

## JOB SATISFACTION AMONGST AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PERSONNEL IN KURDISTAN PROVINCE OF IRAN

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### ABSTRACT

*Understanding behaviour of an individual in an organization requires knowing something about organization and some psychological factors as well as job satisfaction. Job satisfaction broadly is considered to be as attitude of a person reflecting the degree to which his/her important needs are satisfied by this job. To study the job satisfaction level and factors associated with job satisfaction of Extension personnel, a sample of 74 extension personnel from Kurdistan province of Iran were selected. To study the job satisfaction level among respondents, Bray Field and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index was used. A data form was used to collect information about selected personal variables. The reliability and validity of the Bray Field and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index were determined. Cronbach's alpha computed to measure reliability of the 20 items of scale was 0.82. The data were analyzed using statistical methods such as frequencies, percentage, mean score, standard deviation, and product moment correlation and regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the extension personnel (51.4%) belonged to high level of job satisfaction, followed by 35.1 and 13.5 percent belonging to medium and low level of job satisfaction, respectively. The index items most suggesting negative job satisfaction was unclear promotion policy in organization and low salary, respectively. According to regression analysis educational level, level of job diversity*

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and salary were found to have contributed to the increase of job satisfaction among extension personnel.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Kurdistan province of Iran with strong agricultural economic structure has a high potential for agricultural development. That is why the transfer of technology and enhancing agricultural section will help the development of the region. Development departments like extension agencies as an innovation diffusion agent will play an important role in this regard. However, the capability of a development department in achieving its goals will depend on the commitment of its employees.

Commitment to duty is a function of Job satisfaction (Uwakab, 1980, Hamons, 1984, Madukwe, 1994, Chattopadhyay *et al*, 1994, and Truell, *et al*, 1998). Job satisfaction is broadly considered to be an attitude of a person reflecting the degree to which his important needs are satisfied by the job, it has an effective, a cognitive and behavioural component (Chattopadhyay *et al*, 1994 and Naeli, 1994). Why the strong interest in job satisfaction? Robbins (1998) concluded that impressive evidence exist concerning the significance of job satisfaction. A satisfied workforce leads to higher productivity because of fewer disruptions such as absenteeism, departure of good employees, and indicates of destructive behaviour. The presence of satisfied employees also translates into lower medical and life insurance costs. High job satisfaction as a goal can lead to saving money as well as increasing social responsibility. Truell *et al*, (1998), Specter (1997), Naeli, (1994), and Tripathi (1997) were researchers, scholars, and writers who addressed the importance of job satisfaction. Meanwhile, according to effects, importance and consequences of job satisfaction on organizational productivity, this paper will first attempt to measure rate of job satisfaction among extension personnel, and then will indicate those variables which most affect the rate of job satisfaction.

## 2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to determine job satisfaction among agricultural extension personnel in Kurdistan province of Iran. The special objectives of the study were:

- (1) To measure rate of job satisfaction among extension personnel.
- (2) To evaluate factors affecting job satisfaction among extension personnel.
- (3) To identify specific issues that best defines job satisfaction among extension personnel.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Thompson and McNamara (1997) three theoretical framework of job satisfaction could be identified in the literature. Framework one is based on content theories of job satisfaction. Content theorists assume that fulfilment of needs and attainment of values can lead to job satisfaction. Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory (Maslow, 1954) and Hersberg's Motivator-hygiene Theory (Hersberg, 1966) are examples of content theories.

Framework two is grounded in process theories of job satisfaction. Process theories assume that job satisfaction can be explained by investigating the interaction of variables such as experiences, values, and needs (Gruenberg, 1979). Vroom's expectancy theory (1982) and Adams' equity theory (1963) is representative of the second framework. Framework three is rooted in situation models of job satisfaction. Situational theorists assume that the interaction of variables such as task characteristics, organizational characteristics, and individual characteristics influence job satisfaction. Studies showed that two types of variables including: (i) organizational variables and (ii) personality variables more than other variables affect job satisfaction (Tripathi, 1997). Glisson and Durick (1988) examined simultaneously the ability of variables from three categories (worker, job, and organizational characteristics) to predict job satisfaction. According to effects and consequences of job satisfaction on organizational productivity, this paper will first attempt to measure rate of job satisfaction among extension personnel, and then will indicate those variables which most affect the rate of job satisfaction.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

The study used a survey design for data collection. The present study was carried out on the extension personnel of Extension Departments of Ministry of Jihad-e-Keshavarzi, Kurdistan, Iran. All the extension personnel of Kurdistan who were working in the field or had duties in the headquarters (350 people) constituted the population of the study. As regard, the selection of respondents, four Maine cities were selected randomly. To determine the sample size, Cochran formula was applied and then 74 respondents were selected by "Proportional Classified Sampling Method". A pretested questionnaire was used to collect the data on the personal and organizational characteristics. The questionnaire also contained a job satisfaction scale using five likert-type options for the measurement level of job satisfaction. To measure level of job satisfaction, Brayfield and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index (1967) was used. Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of job satisfaction index and its value was found equal to %84 which was favourable. Based on the respondents, a job satisfaction score was summed up for each individual. Considering the lowest and highest score among the respondents, they were classified in low, medium and high job satisfaction levels. The data were analyzed using statistical methods such as frequencies, percentage, mean score, standard deviation, and product moment correlation and regression analysis.

#### **5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **5.1 Personal characteristics**

The majority of extension personnel (95.9%) were male. only 3 people (4.1%) were female (Table, 1). The educational level among the respondents had ranged from under- diploma to Bachelor of Science. The majority of them (59.4%) earned B.Sc. degree preceded by associated diploma (23%) and diploma (16.2%). While only four percent (1 person) was in under-diploma degree.

The majority of respondents (56.7%) were ranked in middle age followed by those in the young age group (24.4%) and only 18.7 percent of them were elder (upper age group) (Table, 1). Based on educational discipline, the majority of respondents (59.5%) were educated in

agriculture, followed by those who were educated in social sciences (18.9%) and in technical and experimental studies (21.6%), respectively (Table, 1).

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of extension personnel as their personal characteristics**

	Personal Characteristics	Frequency	percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	71	95.9
	Female	3	4.1
2	Education		
	Under Diploma	1	1.4
	Diploma	12	16.2
	Associate Diploma	17	23
	Bachelor	44	59.4
3	Discipline		
	Agriculture	44	59.5
	Techniser	3	4.1
	Social Science	14	18.9
	Experimental	13	17.5
4	Age		
	Young < 30	18	24.4
	Middle Age 30-50	42	56.7
	Upper age > 50	14	18.9

## 5.2 Organizational characteristics

It is obvious from the table 2 that 30 person (40.5%) of respondents belonged to the cadre of specialist, followed by extension worker (34.8%) and (25.7%) extension managers. The majority of respondents (54.1%) attended in more than 3 in-service training, followed by those who in between 1 to 2 training courses and there were 17 people (21.0%) who had not attended any in-service training after joining extension services. According to salary, it is evident from Table 2 that, 41 people (55.4%) receive 125 to 250 dollars per month, followed by those who receive more than 250 dollars (23%) and finally the people with less than 125 dollars pre month. According to duration of service the majority of respondents(22 people) (29.7%) belonged to 8-11 class, followed by those in the more than 11 years in service (27.2%), less than

3 years (23%) and between 4 to 7 years (20.1%). According to job diversity, majority of respondents (54.2) belonged to medium level of job diversity, followed by 25.7 and 20.1 percent belonging to high and low level of job diversity.

**Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Extension Personnel according to their organizational characteristics**

Organizational Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
1. Job situation		
Extension Managers	19	25.7
Specialists	30	40.5
Extension Workers	25	34.8
2. In-service training attended		
Not attended	17	21.6
1-3 Course	18	24.3
more than 3 course	40	54.1
3. Salary		
Less than 125 dollars per month	16	21.6
125-250 dollars per month	41	55.4
More than 250 dollars per month	17	23
4. Service duration		
less than 3 years	17	23
4-7 years	15	20.1
8-11 years	22	29.7
more than 11 years	20	27.2
5. Job diversity		
Low (<10 score)	15	20.1
Medium (10-20 Score)	40	54.2
High (>20 Score)	19	25.7

### 5.3 Job satisfaction index

The overall index of job satisfaction is identified on the mean score and standard deviation obtained from a 20-item questionnaire as shown in Table 3. Extension personnel indicated through their response that their positions were "enjoyable", and in general "more interesting than other jobs they could get". Analyzing the items of job satisfaction indices shows that, the promotion policy (1.15 mean) in organization is the most negative job satisfaction item. This finding confirms the Adams'

**Table 3: Job satisfaction index**

	<b>Job satisfaction item</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>SD</b>
1.	I find real enjoyment in my work.	3.95	0.72
2.	Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	3.86	0.71
3.	My job is usually interesting enough to keep me from getting bored.	3.68	0.72
4.	I feel my job is more interesting than others I could get.	3.50	0.67
5.	I am satisfied with my job for the time being.	3.46	0.83
6.	My job is like a hobby to me.	3.35	0.93
7.	I feel fairly well – satisfied with my present job.	3.37	1.06
8.	I feel that I am happier in my work than most other people.	3.26	0.76
9.	I like my job better than average worker does.	3.08	0.95
10.	I enjoy my work more than my leisure time.	3.81	0.85
11.	I am adequately paid for the job I do.	2.04	1.00
12.	It seems that my friends are more interested in their jobs	1.97	0.96
13.	My job is pretty interesting.	1.66	0.94
14.	I am disappointed that I took this job.	1.41	0.83
15.	I am often bored with my job.	1.35	0.80
16.	Each day of work seems like it will never end.	1.30	0.97
17.	I consider my job rather unpleasant.	1.24	0.67
18.	My job has a fair (impartial) promotion policy.	1.15	0.84
19.	Most of the time I have to force my self to go to work.	1.00	0.60
20.	I definitely dislike my work.	0.99	0.61

*Scale: 5=strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=undecided; 2=disagree; 1=strongly disagree*

equity theory that believes the psychological aspect of job satisfaction is related to expectancy of a person from his organization. This kind of result has been confirmed by (Camp, 1990), while others reported that the most suggesting negative job satisfaction was salary (Hamons, 1984, Kumar and Obaliwal, 1988 and Madukwe, 1994).

#### 5.4 Level of job satisfaction

Analysis of the Brayfield and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index for the 74 Extension personnel indicated a mean score of 69.45, suggesting medium level of job satisfaction with Extension personnel. It is obvious from the Table 4 that the majority of respondents (51.4%) belonged to high level of job satisfaction, followed by 35.1 and 13.5 percent belonging to medium and low levels of job satisfaction.

**Table 4: Frequency distribution of extension personnel as their job satisfaction**

	Level of Job Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (<47 Score)	10	13.5
2.	Medium (47-73 score)	26	35.1
3.	High (>73 Score)	38	51.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 5.5 Relationship between job satisfaction with other independent variables

It is clear from the Table (5) that the educational level, job diversity and salary level had a positive and significant relationship ( $P < 0.05$ ) with job

**Table 5: Correlation coefficient of job satisfaction with personal and organizational variable**

Variables	<u>Y</u> Level of job satisfaction r
X <sub>1</sub> age	-0.224
X <sub>2</sub> Educational level	0.301*
X <sub>3</sub> Level of job diversity	0.3271*
X <sub>4</sub> Salary	0.3611*
X <sub>5</sub> Service duration	-0.143
X <sub>6</sub> In-service training attended	-0.021

\*  $P < 0.05$



satisfaction. However, other variables like age and service duration and in-service training showed negative but not significant relationship with job satisfaction level. This kind of result has been confirmed by Glisson and Durick (1988) and Tripathi, (1997).

### 5.6 Regression coefficient of job satisfaction on personal and organizational variables

Regression analysis by enter method was used to determine predictive equation changes in job satisfaction. As shown in Table (6) the positive and significant partial regression coefficients ( $P < 0.05$ ) of educational level, level of job diversity, and salary were found to have a positive effect to increase job satisfaction among extension personnel. The  $R^2$  value of 0.4012 with F value of 18.38 indicates it's significant at 0.01 level of probability and reveals that 40.12 percent variation in job satisfaction of extension personnel could be explained by these five variables.

**Table 6: Regression coefficient of job satisfaction of extension personnel on personal and organizational variables**

V. No.	Variable	B	Beta	T
X <sub>1</sub>	Age	-0.310	0.21	-1.085
X <sub>2</sub>	Educational Level	0.550	0.69	2.415*
X <sub>3</sub>	Level of Job Diversity	0.390	0.28	2.014*
X <sub>4</sub>	Salary	0.035	0.65	2.115*
X <sub>5</sub>	Service Duration	0.450	0.28	0.085
-	Constant Coefficient	6.340	-	-2.59
<b>F = 18.38**</b>		<b>R<sup>2</sup>=0.561</b>		<b>R<sup>2</sup>=0.4012</b>

\*  $P < 0.05$ , \*\*  $P < 0.01$

According to Table 6 regression equations in standard situation will be:

$$Y = 0.550(X^2) + 0.390(X^3) + 0.035(X^4) + 6.340$$

According to the regression equation, educational level had a strong power in prediction of job satisfaction of extension personnel followed by salary and level of job diversity.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the analysis made, the following conclusions were derived:

- 1) The capability of a development department in achieving its goals will depend on the commitment of its employees, and the commitment to duty among personnel is a function of job satisfaction. Analyzing the items of job satisfaction indices, showed that the index item most suggesting negative job satisfaction was promotion policy in organization.
- 2) Two types of variables (personal characteristics, and organizational variables) could influence job satisfaction.
- 3) Educational level, level of job diversity and level of salary were three main variables that showed positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction.
- 4) Changes in job satisfaction were predicted by the educational level, level of job diversity and salary variables.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Subsequent to the conclusions, the following recommendations were proposed:

1. The promotion policy in extension organization was the most negative item regarding to level of job satisfaction among extension personnel. So, recommended to think a new form of promotion policy in organization according to process of job analysis and role definition.
2. Job satisfaction depends on number of factors like educational level, level of job diversity and amount of salary that were found to have a positive effect to increase job satisfaction among extension personnel. Therefore, administration should conduct a periodic needs assessment to determine the level of job satisfaction of personnel and identify methods for increasing satisfaction. However, the choice of the higher educated personnel, determining and definition of different kinds of responsibilities and increasing salary of Extension personnel is

highly recommended to ensure the job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

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