Employee Satisfaction at The Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, NY

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Employee Satisfaction at The Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, NY

Abstract
This study examines the satisfaction levels of employees at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) in Rochester New York. Employees satisfaction in terms of being satisfied or not satisfied with their job was measured using a survey instrument that consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions. The quantitative part contained 75 statements asking employees to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a six-point Likert-scale. The qualitative was comprised of three, open-ended questions asking participants to respond in terms of what they like, dislike, and recommendations for improvements about their jobs at Legal Aid Society. Data were gathered from 43 subjects, all working at LAS. Results indicate that overall, the whole organization is facing critical hygiene issues with pay and benefits on top of the list, followed by working conditions. The theoretical and methodological implications, the limitations of the study and scope for further research are presented. KEYWORDS: job satisfaction; motivation; nonprofits; for-profits; hygiene issues; and employee satisfaction.

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Master of Science

Department of Human Resource Development

By

Geoffrey M. Kilonzo

Rochester, NY

April 2001
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the satisfaction levels of employees at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) in Rochester New York. Employees' satisfaction in terms of being satisfied or not satisfied with their job was measured using a survey instrument that consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions. The quantitative part contained 75 statements asking employees to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a six-point Likert-scale. The qualitative section was comprised of three, open-ended questions asking participants to respond in terms of what they like, dislike, and recommendations for improvements about their jobs at Legal Aid Society. Data were gathered from 43 subjects, all working at LAS. Results indicate that overall, the whole organization is facing critical hygiene issues with pay and benefits on top of the list, followed by working conditions. The theoretical and methodological implications, the limitations of the study and scope for further research are presented. KEYWORDS: job satisfaction; motivation; nonprofits; for-profits; hygiene issues; and employee satisfaction.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I give the highest praise to the Most High and gracious God for allowing me the opportunity to achieve this level of education. Two, Dad, even though you are gone to be with the Lord, I want you to know that I made it. Thank you for believing in me and seeing the potential I never knew I had. Heaven is my witness that I caught on to the vision and I want you to rest in peace because, I have the mantle to go forward. Grandma, Mama, the rest of my family and friends, your support has been consoling even at a far distance.

To Dr. Marilynn Butler, I give my appreciation for being my mentor. I will live to cherish the moments I had at your office, the encouragement, and not to mention tough love that made me try harder and do the extra mile. Thanks to my two professional readers: Dr. David Baronov and Dr. Richard Davis. My deepest gratitude to my fellow HRD professionals: Ms. Bonnie-Vulcheff Bates and Fr. Nobert Chumu for proofreading my paper. And last but not least to Clarence Thompson, a good friend and a brother in Christ, thank you for your support.
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Chapter 1
Introduction
Legal Aid Society (LAS) is a service-intensive nonprofit organization with a significant proportion of its employees working in direct contact with its customers. LAS provides civil legal services in Monroe County and several surrounding counties. The services include legal information, referral; technical assistance; and representation in court.

**LAS Mission Statement**
The Legal Aid Society of Rochester is a nonprofit organization that provides direct civil services, including lay advocacy and related human services, to adults and children. We ensure that those who seek justice have an opportunity to receive a fair and full hearing. We obtain legal solutions that have a beneficial impact on our clients and the community.

**LAS Vision Statement**
The Legal Aid Society of Rochester believes in the guarantees of the process and equal protection as promised in our State and Federal constitutions. To ensure that these rights have real meaning, we will strive to provide a highly qualified and zealous advocate to anyone who cannot otherwise obtain representation in civil legal matters. We will create an environment in our community that values access to legal counsel, so every person is treated with dignity, equality, and fairness.

LAS provides legal representation in civil matters to persons who cannot pay private attorney fees in the following areas: Child support program, domestic violence program, tenant alcohol program, owner-tenant mediation program, law guardian program, and Immigration Legal Services. To be eligible for these services one must earn low income, and be a resident of Monroe County.

**Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of this study is to examine employee satisfaction levels at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, New York. Specifically, the study focuses on whether LAS employees are satisfied with their jobs or not. Here, Rates of Satisfaction (ROS) are calculated for 10 specific work environment satisfaction indicators and compared to the ROS of the organization.
Background Information

Due to high competition for clients in the nonprofit and for-profit organization, organizations are looking for possible ways to stay competitive. LAS is no exception in this competition. The society has strong ties with its clients and, therefore, its main concern is to make sure that the clients' needs are met. In other words, LAS aims to obtain legal solutions that have beneficial impact on its clients and the community. Any success-focused organization uses performance measurement to gain insight into, and make judgments about, the effectiveness and efficiency of their programs, processes, and people (Letts, 1991). LAS is committed to meeting the needs of its clients and, therefore, the need for conducting a survey to determine if the employees are satisfied with their job was necessary. Employee satisfaction is an important factor in the effectiveness of an organization in meeting the needs of the customer. Employee satisfaction results to satisfied customers (Letts, 1991). Every employee can have an impact on customers' experience in need of legal help and, therefore, LAS strives for maximum job satisfaction for all its employees.

What is Employee Satisfaction?

Employee satisfaction has been of great interest to people at every level within organizations and researchers for many decades (Spector, 1997). Locke (1976) defines employee satisfaction as the pleasurable or positive emotional state that results from employees or experiences associated with the job. Research (Moorehead & Griffin, 1998; Hellriegel, Sclocum, & Woodman, 1999) defines employee satisfaction as the gratification or prosperity that the employees get from their job. This definition of employee satisfaction includes various aspects of the influence that the job has on the employee as well as the employee's perception of the organization.

Why Employee Satisfaction?

Research indicates that regardless of changes in an organization's environment, its mission, structure or culture, employee satisfaction and quality of work life remain significant
concerns for most organizational change and development efforts (Church, Margiloff, & Coruzzi, 1995). Jones (1992) argues that the measurement of employee satisfaction as well as customer satisfaction is now central to most quality oriented organization strategies. For organizations dealing directly with customers, employee satisfaction is quite relevant.

Hatry (1997) argues that nonprofit organizations were awakened to the idea of performance measurement, focusing on outcomes, in the early to mid 1990s. This awakening led to a nonprofit organization focus on improvement of customer satisfaction as well as employee satisfaction. Like their counterparts in the profits sector, nonprofit organizations have discovered the direct connection between employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and retention levels, decreased absenteeism, increased productivity, and smoother working relations. This means that employees have a high commitment to the social causes their organization addresses and they are determined to “make a difference” (Letts, Ryan & Grossman, 1999).

Employee satisfaction is a pleasurable feeling resulting from job experience and loyalty, a measure of current behavior such as length of service and also reflects the more fundamental construct of employee commitment (Rust, 1996). Employee commitment involves the assessment of possible determinants such as an organization’s structure and its attention to employee needs, its involvement in quality improvement processes and even the level of employee empowerment (Juul, 1997), in addition to perceived customer satisfaction.

Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of five chapters. Chapter One introduces the study, its purpose, and organization of the paper. Chapter Two offers supporting literature and theory associated with employee satisfaction in the workplace. Here, twelve domains determining employee satisfaction are described. The methodology employed to conduct this examination is introduced in Chapter Three. Chapter Four presents the results of the qualitative and quantitative analysis. Finally, Chapter Five concludes with a discussion about findings of the study, limitations, options for future research and the researchers’ final thoughts.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to examine employee satisfaction levels at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, New York. One way to trace progress toward a better understanding of employee satisfaction in organizations is to examine related literature that has appeared over time. After careful examination, there is evidence that some progress has occurred in this area. However, much still remains to be learned about what comprises employee satisfaction. Chapter two presents literature related to nonprofit organizations, compares and contrasts nonprofit with for-profit organizations, and discusses Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory. Providing the conceptual framework of this study, the rest of the chapter reviews literature addressing the 12 Domains of the LAS survey: Management; Working Conditions; Supervision; Pay and Benefits; Identity (ID) with Organization; Communication; Recognition; Teamwork; Development and Advancement; Policies and Practices; Quality; and Overall employee satisfaction.

Definition

An organization is a collection of resources arranged to accomplish an overall goal. The purpose of a nonprofit organization is to meet one or more needs in a community. Each nonprofit describes its overall purpose in a mission statement. Krannich and Krannich (1996) define a nonprofit organization as “any organization that has been granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service” (p. 4). Plantz, Greenway, and Hendricks (1997) content that 495,000 nonprofit organizations in the United States (with the exception of Churches) receive tax-deductible contributions.

“Nonprofits today account for about 8% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 7 percent of total employment totaling to an annual payroll of $480 billion” (Letts et al., 1999, p.2). In addition to the 9.6 million people employed by the nonprofit sector, millions of volunteers
work billions of hours annually in virtually every part of the sector. Weisbord (1997) argues that nonprofit organizations provide collective goods on a voluntary basis in his seminal work on government failure. A comparison of Nonprofit and For-profit organizations help to focus this examination.

Nonprofit and For-Profit Organization Compared and Contrasted

Literature suggests that the function of nonprofit organizations is to produce public, or collective type goods for society (Weisbord, 1988). Weisbrod (1998) argues that governments and nonprofit organizations are between the market institutions at supplying public goods and when the electorates’ demand for these goods are heterogeneous, then nonprofit organizations, rather than governments, will supply them.

Why would one compare the two sectors? There are two reasons according to Letts et al. (1999) as to why it would be necessary to compare nonprofit and for-profit organizations. First, a substantial body of information and experience has been developed on organizational capacity building, which could provide lessons and best practices. Second, the for-profit experience provides a backdrop against which to see the distinctive assets and liabilities of nonprofits.

According to Letts et al., (1999) managers in both nonprofit and for-profit organizations use similar process for the same reasons. The authors give an example of a manager of a multinational electronics company and the executive of a small social service agency discussing their use of very similar human resource strategies for improving performance. Another related example is that of managers from a luxury hotel-chain and a homeless shelter comparing their methods for assessing and improving the quality of their services.

Another example of nonprofit and for-profit organizations is given by using a study on innovation in the public and nonprofit sectors by Light (1998). Light argues that the social sector focuses too much on innovation and not enough on innovativeness. Innovativeness here is used to mean the capacity to innovate repeatedly. For-profit managers are not inherently better managers but better supported managers. Regardless of the sector, managers use many of the
same practices to advance the fundamental goals of their respective organizations only nonprofit managers face additional challenges. These challenges come from within their organizations and the external environment (Letts et al., 1999). The use of organizational tools by the for-profit sector helps earn more profit by improving their products and services. Nonprofit organizations on the other hand, use the same tools to create social impacts.

Letts et al., (1999) contend that nonprofit program development approaches, moreover, tend to differ from the for-profit model in one critical way. “While businesses stress the benefits of linking idea generation and implementation, nonprofits take the opposite direction: Through program replication and the use of national intermediary organizations, they tend to generate ideas in one set of organization and implement in another” (p. 61). Nonprofits don’t always grow by developing new programs or improving existing ones, and are therefore unlikely to assess their need for program development capacity. Whereas many for-profit managers rely on new or improved products to achieve greater market share, nonprofit managers can grow their own organizations by exploiting the capacity to deliver existing programs (Letts et al., 1998).

Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory and Employee Satisfaction

Insight Analyst’s (the organization that administered the survey) survey used in this study, is built around Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory. This theory, also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, derives from a study designed to test the concept that people have two sets of needs: (a) their needs as animals to avoid pain, and (b) their needs as humans to grow psychologically. This study by Herzberg concluded that the things making people happy on the job and those making them unhappy had two separate themes, thus satisfaction (motivation) and dissatisfaction (hygiene) (Herzberg, Snyderman, & Mausner, 1959).

Herzberg’s work focuses on the individual in the workplace, but it has been popular with managers as it also emphasizes the importance of management knowledge and expertise.

For the basis of this study, Herzberg’s (1959) theory will be used to tie the twelve domains of the survey to the literature review. Herzberg’s theory has two dimensions of
employee satisfaction: motivators and hygiene issues. (See figure 1: Herzberg’s Theory Model).
Motivators have to do with the relationship the employee has with his or her job; job content.
Hygiene issues have to do and are related to the environment or context of the job (Herzberg, 1966)

Figure 1. Herzberg’s Theory Model: Hygiene Issues + Motivators = Overall Satisfaction.
(Adapted from Herzberg’s Theory to fit Insight’s Survey 12 Domains).

Herzberg (1966) contends that hygiene issues cannot motivate employees but can minimize dissatisfaction, if handled properly. The only time they can dissatisfy is if absent or mishandled. Examples of hygiene issues include; company policies, supervision, management, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. These issues deal with or are related to employee’s environment and serve the primary function of preventing job dissatisfaction.

Motivators on the other hand, create satisfaction by fulfilling individual needs for meaning and personal growth. Motivators include achievement, recognition, responsibility and
- Transportation subsidy especially for the employees with difficulty parking their cars
- Measurement of the room temperature, spacing, noise level, etc. to assure a comfortable level (Jex & Gudanowski, 1992).

Organizations like LAS owe their employees a work environment where they can develop new skills, take on challenging assignments, and have the tools that enable them to succeed at those assignments. The same way there are processes to help the organization, so there should be processes for employees to help them deliver services to customers and the community.

Supervision

Supervision affects job satisfaction in the areas of autonomy and interpersonal relations. If a supervisor runs a department with a heavy hand, with many rules and procedures, process controls, and other features which make up a non-participatory environment, then employees may not be able to meet their hygiene needs. Failure to meet hygiene needs will certainly lead to dissatisfaction with the job. To overcome this, supervision can establish a participatory empowered work structure where employees are given more control over the ‘planning’ and ‘doing’ of the work activities (Stoltenberg, 1981).

Pay and Benefits

Letts et al., (1999) asserts that it is true that poor pay is a problem for many nonprofits. Letts adds that poor pay most likely creates job dissatisfaction. Often times, job dissatisfaction comes as a result of the ‘burnout’ from working on difficult social problems for long periods and the only time compensation becomes complicated is when many become ambivalent about it (Letts et al., 1999). This burnout leads to employee suffering and yet no precautions are taken to correct or change it.

Lester, Lamson, and Wollman (1997), observes that “non-profit employees often speak as if there is only so much well-being to go around, and any well being that staff get is deducted directly from the people they serve.” Sadly, these employees may eventually leave their jobs to
seek other jobs due to hardships caused by low pay. In light of compensation, Lester et al. (1997) concludes that an implicit decision to disregard compensation can be extremely dangerous to nonprofits organizations unless one has made an affirmative commitment to personal sacrifice, for example, religious order members (Lester et al., 1997, p. 122).

"To stay productive, motivated, and satisfied over the long term, employees need to achieve and see results" (Lester et al., 1997, p.123). In reference to the above statement, nonprofits need to realize that there is need for more than just personal commitment of employees.

Empowerment (Identification with the organization)

Empowerment will mean giving power and authority to employees to enable them to make real-time decisions on job-related issues and more importantly, how they are done. It also involves giving them greater say about how the organization does business. Empowerment or ID with organization can only be effective and necessary when employees have knowledge critical to effective work and not just management. Kernally (1996) contends that empowerment is a matter of "allowing employees freedom to make decisions relating to their own work, and allowing decisions to be made as close to the point of delivery as possible" (p. 122). Mostly, this freedom to make decisions relative to their own work enables employees to respond quickly to the needs of the customer. Empowerment, therefore, involves notions of employee involvement in decision-making.

Communication

Communication is the process by which information is shared and understood by two or more persons- the idea of directing communication downward alone is not ideal. Many organizations have laudable objectives and initiatives to improving their organization. Barriers and gaps between the intention of CEO’s and wholehearted commitment of managers and employees can scuttle this goal (Strenski & Luer, 1991).

Communication can take place in the form of electronic news using e-mail, company TV, and intranet access as well as through hard copy news and face-to-face interaction. In addition,
leading organizations use cross-functional teams as another opportunity ensuring employee
upbeat to information.

To focus on customers, there is need for new ways of operating and behaving. This focus
requires equipping all employees with the necessary information to make real time decisions. A
focused organization has vision and mission statements, which have to be communicated down
the line for employees to actually know what they are doing. According to Oakland (1995), the
following must be communicated to everyone in the organization:

a). Need for improvement
b). Concept for total quality
c). Importance of understanding business process
d). Approach that will be taken
e). Individual and process group responsibilities

Therefore, if an organization communicates its message clearly and listens to customer input, a
wealth of knowledge can be accumulated regarding differences between market segmentation,
the effectiveness of the company’s improvement efforts, and other variables which impact
growth and profitability.

Teamwork

Every organization needs to create a common understanding behind the concept of
“team.” According to Choppin (1991) a team consists of a small group of people, sharing a joint
responsibility for their activity and contribution to the organization. A team is “a collection of
two or more persons who interact regularly to accomplish common goals” (Larson & Lafasto,
1989, p. 7). Teams do most things better than do individuals because the members stimulate each
other; they possess a broader range of skills, and anyway, working in a team can be more fun.
Teams familiarize employees with what’s important to customers, help bring the necessary
resources to bear to serve customers efficiently, and foster cooperation. Guzzo and Dickson (1996) give us another definition of a team.

...made up of individuals who see themselves and who are seen by others as a social entity, who are interdependent because of the tasks they perform as members of a group, who are embedded in one or more larger social systems, (e.g., community, organization), and who perform tasks that affect others such as customers or co-workers (pp. 308-309). Oakland (1995) lists the advantages that the use of team approach to problem solving has over allowing individuals to work separately:

a). A great variety of complex problems may be tackled- those beyond the capability of any one individual or even one department by the pooling of expertise and resources

b). Problems are exposed to a greater diversity of knowledge, skill, experience, and are solved more efficiently

c). The approach is more satisfying to team members and boosts morale and ownership through participation in problem solving and decision-making.

d). Problems that cross departmental or functional boundaries can be dealt with more easily, and the potential/actual conflicts are more likely to be identified and solved

e). The recommendations are more likely to be implemented than individual's suggestions, as the quality of decision making in good teams is high (p. 269).

The creation of work teams will promote workforce empowerment, and improve quality through innovativeness. A vast amount of extant literature indicates that effectively transitioning to work teams requires significant job and organizational re-engineering.

Development and Advancement

Seeking development opportunities does not necessarily mean one is pressing for promotion. More could be done to enhance employees' career development in their existing positions, including providing quality training, cross-training, and perhaps even sponsored education.
The whole process of helping employees with career advancement is bound to increase personal confidence and creating impetus for new development. The challenge posed is to unlock employee’s potential without which an organization cannot grow and develop. It is imperative to remember that employees are the ones that make the organization effective and not the other way around.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures must be clear and in tune with the mission if the organization is to succeed. Although employees will never feel a great sense of satisfaction due to the policies, dissatisfaction could be reduced greatly in this area by making sure policies are fair and apply equally to all. Making printed copies of the policies-and procedures manual easily accessible to all members of one’s staff is another thing one must do (Austin, 2001).

Quality

Employee satisfaction is mostly driven by the internal quality of the working environment as measured by the feelings employees have toward their job, colleagues, and companies. Any organizational commitment to quality improvement implies that possible key influences in the level of employee satisfaction should be investigated. A quality workplace defines satisfied employees and satisfied employees are the best to define the characteristics of a quality job (Mazza, 1994).

Recognition and Overall Satisfaction

Numerous studies have been done (Carsten, & Spector, 1987; Fields, & Blum, 1997; Spector, & Marlowe, 1986; Lindahl, 1949) in the U.S. industry to determine what employees want from their jobs. In a study by Lindahl (1949), supervisors were asked to pretend they were workers by ranking in order of importance a series of items that workers may want from their jobs. The workers themselves were asked to repeat the same activity as their supervisors did pertaining to what they wanted most from their jobs. The study concluded that what manager’s perceived as being most important to employees was in sharp contrast to what employees opted
for. Therefore, employees ranked full appreciation for work done, feeling “in” on things, and sympathy to personal problems, highest in their rankings. See Table 1.
Table 1
What Do Workers Want From Their Jobs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Supervisors</th>
<th>Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good working conditions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling “in” on things</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactful disciplining</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full appreciation for work done</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management loyalty to workers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good wages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion and growth with company</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic understanding of personal problems</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In conclusion, the research literature on employee satisfaction in organizations clearly reveals a variety of influences on the reason and causes of satisfaction. These differences/influences emerge both from the individuals themselves and the work environment (e.g. the job situation, incentive reward systems, workgroup norms, teams, etc.).

Chapter Two has presented a review of literature related to employee satisfaction providing the conceptual framework of the study. It also focused on employee satisfaction as discussed by Herzberg using his Motivation-Hygiene Theory. A brief look at nonprofit and for-
profit organizations was also applied. Chapter Three will address the methodology developed to conduct the study.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine employee satisfaction levels at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, New York. Employees’ reactions to job satisfaction are tested using Insight Analyst’s (IA) employee satisfaction questionnaire. Rates of Satisfaction (ROS) are calculated and compared. This chapter describes the methodology used to conduct the study. Here, information on subjects, data collection and procedure is provided.

Subjects

Study subjects consists of 43 attorneys and non-attorneys with five or more years of experience working for LAS. All subjects in the population were surveyed.

Data Collection

To conduct this examination, survey research was employed. Data were collected from LAS employees using a survey instrument designed by IA of Rochester, New York. The survey instrument consisted of two parts: (a) 75 statements asking employees to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a six point Likert-scale with each statement; and (b) three open-ended questions asking participants to state what they liked and disliked about their employment, and their recommendations for the organizational improvement.

The 75 statements included in the first section describe characteristics of twelve domains of organization effectiveness. These domains include: (a) Management; (b) Development and Advancement; (c) Communications; (d) Supervision; (e) Quality; (f) Teamwork; (g) ID with the organization; (h) Working conditions; (i) Policies and procedures; (j) Recognition; (k) Pay and Benefits; and (l) Overall employee satisfaction.

Three open-ended questions consist the second section and asked the participants to comment on their likes and dislikes, and also the improvements they would like to see in LAS. The three questions are as follow:

1. Please tell us what you like most about your employment with this organization.
2. Please tell us what you dislike about your employment with this organization.

3. Please tell us what improvements you would recommend to help make this a better place to work.

Procedure

All 43 employees working at LAS were asked to complete the 75-item questionnaire. IAs employees administered the survey in a classroom setting for quick and reliable responses. IA analyzed these survey results.

The results were compared with the national profile database to determine whether or not employee satisfaction levels were high or low. The national profile used in this study is defined as a database made up of 300 organizations with approximately 40,000 employees across the United States. The national profile is valid only in the U.S. The minimum requirement of an organization to fit in the national profile is 50 employees and the number of employees may be many as 1500 employees. To ensure accuracy, IA upgrades the database every five years and technically it does not add organizations with less than 50 employees (R. Newman, personal communication, March 13, 2001).

Data Analysis

IA analyzed the raw data. Percentages and frequencies were calculated and content analysis was performed. For the purposes of this study, this data was provided to the student. The student researcher then performed a secondary analysis of the results. Here statement comparisons are compared.

A list of 10 statements highlighted in the results as the main areas in need of attention, are further analyzed.

1. No. 9. Our washrooms are satisfactory.
2. No. 11. Top management is friendly towards employees
3. No. 74. I think top management will use results of the survey to make improvements
4. No. 56. Overall, I am satisfied with Legal Aid's benefits programs
5. No. 70. I am satisfied with pay for the work I do.

6. No. 51. I am paid fairly compared to similar jobs in other companies.

7. No. 73. My pay and benefits allow me to have a reasonable standard of living

8. No. 23. In my opinion we have benefits equal to or better than other companies.

9. No. 21. Employees are encouraged to submit ideas for improvements.

10. No. 62. In the event of a need to reduce the workforce, Legal Aid would treat the employees fairly.

These ten statements are selected based on LAS specific responses to the survey.

According to IA’s results, 7 of these statements (no. 11, no. 74, no. 56, no. 70, no. 51, no. 73, and no. 23) pertain to the domains of management, pay and benefits. Management, pay and benefits rated critically below the national profile. Rating below the national profile means the organization is doing poorly in certain areas and it is imperative that the organization take action. The rest of the 3 statements (no. 9, no. 21, and no. 62) stem from three different domains: Working conditions, communications and policies and practices.

For the purposes of this examination, the results of these statements are converted into rates. These rates are the primary work environment satisfaction indicators. These individual indicators are then compared to an overall job satisfaction indicator, derived from survey statement no. 75 (considering everything, I am satisfied with my employment at Legal Aid). For this Rate Of Satisfaction (ROS) comparison, 10 statements will be tested: For instance, Is the Relative Rate of Satisfaction (RRS) of people who agreed with statement no. 9 (Our washrooms are satisfactory) different from those who agreed with statement no. 75 (Considering everything, I am satisfied with my employment at Legal Aid)?

Calculating ROS and RRS. In figure 2, the ROS indicators are calculated by dividing the number of “Agree” responses by the total number of statement responses. The RRS is calculated by subtracting the ROS indicators. The letter “N” indicates the number of employees surveyed. Letter “S” indicates the statement’s application.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>ROS</th>
<th>RRS (S_9/ S_{75})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement 9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.418 (S_9=18/43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement 75</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.790 (S_{75}=34/43)</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: observed difference in satisfaction rate is S_9, S_{75} = 0.372

---

Figure 2. Example Calculation.

Chapter Three reviewed the methodology used in this study. Chapter Four presents the results of the study.
Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study is to examine employee satisfaction levels at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, New York. To conduct the survey, Insights Analysts (IA) administered a 75-statement questionnaire and three, open-ended questions to the population of 45 LAS employees. In this study, the population consists of all employees. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study.

Qualitative Data Findings

The response rate was 95.6%. In other words 43 out of 45 employees surveyed responded. The 43 employees who completed part one were asked to respond to three open-ended questions about their likes, dislikes, and improvements they would like to see at LAS. Forty-three employees responded to these open-ended questions resulting in 203 comments. Of the 203 comments, 69 were “likes” of their work with clients especially children, 67 were dislikes about pay and benefits and also management, and 66 recommended improvements on management and pay and benefits.

Quantitative Data Findings

The response rate for LAS was 95.6%. According to IA’s report, LAS has good results compared to the national profile. The national profile is comprised of 300 organizations and approximately 40,000 employees across the United States. Looking at the ten highlighted statements, employees were cited as either critically below profile or significantly below profile. However, in response to the overall working conditions, employees expressed increased satisfaction. To find the Relative Rate of Satisfaction (RRS) calculations were done for the 10 statements versus the overall satisfaction statement. Figure 2 illustrates the RRS comparison. Letter “N” indicates the number of employees surveyed. Letter “S” indicates the statements in application.
The summary findings of the 10 statements are presented in Table 2. A scale is given, ranging from “not satisfied” to “highly satisfied.” Further breakdown of the scale is as follows: 0-.25 (not satisfied); .25-.50 (slightly satisfied); .50-.75 (somewhat satisfied); .75-1 (moderately satisfied); and 1(highly satisfied). The closer the RRS approaches positive 1, the greater the satisfaction.
Table 2

Results Summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>10 Highlighted Statements</th>
<th>% of people satisfied</th>
<th>Relative Rate of Satisfaction (RRS)</th>
<th>Relative Rate of Satisfaction (RRS) Assumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Washroom.</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Friendliness towards employees by management.</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Top management use of survey results</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fair wages compared to similar jobs in other companies.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Satisfied with pay for work done.</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Benefits equal or better than other companies.</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pay and benefits allocation allows employees reasonable living standard.</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Satisfied with LAS’s benefits programs.</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>LAS treatment of employees in the event of a need to reduce the workforce.</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Employees are encouraged to submit ideas for improvement.</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Four has reported LAS results. The summary, discussion, limitations, conclusions, and recommendations of the study will be discussed in Chapter Five.
Chapter 5

Summary

In this study, survey results were used to determine whether Legal Aid employees are satisfied with their jobs. The purpose of this study was to examine employee satisfaction levels at the Legal Aid Society (LAS) of Rochester, New York. The desire to remain competitive in the business world motivated LAS to conduct an employee satisfaction survey. The survey was conducted and recommendations on what needed immediate attention were made by Insight Analysts (IA) Inc. A complete report was documented and presented to the management and employees at LAS. In this section, discussions as well as future research recommendations of this study are reported, and conclusions drawn.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher analyzed the results provided by IA to determine employee satisfaction. The analysis involved the calculation of satisfaction rates using the 10 identified statements that caused high dissatisfaction to LAS employees. The Relative Rate of Satisfaction (RRS) indicated a slight difference between the 10 statements and the overall satisfaction conditions at LAS (See Table 2). Therefore, this study reveals a slight difference of the underlying problem that Insight Analysts (IA) found. However, this conclusion is a result of the lack of mean scores and standard deviations.
Results

The results summary provided in Table 2, page 33 are further broken into five domains: Pay and benefits, management, communication, working conditions, and policies and procedures. These five domains are called hygiene issues as described in Herzberg’s two-factor theory. Herzberg’s theory states that the things that make people happy and unhappy on the job have two separate themes: motivation and hygiene. Hygiene issues cannot in any given time motivate employees but can minimize dissatisfaction, if handled properly (Herzberg, 1966). This infers that hygiene issues deal with employees’ environment thus serving the primary function of preventing job dissatisfaction.

Pay and Benefits

In reference to the results in Table 2, page 33 the pay and benefits domain has the most statements and the most dissatisfaction. Statements no. 4 through 8 all deal with the issue of pay and benefits. Thirty-five percent of the people in statement no. 4 have RRS of .58, meaning they are somewhat satisfied and in need of intervention. Twenty-eight percent of the people in statement no. 5 have RRS of .35, meaning they are very close to “not satisfied.” Forty-nine percent of the people in statement no. 6 have RRS of .44 and therefore, slightly satisfied. Forty-four percent of the people in statement no. 7 have RRS of .55, meaning they are somewhat satisfied. Last in the list is statement no. 8. with 47% of the people’s RRS at .52 which means they are also somewhat satisfied. The closer the RRS approaches positive 1, the more likely it is that employees are satisfied with the overall employee conditions. However, the pay and benefits statements are of great interest since this study is focused on a nonprofit organization. It is true that poor pay is a problem for many nonprofit organizations (Letts et. al., 1999). Pay and benefits dissatisfaction should not be taken lightly because employees may eventually leave jobs (Lester, Lamson, & Wollman, 1997) to seek other employments due to financial hardships. In light of the compensation responses, any implicit decision to disregard it can be exceedingly dangerous to
nonprofit organizations (Lester et al., 1997). Therefore, it is left to LAS to consider taking immediate precautions if retaining employees is crucial to its operation.

Management

Both statements no. 2 and 3 in Table 2, page 33 report on management as compared to the overall employment conditions at LAS. For statement no. 2, 57% of the people with RRS of .72 are moderately satisfied. This RRS implies that the organization is doing very well and can be assumed that there is no need for urgent intervention. More focus must be on the other critical issues facing the organization if any.

Fifty-eight percent of the people in statement no. 3 have RRS of .73. Like statement no. 2, the organization is doing well and therefore the same RRS assumption applies. However, it must be noted that managerial effectiveness impacts employee satisfaction. Management’s duty is to facilitate the growth of employees by assuring an environment where employee’s growth and actualization are realized (Herzberg, 1966). More focus on the management will create trust between employees and their employers. A key aspect of any workplace is the level of trust among employees and their employers. Building a solid level of trust with employees is likely a key factor in bringing about high levels of workplace satisfaction among nonprofit organizations and their employees. One crucial factor in building trust between managers and employees is effective communication.

Communication

Statement no. 10 focuses on employees lack of courage to submit ideas for improvement. In reference to Table 2, page 33 65% of the people have RRS of .82, which implies that the organization is doing well. The RRS assumption is that there is no urgent need to fix the issue of communication right away. However, communication should not be overlooked for an extended period because in the end, dissatisfaction will prevail. Open communication with management helps to motivate employees and makes them feel that they are an important part of the
organization. Communication is key in any organization, as it can empower staff and build confidence, motivating employees to do quality work.

In general, communication is valued and supported at LAS but employees do not feel well informed about what they consider to be vital information. While employees feel that they have the opportunity to give feedback on the surveys, they do not feel it is taken into consideration when decisions are made, nor do they understand how major decisions are made.

**Working Conditions**

Statement no. 1 deals with washroom satisfaction as compared to overall employment conditions. Forty-two percent of the people in statement no. 1 have RRS of .52 and therefore somewhat satisfied. This assumption implies that working conditions and especially, bathroom cleanliness, is imperative if the employees are to continue working for LAS. The RRS assumption concludes that there is need for intervention since this issue is health related. In general, LAS needs to improve the washroom facilities in order to provide a quality work environment thus improving general employee performance.

**Policies and Procedures**

Statement no. 9 deals with fair treatment of employees in the event of a need to reduce workforce as compared to the overall employment conditions at LAS. Table 2, page 33 indicates that 57% of the people in statement no. 9 have RRS of .72 which means they are moderately satisfied. This RRS assumption indicates that there is need for intervention but it is not a priority.

Austin (2001) contends that for policies and procedures to be efficient and acceptable, they must be clear and in tune with the mission statement. Policies and procedures are hygiene issues, and therefore emphasizing them too much will not help employees feel a great sense of satisfaction. However, making sure policies and procedures are fairly and equally applied reduces dissatisfaction. Employees play a very important role in transforming an organization as per human resource development (HRD). Research has suggested that if management wants to
develop a cohesive, loyal, and dedicated workforce, a clear and nurturing policy must be in place.

Discussion

This study looked at Level 1(reaction) in Kirkpatrick's four level evaluation model (Kirkpatrick, 1994). The aim of this examination was to find out if the employees were satisfied with their jobs. In brief, level one is a smile-sheet evaluation. Different people within an organization possess different needs, attitudes and values. It is up to the people in charge, the managers, to therefore get to know employees and what is important to them individually, in order to provide a climate conducive to triggering the motivation potential in people.

This study investigated a set of domains that widely contribute to effective organizations and employee satisfaction in organizations. It is apparent that the results concerning different levels of employee satisfaction are significant. However, this conclusion must be made with extreme caution because there are many other factors with impact on employee satisfaction levels. Lawler (1994) argues satisfaction is a consequence of past events. In other words, satisfaction is past oriented and regarded as a very important factor in quality management. However, Hersey et al., (2000) indicate one of the difficulties with this approach is that two people who do the same work for the same salary rarely record the same level of satisfaction. It is the combination of quantitative and qualitative factors that shapes an individual employee's level of job satisfaction. Understanding that job satisfaction is an individual opinion, and therefore dynamically evolving, is key when measuring employee satisfaction. What may be important at a certain stage in life, may be different at another.

Limitations of the study

This study has three major limitations: First, national profile has data from organizations with 50 to 1500 employees. The data used in this study was collected from 45 employees. Therefore, the results do not align with the national profile (which demands an organization to have a minimum of 50 employees). Second, in order for data to make statistical sense, one must
calculate means, standard deviations and correlations. The researcher did not have access to this information thus making it hard to analyze data succinctly. Third, the conclusion by the researcher was drafted from calculating percentages given in IA’s report summary. Because of these shortcomings, further research is suggested.

Recommendations and Conclusions

Further research on this topic could follow up the issue of employee satisfaction from a researcher’s perspective as opposed to a practitioner's perspective. In addition, further research could also focus on balancing the two factors: Motivation and hygiene issues without putting a lot of weight on only one factor.

This paper has reported the results of a study that examined employees satisfaction levels at LAS, specifically on whether they are satisfied with their job or not. The study surveyed 43 employees, attorneys and non-attorneys. Findings of the study reported that overall, all LAS employees at LAS are facing critical hygiene issues with pay and benefits topping the list, followed by working conditions. Herzberg (1966) declares that hygiene issues cannot motivate but can minimize employee’s dissatisfaction if handled properly. It is imperative to take care of hygiene issues since they are related to the employee’s environment thus preventing job dissatisfaction. LAS’s excellent performance can be attributed to the motivator issues (quality, recognition, and development and advancement), which rated high overall. To fulfill Herzberg’s Two-factor theory, LAS needs to focus its attention on hygiene issues. Once the hygiene issues are addressed, the motivators will promote job satisfaction thus increasing productivity.

Finally, like Herzberg, not only must we reorient our management thinking in terms of how you motivate people, but how we apply the same theory to develop a productive workplace. Satisfied employees breed satisfied customers thus creating loyalty in customers which ultimately leads to business success (Hill, Brierley, & MacDougall, 1999). On the other hand, employee dissatisfaction leads to higher turnover, human resource challenges, and overall organizational dysfunction.
References


Appendix

IRB Application