

**JOB SATISFACTION: THE LINK TO RETENTION AND THE CORRELATION TO AGE,
GENDER AND ORGANIZATIONAL POSITION**

Dr. Darrin L. DeReus,^{*} Wyle

ABSTRACT

In efforts to balance resource availability and workload, leaders in the United States Air Force have attempted to manage the budgets by fluctuating manpower levels. There is minimal research of multiple affiliations (active duty military, government civilians and contractors) and the effects of manpower reductions on the organization. This study collected data on satisfaction levels to find the similarities and differences of multiple affiliations in a service during manpower reductions. The research showed that there were correlations in the area of satisfaction and intent to stay with the organization as well as differences in satisfaction by age, gender and position in the organization. Twenty-eight percent of the participants show intent to leave and another 22% of those are undecided on their intent. Additionally, 25% stated that job satisfaction influenced their decision to stay, 76% stated that their current position was relevant to their satisfaction and over 45% stated that their motivation for career selection was job satisfaction. Those more satisfied expressed a desire to stay beyond their commitment while those scoring lower in satisfaction expressed their desire to depart once their commitment was completed. Leadership must find innovative ways to motivate the members of all affiliations in all services in order to ensure retention does not become a concern when the economy improves.

INTRODUCTION

A person's career anchor is an individual's view of self (Schein, 1996a). Views are seen through individual beliefs in his or her own talents and abilities, basic values and a sense of motives and needs when considering one's career (Schein, 1996a). Schein (1996a) shows that an individual's career anchors evolve over time as the individual gains life and career experiences. Once the career is chosen, an individual then creates an anchor of oneself based on the career. The career becomes a "stabilizing force" and is a basis of values and motives that the member will not easily give up if forced to change (Schein, 1996a, p. 80). In an attempt to balance resource availability and workload, leaders often manage the tight fiscal constraints by reducing manpower. Manpower reductions may cause changes in the terms of employment and therefore cause a person to change their career anchors and impact their satisfaction at work. Research has shown that downsizing has a direct impact on motivation and satisfaction (Berman, 1998; deVries et al, 1997; Frazee, 1997; Jamrog, 2004; Paulsen et al, 2005). Motivation and satisfaction have been shown to have an impact on overall job performance (Herzberg, 1968; Maslow 1943/2002; McClelland et al, 1953). As the economy improves and the job market opens up, it will be increasingly important to retain the best and the brightest of the workforce. Current estimates show that the economy should be performing again by 2014. In order to effectively lead the organization, members in leadership positions must understand how the current manpower reductions affect their personnel and work to minimize the impacts in the future.

This study reviewed an organization going through multiple rounds of manpower reductions to see what areas of satisfaction should be an area of focus for senior leaders. If members must change careers, it is seen as changing their values and motivation for why they are there. The change may not only be the actual career, but changes in the terms of employment such as workload shift, security and stability (Schein, 1996a). According to DeReus (2012) the largest percentage of members of all affiliations has Lifestyle as their career anchor. This descriptor focuses on developing a work/life balance. According to Schein (1996a) these employees feel their careers are less important than family life and are most satisfied when there is an integration of career and family. This career anchor does not handle the loss of security or safety well.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Manpower Reductions

Each group affiliation has felt the effects of manpower fluctuations. The active duty military experienced an overall decrease in manpower since the end of the Cold War with slight increases for the post 9/11 attacks (Figure 1). With the initial manpower cuts provided with PBD 720, the military started a consecutive decrease in manpower that is still ongoing with plans to continue force shaping through 2012 (Gettle, 2006; Hafemeister, 2007) and continued reductions for all affiliations through 2015 (Tilghman, 2010). However, this is the first time the reductions have occurred year after year during a time when multiple battles were still ongoing.

Government civilians are not immune to manpower reductions. With A-76 studies (GAO, 2001) the civilian workforce was decreased while contractor support positions increased. After recent manpower reduction programs such as PBD 720 (AFAA, 2008) and RMD 802 (Goure, 2010), the government civilian workforce had seen some increases in workforce reaching a level of 173,000 Air Force Civilians (Dorr, 2010). Not only do manpower fluctuations have a strain on job satisfaction, other factors may also reduce the civilian employee's satisfaction. In the 2011 budget, the President instituted a pay freeze for all government employees (Dorr, 2010). The commission that studied the deficit proposed a three year pay freeze, but President Obama reduced the amount to a two-year pay freeze (Clark, 2011). This is a difficult challenge that leadership is now facing as we discuss job satisfaction in the organization. Most recently, a hiring freeze was instituted in the Air Force for all civilians and over 20,000 civilian positions were eliminated.

Government contractors also were not protected from manpower fluctuations. The contractor workforce is designed to fill the gaps when the requirements of the DoD cannot be met immediately by military members or government civilians (Hess, 2009) but also are quickly reduced when the need can be fulfilled by government manpower. With the recent insourcing efforts of RMD 802, contractors were reduced and 60% of the contractor funding was provided to hire government civilians for the same workload (Goure, 2010). The larger picture is that regardless of the fluctuation of personnel, the workload is not decreasing, but overall manpower from all affiliations combined is decreasing.

Motivational Theories Affecting Job Satisfaction

Martin (2006) showed that there are links between motivation, performance, and job satisfaction and when members do not have the resources required, including sufficient manpower, employees could be dissatisfied. Without motivation and satisfaction, employees may not perform to the desired productivity level or may actually leave the company once a better opportunity that meets their needs is presented. Withey and Cooper (1989) show that when members are dissatisfied, their performance drops and they either voice their concerns or they leave the organization when another opportunity becomes available.

Although retention is not a current issue with the Air Force, once the economy recovers, maintaining a motivated and satisfied workforce will be critical for ensuring the Air Force maintains a quality force (McMichael, 2008). Understanding motivational theories as applied for this research is important when discussing motivation, job satisfaction and the effects of retention in the future of the Air Force.

Within Maslow's theory (1943/2002), the individual starts with basic needs and must be fulfilled to a level in which the individual is satisfied sufficiently in order to move to the next level of need. With Herzberg's theory (1968), the study suggests that some of the same motivational factors described by Maslow (1943/2002) as basic physiological needs are also basic hygiene needs for an individual. Herzberg theorized that although the need was there, if it was not met the result was no satisfaction. Therefore, in order to achieve satisfaction, Herzberg (1968) discussed that the motivational factors must be present and fulfilled. Conversely, Maslow (1943/2002) theorized that not all of the factors must be present fully in order for a worker to be satisfied. Schein (2003, 1996a, 1990, 1977) also showed

that when a person takes life experiences and applies those to career choices, a career anchor is created that the member uses for future motivation and satisfaction.

McClelland, Atkinson, Clark & Lowell (1953) showed that as workers go through their career, there are expectations and the desire to achieve and gain power. The motivation based on McClelland's theory would focus on the expectancy of achieving the desired salary and the dissatisfaction would occur due to the gap between the expectation of the desired outcome and the actual outcome achieved (p. 28).

Herzberg (1968) theorized that the factors were different for satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The factors that drove satisfaction were not the same factors that caused dissatisfaction. Maslow theorized that the needs were simply physiological needs that had to be met in order to fulfill the individual needs. Storlie (2006) stated in his research that "In contrast to Maslow's more abstract conceptualization, McClelland's conceptualization offered researchers a clearly defined set of needs as they relate to workplace behavior, and has found considerable popularity in research on individual factors relating to work motivation" (p. 37). So although Maslow (1943/2002) was providing a listing of needs to be fulfilled, McClelland provided a finer tuned list of needs that could be utilized in more of a managerial setting. Schein (1996a) assembled desires into categories or career anchors and those anchors are the basis of one's desired career goals and satisfaction levels. DeReus (2012) showed that all organizational affiliations in this study ranked "Lifestyle" as their number one career anchor.

All motivational theories provided have areas in which weaknesses are discussed. Not all motivational theories are a complete list of steps to follow that will guarantee successful and motivated employees. In Maslow's (1943/2002) theory, not all of the needs must be fulfilled completely and may never be filled completely. The individual may not achieve the final stage of self-actualization and some may only fulfill the basic need of love and belongingness. Herzberg's (1968) focus was on enriching the job by manipulating the motivational factors to the individual's desires within the control of management (p. 93). Schein (1996a, 1990) shows that career anchors are based on stages in a workers career and when those areas are disrupted, the worker may no longer be satisfied. A motivated and satisfied workforce is vital to ensure job performance is continued, even in turbulent times. Although retention is not a concern for the Air Force now, once the economy improves, members will seek other options to fulfill their motivational and satisfaction desires (Withey & Cooper, 1989).

Effects of Downsizing

Understanding the impacts of downsizing on the organization is important for leaders to understand the effects of downsizing on Air Force retention in the future. According to Pool (1997) the greatest prediction of satisfaction on the job was work motivation. Kotter (1990) showed that motivation inspires and energizes employees. However, downsizing creates the opposite of satisfaction and motivation. Frazee (1997) showed that 72% of companies experience an immediate negative affect from downsizing while 36% still feel the negative effects of downsizing a year after the manpower reduction occurs.

Although the overall goal when performing manpower reductions is to ultimately save money, the application must also include changes in workload allocation. During manpower reductions, those more experienced leave the organization and those left behind have to manage the workload that has not decreased. These members accept this workload without an increase in pay, but may be expected to perform at higher levels with decreased resources. With a decrease in manpower and the difficult situation that remains, Woodward (2007) states that morale and employee satisfaction has fallen below 50% throughout all industries. In order to mitigate the effects of downsizing, leadership must recognize and develop methods to motivate and retain employees.

Motivating and Retaining Employees

With the continued manpower fluctuations in all affiliations and the ultimate decrease in overall manpower resources, there is a need to understand each affiliation and acknowledge that retention will be a concern once the economy recovers (McMichael, 2008) and members struggle for positions and power. According to Boddie,

Contardo and Childs (2007), the current workforce is struggling for power as workforce shifts and jobs become scarcer. Maslow (1943/2002) focused on the physiological desire for esteem and Herzberg (1968) theorized that power was not necessarily a motivator, but the need for achievement and recognition were the top two motivators. McClelland et al. (1953) also theorized that individuals strived for achievement and power based on their visualization of success expectation in their own minds. The success of power is a perception by the individual worker. Boddie et al (2007) states that as employees grow in their perception of power they “expect their subordinates to behave with the appropriate respect for the position of power they have worked so hard to achieve” (p. 25).

The current workforce has the expectation of salary increases over time. Salary increases are seen as a basic need by Maslow (1943/2002), a hygiene factor for Herzberg (1968) and a show of potential power and achievement for McClelland’s (1953) theory. Today’s employees expect salaries to maintain a stable climb to provide security for their families. Along with salary desires, Boddie et al (2007) show that promotions are expected and should be based on longevity. However, with current administration policies, pay freezes have been enacted for the next two years (Dorr, 2010) and workforce reductions for the entire DoD are planned well into 2015 (Tilghman, 2010).

Almost half of the government civilian workforce is eligible to retire (Peters, 1996). As baby boomers exit the workforce, they take their habits and work ethics with them. The period where baby-boomers and Generation Y overlap could involve a culture clash as the two generational work ethics converge. The future workforce will bring new experiences and expectations with them. According to Baldonado and Spangenburg (2009) Generation Y “defined as those born after 1980” (p. 96), workers grew up with very involved parents with “busy schedules— sports, music lessons, and scheduled play-dates occupying much of their time” (p. 99). These individuals are used to constantly being busy and having influence in the decision making process because “their parents constantly communicated with them” (Baldonado & Spangenburg, 2009, p. 99). These new workers grew up with a life full of technology, surrounded by cell phones, instant access to multiple outlets of entertainment and information. The future workforce has grown up with instant collaboration with real time updates and text messaging. Most future employees will expect the same communication at the workplace that they experienced as they grew up and went through college.

These young workers will adapt to changing technologies and will maintain the busy schedules in which they were raised. “The future worker will be unconstrained by time, space, and organizational boundaries and will leverage innovative technologies to communicate and interact effectively” (Boddie et al, 2007, p. 26). All of these changes do not change the motivational factors within Herzberg’s theory, but what defines achievement may be different between baby boomers and the next generation of workers. As Herzberg (1968) defined motivational factors as: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth, the next generation of worker may change how each is defined. Young future workers’ expectations will be different than the baby boomer generation. Boddie et al (2007) utilized a quantitative survey to measure the hygiene and motivational factors according to Herzberg’s theory and discovered that the motivational and hygiene factors truly did not change, but the order of importance shifted slightly compared with previous research. These new workers are the next generation of Airman, civilians and government contractors that will be recruited and retained for the future of the Air Force.

If the next generation is not satisfied in his or her current position of employment, future workers may depart the company. Baby boomers desire the long term safety and security of employment and hold on average no more than 10 jobs in a lifetime (Boddie et al., 2007, p. 26). Generation Y could potentially hold twenty to thirty jobs by the time they have completed a forty year career (Boddie et al., 2007, p. 26). Schein (1996a) states that career anchors may impact satisfaction even more as more individuals are laid off. Schein (1996a) continues by stating that careers may become more temporary for job experience and there may be fewer super organizations, but several smaller organizations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive non-experimental quantitative survey study tested the relationship between the JDI satisfaction scores and independent variables of group affiliations of active duty, government civilian employees and contractors. The research focused on each affiliation's age, gender and position within the organization. The results were analyzed using IBM®'s Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) ® software application, version 19.

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine relationships satisfaction between affiliations and age, gender and organizational position. The relationship evaluated the satisfaction levels among the affiliations, the areas of satisfaction and their intent to stay in the organization. The study looked at the independent variables of affiliation, age, gender and position against the results of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI). There was no data manipulation for the independent variables and only the relationships were studied.

The target population was all members of military installation, regardless of affiliation. The sample consisted of all genders, all ranks and provided a cross representation of the current manpower structure of the Midwestern Air Force Base. Due to the nature of this research, purposive non-probability sampling method was used. With inherent restrictions of gathering information while working on a military installation, the ability to effectively coordinate and randomly select probability samples would be too time-consuming as well as place additional burden on the affiliation involved. It was not possible to estimate the actual probability of being selected as part of the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). All members were available to the researcher for the study and all were invited to participate.

Research Instrumentation

The instrument selected is the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) created by Smith, Kendall & Hulin (1969). The JDI is a survey that measures satisfaction in six categories: People on Your Present Job, Job in General, Work on Present Job, Pay, Opportunities for Promotion, and Supervision. The respondent answers "Yes", "No" or "?". The questions in each section are short phrases or a word. According to the Quick Reference Guide provided by Bowling Green State University (2009), the JDI measures overall job satisfaction. When scoring, the answers are graded 3, 1, or 0 for positive questions and 0, 1, and 3 for negative questions.

The validity of the JDI was originally tested by Smith et al. (1969) and showed that the instrument "show[s] very good convergent and discriminant validity" (p. 57) and the instrument was specifically tested in the research conducted by Kinicki, Schriesheim, Mckee-Ryan, and Carson (2002) and showed the JDI was a valid tool for measuring job satisfaction and continued to show convergent and discriminant validity. Pearson (2008) and Pearson (1998) also performed studies using the JDI and showed a Cronbach's alpha of .90 for their study. The JDI is a valid instrument and evidence provided proves that the satisfaction measures will provide the additional information required to perform comparative analysis for the job satisfaction for multiple group affiliations working under a single organizational structure

Research Statement and Hypotheses

With the manpower reductions impacting all affiliations, there is a need to understand the current impact on satisfaction to allow leadership to address the long term impacts on retention once the economy improves. The correlation between the economic climate and retention already exists, but the goal is to correlate satisfaction, the intent to stay in the organization and where the correlations are the strongest. As options for other employment start to present themselves, leadership of all organizations will need to concentrate on maintaining the highest talent pool of employees.

The research documented the correlations between the satisfaction, group affiliations and age, gender and organizational position. A relationship was considered to be significant ($p < .05$) showing correlation and areas of concern for leadership.

The following are the hypotheses for the study.

- H1₀: There are no statistically significant differences between affiliation and JDI job satisfaction scores.
- H2₀: There are no statistically significant differences between age and JDI job satisfaction scores.
- H3₀: There are no statistically significant differences between gender and JDI job satisfaction scores.
- H4₀: There are no statistically significant differences between organizational position and JDI job satisfaction scores.
- H5₀: There is no statistically significant correlation between job satisfaction and the intent to stay in the organization.

Research Variables

The dependent variable (DV) for this research was the satisfaction scores calculated by the inputs from all members of the affiliations. Differences and correlations were calculated based on the independent variables (IV) gathered from the demographic variables of age, gender and organizational position.

Population

The population studied within this research included all military members, government civilians and contractors working at an Air Force Installation. All members within each affiliation provided valuable insight into job satisfaction within their affiliation. All affiliation members were available to the author for this research. During the research period, a significant percentage of the total population could be out on various tasks or deployments and otherwise unavailable leaving approximately 1,000 personnel available to take the survey. This number still left a large enough population to draw a significant sample for research. There were 353 surveys filled out and after reviewing all responses 295 were deemed complete. The final response rate was 29.5% ($n=295$). All survey responses were coded, scored and input into SPSS to perform the analysis. Descriptive statistics were completed based on the completed responses only.

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to perform a comparative analysis on the multiple group affiliations within the Air Force for career anchors and job satisfaction. The study was focused on finding the similarities and differences between the affiliations in career anchors and satisfaction to allow leadership insight into potential challenges during recent consecutive manpower reductions affecting all affiliations.

Demographic Data

The demographic survey portion was the lead in to the overall questionnaire. The first question asked was the age of the participant. The ages of the respondents were spread almost evenly between the first four age categories. The ages of 18-42 represented 77% of all respondents with each category at 18%-20%. The majority of participants were military members and most military members join between the ages of 18 to 24 either immediately after high school or college. After a 20-year career, members are eligible for retirement, which would explain the decrease in participants after the 42-year age category.

The participants' gender was 65% male and 35% female. The military is a male dominated force with 81% males and 19% female (Air Force Personnel Center, 2011). Reviewing both officer and enlisted ranks for male to female ratio, it was discovered that the ratio was similar, regardless of rank. This ratio was for military alone and there were also government civilian employees and contractors participating, who do not have the percentage differences one expects to see in the military.

The affiliation selection was a key question for research analysis. Portions of the analysis were based on the affiliation of the member. The proportion of respondents was in line with the overall proportion of the base population. The base proportion is approximately 81% military, 16% government civilian and 3% contractor and the responses were 73% military, 22% government civilian and 5% contractor. This was representative of the overall base population and the participation was as expected among the affiliations.

The majority of the members who took the survey were Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs; 26%). Airmen (Amn) were the next highest with 15% responding. Airmen are the junior ranking members of the force and generally do not have as much experience. An enlisted member will be an Airmen for at least the first 4 years of their career and up to 8 years if they do not make the first NCO rank. For officers, company grade officers (CGOs) are the least experienced members. A CGO enters similar to Airmen with zero experience and will remain in CGO status for three ranks until approximately the 10 year point when they become a field grade officer (FGO). Junior ranking members were 51% of the respondents, therefore, the average years of experience for the survey were 9.24 years with a standard deviation of 7.37 years. As members continue through their career and move through the ranks, some decide to leave, some have that choice made for them through disciplinary actions and others continue to increase in rank and responsibility.

The question regarding a member's intent to stay after their commitment was completed providing interesting results. There were 28% who stated they were very unlikely or unlikely to stay after their commitment was up, but additionally 22% were undecided on their intent to stay. Even if only half of these members decided to exit, it would create a 39% decrease in retention. Martin (2006) shows the links between motivation, performance and job satisfaction. Withey and Cooper (1989) proved that when dissatisfied, members decrease their performance in the organization, and they either voice their concerns or will leave the organization as soon as another opportunity becomes available. In a study by RAND (2004), economy is shown as a negative correlation on retention so when the economy improves, retention decreases. RAND (2004) discovered that as it becomes more difficult to recruit, standards of the new recruits decrease and the quality of the recruit goes along with the decrease. RAND (2004) also discovered that when the military provides additional bonuses and incentives, including increased pay, the impact is negligible. Although retention is at an all-time high in today's economic situation, when the economy improves, retention could be exponentially impacted by the recent manpower reductions and current satisfaction levels.

When members were asked what influenced them to stay in their current careers, most replied job satisfaction. The survey shows that 25% of members felt that satisfaction with what they were doing influenced them the most, where money and benefits came in next at 20%. This is similar to studies conducted by Martin (2006), Withey and Cooper (1989), and RAND (2004). When members stated they were looking for satisfaction, they defined it based on their own beliefs, but Herzberg (1968) discovered members felt that achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth at work were motivators that provided satisfaction.

Continuing to look at satisfaction, over 75% stated that their current position was relevant or very relevant to their satisfaction. Members want to be satisfied at work over everything else presented and their current job, the career they have chosen, is relevant to that satisfaction. Continuing with satisfaction, the next question asked if working in their area of interest was important to satisfaction and almost 90% felt that it was important or very important with the majority stating it was very important. Finally, when asked what their primary motivation for career selection was, over 46% stated that job satisfaction was their motivation with 15% stating money and benefits.

Half of all members in all affiliations either intend to leave or are undecided. Members want to be satisfied at work and use satisfaction as their primary factor for choosing a career. Members of all affiliations want to stay in their current career which is relevant to their current level of satisfaction. Schein (2003, 1996a, 1990, 1977) theorized that individuals place their own self-conceptualization into their careers as they grow. Once a member ties themselves to that self-concept of who they are, the view becomes their key stabilizer and they do not willingly give

that self-perception up (Schein, 1996a). Implementing manpower reductions changes that identity by placing members into careers or changing the environment in which they are accustomed.

Instrument Analysis

The JDI is a survey that measures satisfaction in six categories: People on Your Present Job, Job in General, Work on Present Job, Pay, Opportunities for Promotion, and Supervision. All data collected was reviewed and the scoring was conducted as required by the instructions presented by Smith et al (1969). Each question was analyzed for the mean score for the overall data collection. Each category was reviewed and descriptors analyzed further in the discussion area.

Internal Consistency Reliability

In order to ensure internal consistency of the surveys used in the research, Cronbach's alpha scores were calculated for each area of the JDI. The Cronbach's alpha scores for the JDI are displayed in Table 1. The internal validity for the JDI was strong with an overall score of .967. The lowest score was the pay category at .865 which is still a strong reliability for the study. The JDI has shown to have very strong reliability within this study as well as other studies conducted by Pearson (2008, 1998) who had consistent reliability in the range of .90.

Hypothesis 1

Next, the researcher performed the hypothesis testing for each area of focus of the study. The first hypothesis tested was:

H1₀: There are no statistically significant differences between affiliation and JDI job satisfaction scores.

H1₁: There are statistically significant differences between affiliation and JDI job satisfaction scores.

The data was entered into SPSS for comparing means. The initial results were reviewed and tested for homogeneity of the variables. The results are located in Table 2.

In order to use the ANOVA, the homogeneity test must be passed with significance greater than .05 (Norusis, 2006). The data did not meet all of the criteria for homogeneity so the ANOVA could not be used and the data had to be analyzed with the robust test of equality of means instead of the standard ANOVA using the Welch test (Norusis, 2006). The results are located in Table 3.

There are significant differences in all areas of affiliation for all categories of satisfaction except the Pay category with a significance of .575. There is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. There truly are significant differences between affiliation and job satisfaction scores.

Hypothesis 2

The next hypothesis test reviewed age and job satisfaction. The hypothesis is below and the results are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

H2₀: There are no statistically significant differences between age and JDI job satisfaction scores.

H2₁: There are statistically significant differences between age and JDI job satisfaction scores.

The data did not pass the test for homogeneity of variances, shown in Table 4, therefore the robust tests of equality of means was used shown in Table 5.

Most areas showed strong statistical differences in satisfaction, except the pay category. There was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there are statistical differences between age and satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3

The next hypothesis test looked at the relationship between the gender and JDI job satisfaction scores. The research hypothesis is below.

H4₀: There are no statistically significant differences between gender and job satisfaction scores.

H4₁: There are statistically significant differences between gender and job satisfaction scores.

The test of the homogeneity of variances was passed, shown in Table 6, and the ANOVA could be used. The results of the ANOVA are located in Table 7.

The only significant difference when comparing satisfaction among the genders is in the promotion category ($p=.001$). All other satisfaction areas were not statistically significant. There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis for all satisfaction areas other than the promotion category.

Hypothesis 4

The next hypothesis test looked at the relationship between the organizational position and JDI job satisfaction scores. The research hypothesis is below.

H4₀: There are no statistically significant differences between organizational position and job satisfaction scores.

H4₁: There are statistically significant differences between organizational position and job satisfaction scores.

This test also did not pass the test of homogeneity of variances shown in Table 8 and had to use the robust tests of equality of means with a p-value of .05 shown in Table 9. All job satisfaction scores were statistically significant when compared with the organizational position. All showed significant differences and there was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. There is a difference between the position in the organization and job satisfaction scores.

Hypothesis 5

The final hypothesis evaluated if there were significant correlations between satisfaction and intent to stay in the organization.

H6₀: There is no statistically significant correlation between satisfaction and intent to stay in the organization.

H6₁: There is a statistically significant correlation between satisfaction and intent to stay in the organization.

The test was conducted using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient with a p-value of .05. The intent to stay and all JDI satisfaction scores were entered for evaluation and the results are located in Table 10.

As shown in Table 10, there were significant correlations between the Intent to Stay and JDI satisfaction scores. The positive correlation for all satisfaction scores shows that as the satisfaction increases in each category, so does the intent to stay of the member. This also proves that the opposite is true. The member's lower desire to stay in the organization also correlates with lower satisfaction scores. All scores correlated at statistically significant levels in all areas and provided sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis with People ($p=.001$), Job in General ($p=.000$), Work ($p=.000$), Pay ($p=.001$), Promotion ($p=.006$) and Supervision ($p=.000$) areas all showing significant statistical correlations.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Herzberg (1968) studied hygiene factors and motivators and theorized that motivators were the primary drivers of satisfaction where hygiene factors didn't cause satisfaction, but did cause unhappiness. If a hygiene factor was not present, then individuals were unhappy. Hygiene factors under Herzberg (1968) are security, status, relationship with subordinates, personal life, relationship with peers, salary, working conditions, relationship with supervisor, supervision and company policies. Herzberg (1968) then stated that growth, advancement, responsibility, work itself, recognition, and achievement are motivators that cause actual satisfaction for employees/members. The JDI measured satisfaction levels for six categories that crossed both the hygiene and motivator sections. Although the

JDI doesn't split between hygiene and motivators, the results provided interesting results for each age category, gender and position of the individual within the organization.

Hypothesis 1

The first Hypothesis focused on the comparison of affiliation and job satisfaction. The initial test using ANOVA was attempted but did not meet all of the criteria for homogeneity so the next step was to use the robust test of equality of means using the Welch test (Norusis, 2006). Although the top three areas of satisfaction were the same for all affiliations, the test shows that there are differences between all organizations when it comes to satisfaction. The only area where there was not a difference, according to the robust test of equality of means, was the Pay category. The insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis for the Pay category is understandable. For the military and government civilian categories the pay charts are published and pay raises are primarily set by Congress and on pay chart based on longevity and organizational position.

Hypothesis 2

Age was another area of focus for the researcher. Looking at the JDI scores by age in Table 5, significant differences are shown. There were significant differences in every category except the Pay category ($p=.643$). The significance of the differences in age shows that different ages have different priorities for satisfaction.

Satisfaction is broken out by age and shown in Figure 2. The younger members appear to have a lower satisfaction than those in the 43-48 categories and then there is a dip as members achieve the age of 56-62. According to Boddie et al (2007) the current young workforce needs flexibility, technology adoption, increased education and training and leaders who are innovative. It is leadership that needs to create an environment that enables young workers of all affiliations to see that they do add value to the workforce. The dip in the 56-62-year-old age range is interesting and could be an area of future focus as to why there is such a difference in satisfaction for an area where many should be wrapping up successful careers.

Hypothesis 3

When discussing the overall satisfaction ANOVA in Table 7 for the differences by gender alone, there was only one area of significant statistical differences and that area was promotion. When looking at the mean scores of satisfaction between males and females for promotion, males were significantly more satisfied than females. This analysis shows that there may be a perception of unfair promotion practices or a perceived disparity between males and females by the female population. This is another area where leadership may need to focus efforts to overcome the perception of unfair practices.

Hypothesis 4

The focus of Hypothesis 4 looked at the organizational position in each affiliation and the differences among them when concerned with job satisfaction. The differences in satisfaction when comparing ranks in the affiliations were significant in all areas. Organizational position in the affiliations takes on various responsibilities at various levels and will require additional efforts from leadership to provide that satisfaction. The lower ranking members are shown to be the lower satisfied in almost all areas. Their expectations may not be met, they may feel they are taking on more of the burden as manpower decreases and may want additional recognition for the work they perform. Jamrog (2004) suggested that retention is based on the ability of supervisors being able to walk around and lead, coach and mentor. With taking on more responsibilities, the focus has been more on what is produced and sent out the door instead of leading their employees (Jamrog, 2004). Fong and Kleiner (2004) show that work overload could be a problem for organizations that downsize and can develop unwanted results. Workload overload can cause increases in stress, depression, anxiety, accidents and other hazards (Fong & Kleiner, 2004). These factors must be managed properly by leadership in the defense organization to improve satisfaction for all ranks in all affiliations.

Reviewing the satisfaction levels, the graphical depictions show the relationship of each organizational position and their respective satisfaction scores. Each mean score by position was plotted for a graphical depiction of the areas of concern. This allowed for pinpointing areas of focus for leadership. The maximum score available in each category is 54 and when reviewing the total score for all categories it is 324.

The first area shown in Figure 3 is the mean score of the People category broken out by organizational position. The lowest ranking of the active duty components showed the lowest scores while civilians scored higher on average, but dips for the government civilian GS 6-11 or technician and middle management ranks. Field Grade Officers (FGO) had the highest satisfaction rating followed closely by the Contractor. Herzberg (1968) showed relationship with peers as a hygiene factor that influences satisfaction through the basic cause of either having a positive relationship with peers or not having a relationship with peers. Herzberg (1968) stated that when it came to hygiene factors, such as relationship with peers or People category were the “primary cause of unhappiness on the job” (p. 92). According to Baldonado and Spangenburg (2009), the younger generation is more idealistic and has distinct motivation and hygiene needs. This became more evident as each satisfaction category in the affiliations were reviewed and sorted by rank.

The satisfaction in the Job in General category, shown in Figure 4, depicts the scores by organizational position. Overall the military affiliation has the lowest satisfaction in the Airman and Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) positions. While the civilian affiliation exhibits higher satisfaction equal to those higher ranking in the military. Even the lower ranking civilians have a higher Job in General satisfaction rating, which shows leadership that there is an area of focus for satisfaction improvement. The category scores showed that members did not rate the positive items as high as the negative items. Members rated the negative items higher stating that although they are not dissatisfied with the current job, they are not satisfied completely either. Members do not believe their job is Rotten ($M=2.65$) but also do not think it is Great ($M=1.38$) or Superior ($M=1.18$). Airmen and NCOs are the younger force who is looking for satisfaction at work. Baldonado and Spangenburg (2009) showed that today’s workforce is looking for new opportunities to grow in their careers. The younger members want to be challenged and recognized for what they do.

The score of the Work category in Figure 5 displays results similar to the Job in General category. The military affiliation shows lower satisfaction scores for work satisfaction in the lower positions than the higher military positions in the organization. The scores were much lower than the civilian and contractor categories. This once again highlights an area of concern where leadership should focus efforts within the active duty affiliation.

With the younger members still coming in with lower satisfaction scores and the overall total compared to the available score of 54, Airmen and NCOs are once again the least satisfied. Members overall feel that the work is Routine ($M=.79$), Repetitive ($M=1.01$), not Fascinating ($M=1.27$). Members do feel that the work is Useful ($M=2.56$) and Satisfying ($M=2.08$). Members do not feel excited about the work they do and tend to feel that they are not allowed to be Creative ($M=1.31$). Baldonado and Spangenburg (2003) stated that one must keep the younger generation satisfied by offering additional responsibilities as rewards as well as offering fun and creativity in their work area.

When reviewing the Promotion category for the organization, shown in Figure 6, a different picture is depicted. The total score available is still 54, but reviewing the figure below, one can see that the max score achieved by the CGOs was almost 40 with the lowest average score being below 10 for the civilian GS 1-5 positions. Overall members feel that their job is not necessarily a Dead-end job ($M=2.23$) but members do feel that Opportunities are limited ($M=.99$) and people are not necessarily Promoted on ability ($M=1.15$).

The lower ranking members of the active duty affiliation are more satisfied with their promotions than the civilian counter parts. One item to note for the active duty components is the fact that promotions for Airman (Amn) and Company Grade Officers (CGOs) are automatic based on time in service. The promotion to Field Grade Officer

(FGOs), NCOs and SNCOs are no longer automatic and based on supervisory reviews and for NCOs and SNCOs, test scores. For civilians, their promotions are based on available positions, education and experience. There must be a vacancy in order to be hired into that position. With only approximately 575 civilian positions and less chance of moving from location to location, the promotion opportunities are not as available as other affiliations. For leadership, the focus would be to recognize opportunities for rewarding civilians who have proven themselves and making sure they are recognized properly.

Reviewing the mean score of the Pay category in Figure 7 shows that those in the lower positions for both the active duty and civilian categories are not satisfied by their current pay for where they are in their careers. Members do feel they have Enough to live on ($M=2.56$) but also feel they are not Well paid ($M=1.10$), are paid Less than they deserve ($M=1.35$), and are Underpaid ($M=1.40$).

The interesting area of change is the airman scored a higher mean satisfaction for pay than NCOs. It may be of concern that middle management in the Air Force are feeling overworked and underpaid for what they are asked to take on for their duties and responsibilities. Ultimately, the CGOs scored the highest, which makes sense due to being recent college graduates and making a significant amount of money in annual salary. Pay is an issue when it comes to retention and often used as a marketing tool, however RAND (2004) found that pay actually does very little to influence retention and recruitment when there is a strong or improving economy. According to Jamrog (2004), pay is not as big of factor as others may believe. In all affiliations, the higher ranking members appear to have higher levels of satisfaction with their pay. Leadership can look at pay as an area of focus for increased satisfaction; however Jamrog (2004) warns that high pay alone is not going to retain individuals.

The final category reviewed in Figure 8 is the Supervision category. Jamrog (2004) discusses how employees depend on their supervisors more than anyone else in the company. Members stay because a supervisor motivates the employee, gets them engaged and provides leadership, mentorship and coaching (Jamrog, 2004). When discussing how to lead during tough times, Pardey (2007) showed that supervisors are a vital link to ensure that the vision is clear, trust is inspired and others are empowered.

Looking at specific Supervision category means for the overall scores, contractors were extremely satisfied by their supervision while NCOs were the lowest satisfied by supervision. Airman had the next lowest satisfaction with supervision. The government civilian affiliation had higher mean satisfaction scores when compared to rank structures for military active duty counterparts. Members overall are satisfied with their supervision. The lowest scored descriptor was Tells me where I stand ($M=1.72$) and was above the average descriptor score of 1.5. The affiliations overall feel that their supervisors are not Lazy ($M=2.54$), they are not Bad ($M=2.53$), and are Intelligent ($M=2.48$).

The overall satisfaction of the organization was calculated as a percentage of each rank's total divided by the overall score available to present a percentage of overall satisfaction scoring. The results are presented in Figure 9. Reviewing the overall satisfaction by mean total percentage shows that with the overall score, NCOs are scoring approximately 56% of the available scored points available with the next two lowest ranking positions next in line. NCOs are considered the first tier of management and leadership in the organization and may be feeling the effects of the manpower reductions the most as the workforce shrinks. According to Hill (2004) as organizations become leaner, managers are being asked to take on more responsibilities earlier in their careers. They are taking on more tasks, people and responsibilities and finding it more difficult to find the balance that they feel they need (Hill, 2004). However, as the rank increases in all affiliations, there appears to be an increase in satisfaction. It may be that responsibilities are being delegated and placing that burden more on the NCO.

Hypothesis 5

With the several areas of statistical significance between the affiliations and satisfaction scores, the researcher was curious with the correlation between satisfaction and the actual intention of staying in the organization. Figure 10

shows that the intent to stay is the lowest among the Amn with NCOs and the FGOs almost equal to their intentions to stay. The active duty military had an overall lower mean score of intent to stay when compared to government civilians and contractors.

The correlation is significant for satisfaction scores and the intent to stay. It is important to realize that with almost 50% very unlikely, unlikely and undecided if they will stay in the organization, the focus of satisfaction is important. Each area of the satisfaction scores presented must be reviewed by age, gender and position within the organization to see where efforts can be focused to increase satisfaction.

The biggest areas of concern for satisfaction would be the need to focus on building relationships, providing leadership training for the younger members and revitalization for those in the 56-62 age categories. By focusing on building the foundation of why the members are there, providing a work/life balance (Baldonado and Spangenburg, 2009) and developing flexible and varying managerial methods to motivate the younger force. Ultimately it is not the higher ranking members that need the attention of leadership. It is the workers in the field doing the heavy lifting who need the attention, the appreciation, the opportunities of advancement that they currently express is not being displayed. The concern isn't immediate, but is more of a concern when the economy improves. Those 40% to 50% that feel they were not appreciated may decide they are more appreciated outside the organization and then decide to depart the organization. When they depart, they take the years of knowledge, training and experience with them.

LIMITATIONS

One key limitation was the length of the survey. The survey included 142 total questions and several members who started the survey did not finish. With 353 initiating the survey and only 295 completing the survey, it shows the researcher that the survey should be shortened. A pilot study may be considered for surveys being conducted that merges different existing surveys together. A pilot study would have brought this to the attention of the researcher who could have possibly modified the data collection process.

A final limitation was the simple availability of personnel. With the current operations in multiple locations, it was very difficult to reach out and request participation. Asking them to take 15 to 20 minutes out of their busy day to perform a survey may be more than they want to tackle.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research focused on satisfaction in multiple group affiliations in the Air Force in a period of manpower reductions. Significant evidence was provided showing significant differences in the area of satisfaction scores. However, the area of satisfaction research in the affiliations individually could be expanded even further.

In the area of satisfaction, the increased focus would entail mentorship, satisfaction, the age and position of the individual in the organization. There have been studies in the past focusing on the future workforce (Baldonado and Spangenburg, 2009; Dries et al., 2008; Jamrog, 2004) but none of the research focus specifically on age and satisfaction while looking at mentorship programs. This focus of research could incorporate generational differences but focused in a setting that could also allow leadership a view into the challenges faced in the future, closing the loop on satisfaction concerns highlighted within this study.

The final area of recommended research concerns gender influences on satisfaction. The highlight of the possible perception of gender bias on promotion highlighted a concern that leadership should be concerned with immediately. Further research could focus on specific questions for seeing where current perceptions in the military are when discussing gender and satisfaction with the military organization.

CONCLUSION

This study highlighted information on satisfaction in relation to multiple affiliations within an organization. The discovery was that there are significant differences within the organization when measuring satisfaction scores. Specifically the differences were with the age, gender and organizational position. The only area without a significant difference in satisfaction was pay, which is not saying pay was an area of satisfaction, but simply that all felt it was of equal satisfaction within all age and rank categories.

The research showed that 25% of members who responded stated that job satisfaction influenced their decision to stay. Seventy-six percent stated that their current position was important for their current satisfaction and almost 90% stated that working in their area of interest was important or very important for their job satisfaction.

Jamrog (2004), Woodward (2007), and Pardey (2007) all show that downsizing has short term and long term negative effects on morale and satisfaction. Martin (2006) showed links between motivation, performance and job satisfaction. Withey and Cooper (1989) performed research proving that when members are dissatisfied, performance drops and the members will either voice their concern or leave the organization as soon as another opportunity becomes available. RAND (2004) showed that as the economy improves, retention and recruitment becomes more difficult and monetary tools normally used by the organization only provides small improvements. Jamrog (2004) shows that waiting until retention actually becomes an issue does not help, but could hurt an organization and organizations should start working today to build retention.

The research showed that 28% of members are very unlikely or unlikely to remain in the Air Force organization after their term has expired. Another 22% are undecided if they will stay or not. It ultimately comes down to if the members are satisfied. The evidence proves that satisfaction and intent to stay are strongly correlated. In an effort to retain members after multiple manpower reductions, the focus needs to be on finding out what brings them satisfaction in their work and their lives. According to DeReus (2012), Lifestyle was the highest rated area of career anchor and was evident in all affiliations. The effects could be felt now with increases in suicides and other stress related infractions. Fong and Kleiner (2004) show that work overload could be a problem for organizations that downsize and can develop unwanted results. Workload overload can cause increases in stress, depression, anxiety, accidents and other hazards (Fong & Kleiner, 2004). Leadership must find that work/life balance which may be the key to keeping the members satisfied. Regardless of what happens with manpower reductions, in order to retain members in the future, leadership will need to look at new, innovative ways to reach the lower ranking, younger members of the organization in all affiliations to motivate them and ultimately retain them in the years to come.

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Tables and Figures

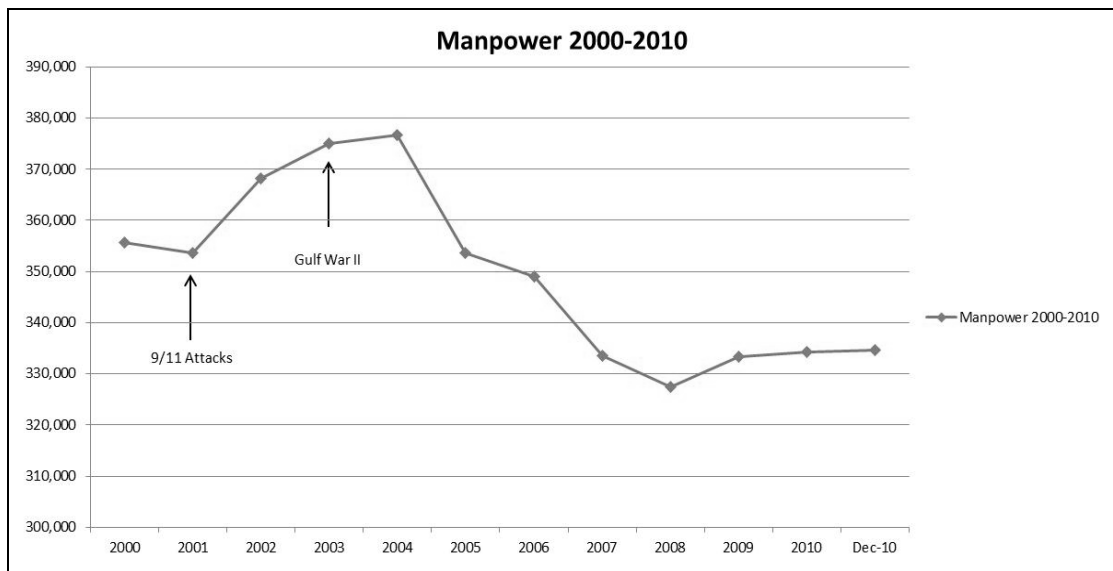


FIGURE 1. Manpower Active Duty Air Force 2000 – 2010

TABLE 1. Cronbach’s Alpha for the JDI

Category	Alpha
People	0.917
Job in General	0.902
Work	0.921
Pay	0.865
Promotion	0.918
Supervision	0.935
Total	0.967

Note: $N=18$

TABLE 2. Hypothesis 1 - Test for Homogeneity of Variables

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	3.692	2	290	.026
Job In General	15.860	2	292	.000
Work Itself	2.409	2	290	.092
Pay	.584	2	292	.558
Promotion	5.936	2	292	.003
Supervision	7.013	2	292	.001

TABLE 3. Hypothesis 1 - Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Robust Tests of Equality of Means				
	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	4.143	2	37.731	.024
Job In General	12.321	2	42.786	.000
Work	4.382	2	31.948	.021
Pay	.561	2	34.630	.575
Promotion	24.984	2	33.424	.000
Supervision	11.800	2	43.845	.000

TABLE 4. Hypothesis 2 – Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	3.232	7	285	.003
Job In General	7.048	7	287	.000
Work Itself	2.847	7	285	.007
Pay	.520	7	287	.819
Promotion	1.988	7	287	.057
Supervision	3.646	7	287	.001

TABLE 5. Hypothesis 2 – Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Robust Tests of Equality of Means				
	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	2.757	7	17.220	.041
Job In General	12.412	7	30.287	.000
Work Itself	3.996	7	17.931	.008
Pay	.738	7	17.336	.643
Promotion	3.786	7	17.483	.011
Supervision	4.980	7	25.754	.001

TABLE 6. Hypothesis 3 - Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	.832	1	291	.362
Job In General	1.264	1	293	.262
Work Itself	.100	1	291	.752
Pay	.458	1	293	.499
Promotion	1.463	1	293	.227
Supervision	.142	1	293	.706

TABLE 7. Hypothesis 3 - ANOVA of Gender and Job Satisfaction

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
People	Between Groups	185.610	1	185.610	.880	.349
	Within Groups	61376.595	291	210.916		
	Total	61562.205	292			
Job In General	Between Groups	56.900	1	56.900	.253	.615
	Within Groups	65798.334	293	224.568		
	Total	65855.234	294			
Work Itself	Between Groups	118.827	1	118.827	.480	.489
	Within Groups	72042.887	291	247.570		
	Total	72161.713	292			
Pay	Between Groups	88.809	1	88.809	.339	.561
	Within Groups	76835.937	293	262.239		
	Total	76924.746	294			
Promotion	Between Groups	4381.123	1	4381.123	12.264	.001
	Within Groups	104671.704	293	357.241		
	Total	109052.827	294			
Supervision	Between Groups	.093	1	.093	.000	.985
	Within Groups	75148.233	293	256.479		
	Total	75148.325	294			

TABLE 8. Hypothesis 4 – Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	4.293	8	284	.000
Job In General	7.849	8	286	.000
Work Itself	3.664	8	284	.000
Pay	3.244	8	286	.001
Promotion	4.122	8	286	.000
Supervision	4.756	8	286	.000

TABLE 9. Hypothesis 4 - Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Robust Tests of Equality of Means				
	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
People	4.276	8	67.195	.000
Job In General	7.492	8	70.310	.000
Work Itself	8.697	8	66.545	.000
Pay	9.796	8	65.603	.000
Promotion	15.660	8	68.233	.000
Supervision	5.723	8	71.271	.000

TABLE 10. Hypothesis 5 – Correlation of Intent to Stay and Satisfaction

Correlations								
		Intent to Stay	People	JIG	Work	Pay	Promotion	Supervision
Intent to Stay	Pearson	1	.191	.292	.247	.186	.158	.223
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.000	.000	.001	.006	.000

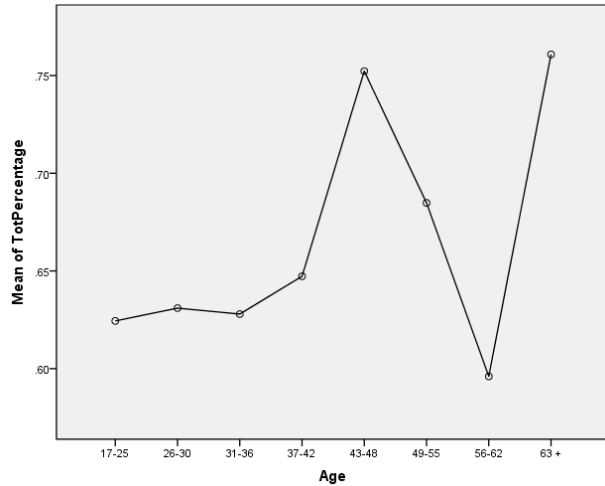


FIGURE 2. Mean of Satisfaction by Age

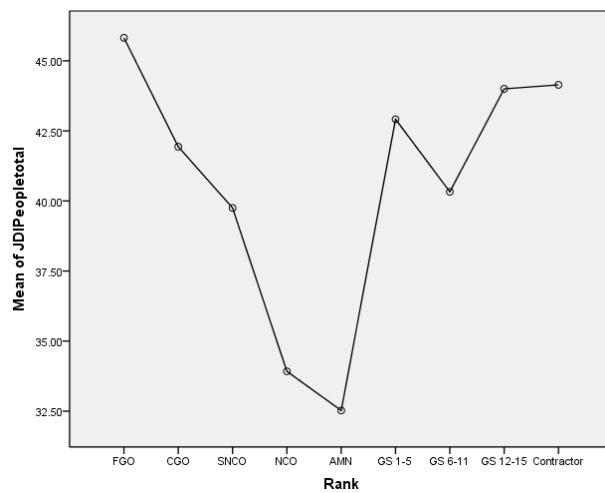


FIGURE 3. People Satisfaction by Organizational Position

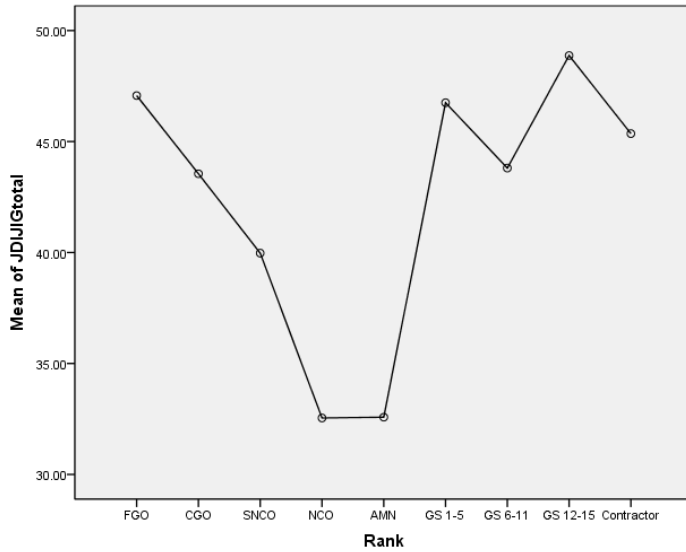


FIGURE 4. Job Satisfaction by Organizational Position

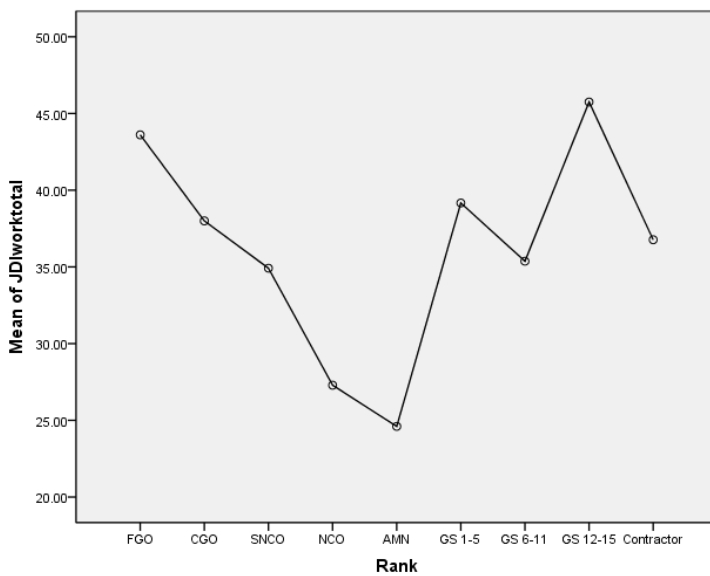


FIGURE 5. Work Satisfaction by Organizational Position

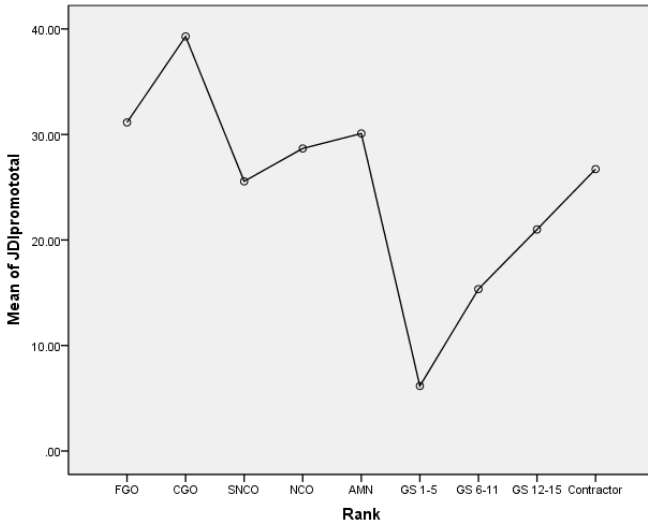


FIGURE 6. Promotion Satisfaction by Organizational Position

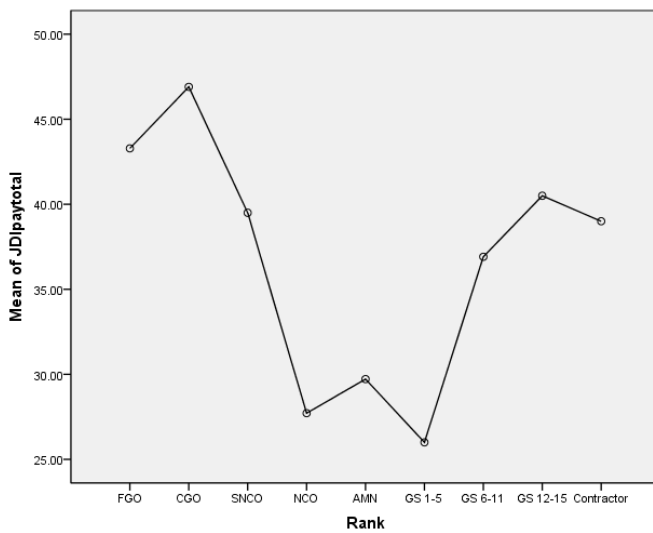


FIGURE 7. Pay Satisfaction by Organizational Position

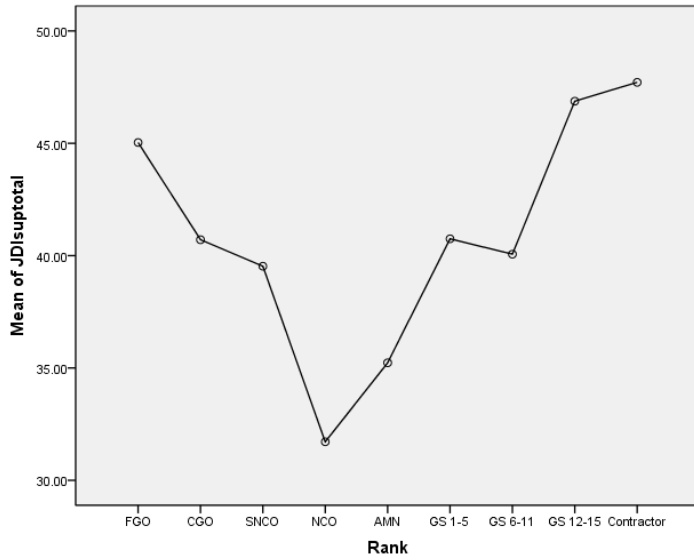


FIGURE 8. Supervision Satisfaction by Organizational Position

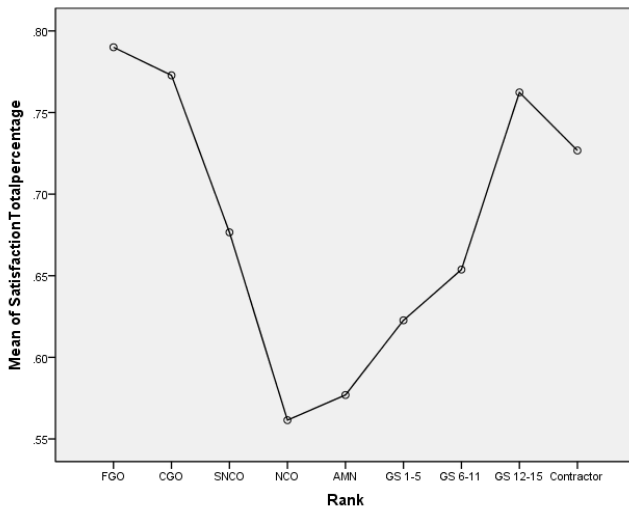


FIGURE 9. Total Satisfaction by Organizational Position

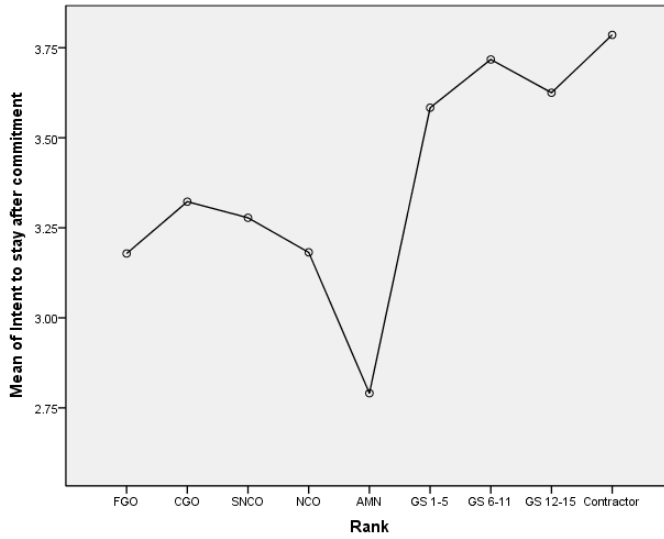


FIGURE 10. Intent to Stay by Organizational Position