

JOB SATISFACTION AND EXTENSION MODALITIES EMPLOYED BY THE EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS IN THE OCCIDENTAL MINDORO STATE COLLEGE’S EXTENSION DELIVERY SERVICE

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to determine the extension modalities employed by the extension professionals, problems encountered in conducting extension service, and their job satisfaction in the extension delivery service.

The study employed descriptive research design. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) collection instrument was used. The respondents were purposively selected from the list of faculty and staff actively involved in extension service. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the gathered data.

Result shows the extension modalities were “sometimes” employed by the extension professionals during the conduct of extension activities.

Further, the “highly” serious problem encountered were lack of extension worker's competencies, change in political leadership , lack of trainings in extension methods and communication skills, and too much academic work in addition to field work. However, they were “highly satisfied” with their extension work.

As the fulfilment of extension professionals in the academe, there is a need to revisit their job satisfaction that could also lead to an improved and effective delivery of extension.

The paper presents a model on job satisfaction that draws on experiences of extension professions that could be applied to early career and continuing professional development in the academe.

Key words: job satisfaction, competencies, extension, performance, ICT

Introduction

Job satisfaction frequently has an effect on a variety of work-related outcomes, including job performance (Ziegler, Hagen, and Diehl 2012). Job satisfaction may also affect attrition rates. Jewell, Beavers, Kirby, and Flowers (1990) stated that there is an implication of some degree of job dissatisfaction when agriculture education teachers decide to leave the profession. The same may be said in regards to Extension professionals. After studying job satisfaction for years, researchers have identified an assortment of variables related to job satisfaction to include: retirement, baby boom era, motivation, managing professional and personal time, demographics, and organizational restructuring.

One of the closely associated concepts with performance of an organization is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as all the feelings that an individual has about his/her job (Spector 1997). Several studies have shown the impacts of job satisfaction on other essential factors of organizations. Bowran and Todd (1999) asserted that "behavioral and social science research suggests that job satisfaction and job performance are positively correlated. A better understanding of job satisfaction and factors associated with it helps managers guide employee's activities in a desired direction."

Changing societal demands, philosophical thinking, and community dynamics have influence how OMSC Extension Service manage job performance and job satisfaction. The multiple expectations of an extension agent create a concern for motivation, or the lack of motivation, in the work environment. Factors could include: demographics, balance of work and family, recognition, working environment, advancement, competitive salary, and increased workload. Volsky and Aguilar's (2009) research indicated a "positive correlation with employee satisfaction, job challenge, performance measures, feedback on performance from superiors, job instrumentally, and job stability/security."

Onu, Madukwe, and Agwu (2005) had examined the factors affecting job satisfaction of field extension workers in Enugu State Agricultural Development Programme. The field extension workers indicated low level of satisfaction with their job content, conditions of service and working environment. However, they rated their organizational policies/interpersonal relationship as moderately satisfying. Three major factors – interpersonal relationship, organizational policies and conditions of service were found to be strong predictors of job satisfaction.

While, Banmeke and Ajayi (2005) posits that agricultural extension can be said to be germane for any meaningful development in the agricultural sector. Result shows that extension training was considered as an important factor affecting extension workers job performance and the extension personnel were more satisfied with the working relationship with their colleagues but unsatisfied with the working conditions and salaries being paid.

Rownowski and Hulin (1992) suggested that the most useful information to have about an employee in an organization is a valid measure of their overall level of job satisfaction. It is instrumental in maintaining a thriving work place at the Occidental Mindoro State College extension delivery system. Due to the unusually high Performance Based Bonus targets and other accrediting organizations demands and recommendation, determining current levels of satisfaction, and identifying current levels of satisfaction with specific aspects of an extension professional's job, may help to identify ways to improve the extension delivery system.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. Determine the profile of the extension professionals, in terms of:
 - a. Age;
 - b. Sex;
 - c. Marital status;
 - d. Educational qualification;
 - e. Academic work load (units);
 - f. Academic rank; and

- g. Status of employment.
2. Determine the extension modalities employed by the extension professionals.
3. Determine the problems encountered by the extension professionals in conducting extension service.
4. Determine the job satisfaction of extension professionals involved in the extension delivery service using the existing instrument associated scales.

Theoretical Framework

The Motivation-Hygiene Theory by Strong and Harder (2009) categorized various motivation factors that have the potential to influence extension agent retention. The motivating factors included strong and consistent training and staff development programs, mentoring programs, accolades for work well done, having an appealing vocation, a sense of support within the workplace, and overall job satisfaction. The maintenance factors included inadequate salary, poor pay to workload ratio, financial opportunities outside Extension, large and abnormal time obligations, issues balancing personal and professional life, and job stress (Strong & Harder, 2009).

Methodology

The study employed descriptive research design. The survey was conducted in Occidental Mindoro State College on March to June 2017, and the interviews and observation was done on January to March 2018.

The Occidental Mindoro State College (OMSC) is the only state college in the province of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines. Its main campus is located in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. OMSC began as a barangay high school founded in 1966 and is now a full-fledged state college with five campuses catering to more than eight thousand students of the province and nearby municipalities.

The respondents were purposively selected from the list of faculty (all campuses) and RDE staffs actively involved in extension service for at least one year, serve as coordinator of the College or an extension program, and had presented at least one extension in the Agency in House Review in the past years.

Table 1. Respondents of the study.

Campus	Number of Respondents
Main	10
Labangan	3
Murtha	6
Sabluyan	1
Mamburao	2
Total	22

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) collection instrument was used in the study developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist (1977) of the University of Minnesota Vocational Psychology Research (Weiss et al., 1977). Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data.

Results and Discussion

Profile of extension professionals in Occidental Mindoro State College

The extension professional has to work with people in a variety of different ways. It is often an intimate relationship and one which demands much tact and resourcefulness. The agent inevitably works with people whose circumstances are different from his own. He is an educated, trained professional working with farmers, many of whom have little formal education and lead a way of life which may be quite different from his (FAO, 1997).

The extension professionals were predominantly female (86.36%) , married (77.27%), holds permanent (86.36%) instructor position (54.54%), with a mean workload of 21.27 units ranging from 4-33.

Table 2. Profile of extension professionals.

Characteristics	Frequency (n=22)	Percentage (%)
Age	Mean=32.64 Range=22-50 years old	
Sex		
Male	3	13.63
Female	19	86.36
Marital Status		
Single	5	22.72
Married	17	77.27
Academic work load (units)	Mean=21.27 Range=4-33 units	
Academic rank		
Instructor I-III	12	54.54
Assistant Professor I-IV	6	27.27
Associate Professor 1-V	1	4.54
Science Research Specialist I	1	4.54
Science Research Analyst	1	4.54

Research Assistant	1	4.54
Status of employment		
Permanent	19	86.36
Temporary	2	9.09
Job Order	1	4.54

Extent of extension modalities used by the agricultural professionals

In practice, extension organizations pursue technology transfer and human resource development, though within each organization there is a mix of objectives, organizational patterns, and extension modalities employed (Nagel et al. 1992). Purcell and Anderson (1997) observed that field of extension now encourages a wider range of communication and learning activities organized for rural people by professionals using different extension modalities.

Anderson and Feder (2003) focus on specific formats or approaches to extension that have appeared in the last three decades such as Training and Visit (T&V), decentralization, privatized extension and Farmer Field Schools (FFS). However, Seevers et al. (1997) posits that delivery methods can be classified according to the nature of the contact, the form of communication or function.

With this, PCAARD, UPLB, ATI, and PhilEASNet (2015) had defined extension modalities as an established extension intervention that has been tested and adopted by various agencies or localities and has specified guidelines and standards that influences its approach and methods such as the Techno-gabay Program (TGP) and Adopt-a-Barangay. The methods used are common to all though the style of implementation may be influenced by the local management and needs of the community. This is true as well for Adopt-a-Barangay, which is a common modality to State Universities and Colleges.

The different extension modalities employed by the extension professionals were rated as “sometimes” with an overall mean of 2.73. The “frequently” use extension modalities is the utilization of information and communication technologies (mean=3.64), while the “never” employed is the use of radio broadcast (mean=1.45), while the “always” employed were Cost-sharing scheme (mean=4.51) and adopt-a-barangay/school (mean=4.51).

Table 3. Extension modalities used.

Extension modalities	Mean	Interpretation
Individual farm/home visits	2.64	Sometimes

Farmers' groups educational meetings	3.82	Frequently
Method demonstration	3.36	Sometimes
Farmer field school	2.00	Occasionally
Establish demonstration school/farm	1.73	Occasionally
Formation of coop/groups/FA	2.36	Occasionally
Use of information and communication technologies	3.64	Frequently
Extension leaflets/ posters/brochures/ newsletters	3.27	Sometimes
Educational video programmes	2.64	Sometimes
Cost-sharing scheme	4.51	Always
Radio broadcast	1.45	Never
Integration of modern and indigenous knowledge	3.09	Sometimes
Adopt-a-barangay/school	4.51	Always
Overall mean	3.00	Sometimes

Legend:0.50-1.50= never;1.51-2.50= Occasionally, in about 30% of the chances when I could have;2.51-3.50= Sometimes, in about 50% of the chances when I could have;3.51-4.50= Frequently, in about 70% of the chances when I could have;4.51-5.50= Always, in about 90% of the chances I could have

Problems encountered by the extension professionals in conducting extension service

Extension workers are faced with problems that need to be dealt with in order for them and extension as a whole to be effective and efficient. There are constraints that hinder extension workers to do their work which ultimately leads to poor performance and low efficiency. Extension managers have a vital role to play in ensuring that extension workers improve their work performance and as a result become more efficient and productive (Mokone and Steyn, 2005). Asayehegn, Weldegebrial, and Kaske (2012) found out that most extension personnel are working under difficult and unfavorable conditions depicted by transportation problem, residence problem, remoteness, and health problems due to the absence of health services in rural areas.

The extension professionals generally encountered “moderately” serious problem in conducting extension service. The “highly” serious problem were lack of extension worker's competencies (mean=3.51), change in political leadership (mean=3.83), lack of trainings in extension methods and communication skills (mean=4.13), and too much academic work in addition to field work (mean=4.23).

Table 4. Problems encountered by the extension professionals.

Problems	Mean	Interpretation
Lack of complementation among research and development key players	2.64	Moderately serious
Lack of extension worker's competencies	3.51	Highly serious
Lack of established partnership with MOA	2.63	Moderately serious
Insufficient allocation of fund	1.64	Less serious
Top-down management	2.91	Moderately serious
Lack of technology suitable for farmers/ fishers/ women etc	2.91	Moderately serious
Change in political leadership	3.83	Highly serious
Lack of trainings in extension and communication methods	4.13	Highly serious
Lack of adequate transportation to reach clientele	2.45	Less serious
Lack of essential teaching and communication equipment	2.36	Less serious
Too many changes in the policy objectives	2.73	Moderately serious
Too much academic work in addition to field work	4.23	Highly serious
Coverage of too many target groups by one agent	3.00	Moderately serious
Lack of subject-matter specialists to serve specific problems	2.82	Moderately serious
Overall mean	2.99	Moderately serious

Legend:0.50-1.50-not serious; 1.51-2.50- less serious; 2.51-3.50-moderately serious;3.51-4.50-highly serious;4.51-5.00-very highly serious

Job satisfaction of extension professionals involved in the extension delivery service

Understanding motivation and job satisfaction is important for increasing rates of employee retention within the extension delivery service. Job satisfaction is a general attitude towards an individual's current job and organization that encompasses the feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about that job (Bitsch, and Hogberg 2004). It also denotes the workers' perception of their workplace settings, relationships amid fellows, salary as well as endorsement opportunities. Literature shows that a large number of factors influence employee performance such as satisfaction from the profession, work environment, compensation policies and demographic variables, educational qualification and many more factors influencing (Naz, and Sharma 2017).

The extension professionals were "highly satisfied" (mean=3.67) with their extension

work. The results shows that they were “highly satisfied” with their job routine (mean=3.56). It implies that most of the EPs were self-motivated and were satisfied with their job routines of fixed field visits, organizing field visits, and mobilizing farmers to establish organizations.

However, they all indicated that they were “moderately” satisfied with the opportunities for promotion (mean=3.47) and remuneration (mean=3.44). This corroborates with the findings of Strong and Harder (2009) that "a number of recurring maintenance factors in the extension agents were dissatisfied with, including salary and work/life balance. It should be noted, as explained by Brown (1994), that only employees who are satisfied tends to be more productive, creative and committed. It is imperative to remove these bottlenecks that EPs indicated were inhibiting effective performance of their job schedules. Further, Okele and Mtyuda (2017), posited that aside from lack of resources, too much crowd of courses and indiscipline amid pupils ,other causes of job dissatisfaction are management consequences.

It could be noted that although extension professionals are the key agents of change to bring an improvement in the living standards of millions of farmers, their level of job satisfaction was affected by factors like extra work burden, extremely low salary, unfavorable work environment, poor social status, and poor interpersonal relationships with co-workers and supervisors (Kassa 2016).

Table 5. Job satisfaction of extension professionals.

<i>Job satisfaction indices</i>	Mean	Interpretation
<i>Job satisfaction in relation to extension job routine</i>		
Regular fixed visits to clientele/beneficiaries	3.27	Moderate
Conduct of PRA/TNA.	3.55	High
Mobilizing clientele to establish organizations	3.45	Moderate
Keeping records of field visits	3.82	High
Organizing field days/stakeholders’ meetings	3.73	High
Sub mean	3.56	High
<i>Job satisfaction in relation to opportunities for promotion</i>		
Promotion based on merit	3.00	High
Opportunities to attend workshops/confirms/seminars/in-service trainings are adequate	3.41	High
Opportunities for professional growth are adequate	4.00	High
Sub mean	3.47	Moderate
<i>Job satisfaction on the basis of remunerator</i>		
Income adequate for normal expenses	3.40	Moderate
Salaries are paid as at when due	3.48	Moderate
Sub mean	3.44	Moderate
<i>Job satisfaction on the basis of existing relationships</i>		
Relationship with clientele is good	4.00	High
Relationship with other extension agents is commendable	4.00	High
Relationship with other EWs in other agency is smooth	3.82	High

Relationship with the extension administration is good	4.00	High
Sub mean	3.96	High
<i>Job satisfaction in relation to EAs work environment</i>		
The work environment such as office accommodation and furniture are adequate	3.73	High
The psychological environment is all right	4.00	High
Equipment and material resources for extension work/mobility are good enough	3.55	High
Sub mean	3.76	High
Overall mean	3.66	High

Legend:0.50-1.50-Very low; 1.51-2.50-Low; 2.51-3.50-Moderate;3.51-4.51-High;4.51-5.00-Very high

Conclusions

The study has the following conclusions:

1. The extension professionals were predominantly female, married, holds permanent instructor position, with a maximum workload units.
2. The extension modalities were “sometimes” employed by the extension professionals during the conduct of extension activities.
3. The extension professionals generally encountered “moderately” serious problem in conducting extension service. The “highly” serious problem were lack of extension worker's competencies, change in political leadership , lack of trainings in extension methods and communication skills, and too much academic work in addition to field work.
4. The extension professionals were “highly satisfied” with their extension work.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following based on the problems encountered by the extension professionals:

1. Conduct of capability building extension methods and communication approaches.
2. Develop a separate Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) on overload work in extension in the Academe.

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