID KHALIL

Ogos 2008

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Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti perkaitan antara pembolehubah terpilih iaitu kompetensi kerja pengembangan termasuk kompetensi pembangunan manusia, pembangunan kepemimpinan, kaedah pengembangan, pembentukan program, pelaksanaan dan penilaian program; komitmen organisasi; serta kepuasan kerja dan prestasi kerja pekerja pengembangan pertanian. Kajian juga bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti peramal prestasi kerja pekerja pengembangan tersebut.

Kajian menggunakan teknik persampelan rawak berstrata untuk mendapatkan 300 responden sebagai sampel kajian dari sektor perkhidmatan pengembangan pertanian di Yemen. Satu senarai lengkap organisasi pengembangan pertanian diperolehi dari setiap jabatan pengembangan dan setiap wilayah iaitu wilayah pesisiran pantai, tanah tinggi dan padang pasir. Data yang diperolehi dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, korelasi Pearson, analisis regresi berganda, ujian-t dan ANOVA.

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan terdapat perkaitan signifikan antara prestasi kerja pekerja pengembangan dan kompetensi dalam tugas berikut iaitu pelaksanaan program pengembangan, perancangan program pengembangan, penilaian program pengembangan, pembangunan kepemimpinan, kaedah dalam komunikasi pengembangan, dan pembangunan manusia. Juga terdapat perkaitan signifikan antara prestasi pekerja pengembangan dan kepuasan kerja serta komitmen organisasi.

Analisis regresi berganda menunjukkan lima peramal prestasi pekerja pengembangan. Peramal tersebut mengikut susunan menurun ialah kepuasan kerja (Beta = 0.431), kompetensi perancangan program pengembangan (Beta = 0.239), kompetensi pelaksanaan program pengembangan (Beta = 0.147), kompetensi penilaian program pengembangan (Beta = 0.145), dan komitmen organisasi (Beta = 0.102). Faktor peramal tersebut menerangkan 60.6 % varians ($F = 54.008$, $p = 0.0001$) prestasi pekerja pengembangan.

Kajian ini penting untuk dijadikan asas dalam meneruskan kajian akan datang tentang pembolehubah lain yang mempengaruhi prestasi pengembangan. Inisiatif pembangunan sumber manusia adalah penting dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi pekerja pengembangan demi seterusnya memperbaiki prestasi mereka. Kajian juga menyarankan pentingnya memastikan persekitaran kerja yang kondusif untuk memotivasikan pekerja pengembangan supaya berprestasi tinggi. Hasil kajian dijangkakan dapat dijadikan panduan oleh agensi pengembangan dalam melaksanakan inisiatif pembangunan sumber manusia seperti rekrutmen, pemilihan

dan perancangan pengambil-alihan staf. Ini untuk memastikan pekerja pembangunan memahami tanggung jawab, tugas dan bagaimana mendampingi masyarakat luar bandar.

Kajian ini mencadangkan supaya penyelidikan akan datang dijalankan dalam kalangan pekerja pembangunan dari organisasi luar bandar lain termasuk agensi pertanian dan pembangunan masyarakat dengan mengambil kira faktor sosial dan ekonomi untuk menyokong hasil kajian tentang peramal prestasi pekerja pembangunan dalam menjalankan tugas di negara tersebut.

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*Ali Hassan Khalil;
May, 2008
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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 20th of August 2008 to conduct the final examination of Ali Hassan Obaid Khalil on his Doctor Philosophy thesis entitled “Relationships between Extension Competencies, Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction with Performance of Agricultural Extension Workers in Yemen” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members Committee are as follows:

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Date: 13 November 2008



DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not currently submitted for any other degree at University Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

ALI HASSAN OBAID KHALIL

Date: 14 October 2008

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEWs	Agriculture Extension Workers
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	General Domestic Production
GSYB	General Statistics Year Book
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
MAI	Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
OC	Organisational Commitment
ROY	Republic of Yemen
SMSs	Subject Mater Specialists
SPSS	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
T&V	Training and Visit Extension System
TDA	Tihama Development Authority
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Advancement in using agricultural technologies is rapidly altering the traditional face of agricultural extension organisations workplace. With the competition in global agribusiness environment, extension organisations are continuously searching for strategies and techniques to improve their extension workers' performance and delivering a good quality service to farmers. As the demands of the workplace continuously change, organisations are paying more attention to increased job satisfaction, increased organisational commitment and improving the employees' competencies. Nowadays, organisations consider that their employees are fundamental assets, and thus they try to leverage these assets to have greater ability and high performance (Cooke, 2001).

Internationally, in the context of agricultural extension organisations several studies have examined the performance through concentration on appraising the effectiveness of agricultural extension organisations from economical perspectives. For example, Owens, Hoddinott and Kinsey (2001) and Dinar, Karagiannis and Tzouvelekas (2007) focused on assessing the impact of agricultural extension on farm production, and farmers' adoption rate of the new technology disseminated by extension workers. Another study was conducted by Vogt and Tilburg (1988) to determine the level of satisfaction of cooperative extension workers. In the study the performance rating methodology was used to evaluate extension workers' performance.



In Yemen, the agricultural extension services have been still largely the responsibility of the government through the ministry of agriculture. Over the last decade, extension service started experiencing some challenges due to socio-economic changes and agricultural sector reforms taking place in the country. The extension services were blamed for not having a clear performance evaluation for its extension workers (Al-Sharjabi and Vogelzang, 2000). In addition, agricultural extension leaders are actually aware of the difficulties and limitations of the agricultural extension system in adapting to change the agricultural and rural economy and rely on performance evaluation to guide the programme and personnel improvement.

As a result, an institutional analysis should assess the existing agricultural extension system and design improvements. Among other areas, attention should be paid performance of extension workers; mechanisms for improving work conditions and job satisfaction; identification of competencies and the reinforcement of commitment towards extension professions and organisations. Investigating relationships of these variables with performance will help in studying this phenomenon from being person-oriented where the main emphasises on the person, through focus on the job to being behaviour oriented where the main emphasises covers the job itself and the dimensions of work behaviour that were associated with given job as well (Welbourne, Johnson and Erez, 1998). In the recent past many studies have been dedicated to the exploration of work behaviours termed citizenship behaviour, job performance, job satisfaction, commitment and extra role behaviours in business and commercial organisations rather than agricultural extension and non-profit

organisations. Saari and Judge (2004) stated that linking statistically employee's work behaviour and attitudes to business measures outcomes is one of the newest areas of research that assists with identifying important areas for survey action. In addition, McCaslin and Mwangi (1994) emphasised that continued and accurate staff evaluation is essential in improving extension workers' performance, productivity and job satisfaction. Yusof (2003) quoted the former National Chief Secretary of Malaysia Tan Sri Dato' Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid (1992) who cited that there are five main reasons behind assessing the employee's performance. These are 1) to acknowledge employee's successes and motivate them further; 2) to identify problem areas and find ways to solve personnel difficulties; 3) to reconcile employee's ambitions with their potential; and 4) to help employees sort their priorities within the job so that they will concentrate their efforts where they are most needed.

However, in complex organisations it has often been difficult to measure individual performance, as work outcomes are a result of multiple interdependent work process (Borman, 1991). Consequently, job performance has been conceptualised as performance on specific dimensions such as the quality and the quantity of work (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin and Jackson, 1989). In that sense, there is a need for carefully establishing a group of performance dimensions that might be used as parameters for extension worker's performance measurement. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the measurement of performance focused on the individual level which is represented by extension workers at this level through adapting and establishing a group of performance dimensions.

Job Performance

The term performance has been used with reference to individuals, groups, and organisations. According to Williams (1998), performance has been used as a synonym for output, efficiency, motivation individual productivity, organisational effectiveness, production, profitability, cost effectiveness, competitiveness and work quality. For example, Bernardin, Kane, Ross, and Johnson (1995) define performance as the record of outcomes produced on a specified job functions or activity during a specified time period. Bernardin et al. (1995) and Bernardin (1992) argue that a focus on results should be the preferred approach to performance management as it takes the customer perspective and enables employees' efforts to be linked to organisational goals. Viswesvaran and Ones (2002) assert that the assessment of job performance dimensions has primarily relied either on objectives of specified acts, output maintained in organisational records or subjective judgement from ratters. The job dimension should be always as a part of a performance scale (Welbourne et al., 1998).

Welbourne et al. (1998, pg.541) argued that one of the major limitations of existing models of job performance is that they “lack a unifying theoretical framework” and that “without a theoretical underpinning, there is little guidance for choosing which dimensions of performance ...to include or exclude from a model”. Therefore, the choice of performance measure has long been a difficult issue facing researchers within the organisational field (Schoenberg, 2006).