
Impact of Organizational Adaptability on Job Satisfaction: The Case of Local Government Sector

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Abstract

Adaptability is one of the most important factors, obtaining competitive advantage and sustainable performance for an organization. In Sri Lanka, public sector employees are pressed by the rules, regulations and legislations. Moreover, government organizations practice bureaucratic managerial style. Research findings have revealed that; the inefficiency has been rooted in Sri Lankan government organizations and, employee dissatisfaction is one of the main reasons for the ineffective and inefficient service in Sri Lankan state sector. Therefore, the focus of this study was to identify the impact of organizational adaptability on employee job satisfaction in state sector enterprises/ organizations in Sri Lanka. The conceptual model developed in the present study was based on Denison Organizational Cultural Survey (DOCS) which identifies three organizational cultural traits namely, creating change, customer focus and organizational learning as independent variables. The dependent variable, employee job satisfaction was based on Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire. Based on these literature, a structured questionnaire was developed and self-administered to a sample of 150, secondary level employees in local government sector in Matara district. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that all the traits measuring adaptability, namely; creating change, customer focus and organizational learning were positively related with employee job satisfaction. Moreover, organizational learning is the most contributing organizational culture trait in the prediction of employee job satisfaction with the beta value of .379. The other two adaptability traits, in their descending order of standardized coefficients are customer focus and organizational learning. Based on the findings, it was concluded that

adaptability is important in determining and improving the level of employee job satisfaction which is asserted by the positive contribution of creating change, customer focus and organizational learning towards employee job satisfaction.

Keywords: *Adaptability, creating change, customer focus, organizational learning, job satisfaction*

1. Introduction

Organizations consist of a bunch of people who are combined to one another purposively to meet the goals of them and the organization (Biswas, 2015). Employee is a leading factor which determines the success of an organization, in the competitive environment (Shah, Memon, & Laghari, 2011). The effectiveness of an organization will be limited if employees are not motivated to do their jobs well. (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Organizational adaptability is one of the most important predictor when considering the success of an organization (Chen, & Li, 2019). Adaptability affects for many corporate outcomes in any organization and it is very effective on increasing employees' efforts and their motivation (Mousavi, Hosseini, & Hassanpour, 2015). When managing the employees, the most complex factor faced by managers is the employee job satisfaction (Tran, 2020). Dissatisfaction of employees causes absenteeism, less productivity and less loyalty (Aziri, 2011). Adaptability is one of the strongest predictor when considering the employee job satisfaction (Denison & Mishra, 1995). Considering Sri Lankan context, studies have revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational adaptability with employee job satisfaction. The “government organizations have been criticized due to the inefficiency and, many research findings have revealed that, the inefficiency is rooted in Sri Lankan government organizations themselves (Gunaruwan, 2015, p67). Job satisfaction among Sri Lankan public sector workers has been very low and have been identified as a major concern by previous research studies (eg: Gamlath, 2019) due to the fact that job satisfaction directly affects efficiency and productivity in organizations. Further studies have shown that, Sri Lankan state sector has failed to deliver an efficient and effective service due to the employee dissatisfaction (Sanjeewa & Herath, 2018).

Accordingly, Literature has proved that there is a very strong relationship between employee job satisfaction and organizational adaptability (Bhatti & Qureshi, 2007). When considering the local government sector in Sri Lanka, the local authorities are self – governed by the local body which is made of persons elected by the local people. The ability of local governments to provide and maintain basic services, sound financial management, and well-managed development, has been severely reduced due to the inefficiency and ineffectiveness among the

employees (Krishnamohan, 2016). A study conducted regarding the local government employees in Sri Lanka revealed that, the satisfaction level of employees is in a poor level (Selvakumaran et al., 2012). According to the literature, the efficiency, effectiveness and employee job satisfaction is very low in the local government sector in Sri Lanka (Samaratunge & Bennington, 2002; Gunaruwan, 2015). Even though many studies have revealed that there is a significant relationship between organizational adaptability and employee job satisfaction, there are very limited studies based on Sri Lankan government sector organizations studying these phenomena (Wickramasinghe, 2016; Velnampy, 2007). Therefore, to fill this contextual gap, this study was focused to identify the impact of organizational adaptability on employee job satisfaction with special reference to the local government organizations in Matara, Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the main objective of this study is, to identify whether there is an impact of “Adaptability” aspect of culture on employee Job Satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Adaptability

Organizations are adaptable due to customer needs and organizations learn from the mistakes, face to risks, and have experience and capability to create the change (Denison et al., 2004). Adaptability refers to the organizational capacity to change, according to the external conditions (Gillespie et al., 2008). Adaptable organizations continuously change the system because of that, organizations can improve their collective abilities, providing a valuable service for their customers (Denison et al., 2004).

2.2. Organizational Adaptability

Adaptability describes that an organization must hold a system of beliefs and norms which support the capacity of an organization to receive, interpret, translate signals from organizational environment into internal behavioural changes which increase the chances for survival, growth, and development (Mousavi, Hosseini, & Hassanpour, 2015). Companies which valued adaptation were likely to hold ambitious objectives, give priority to the satisfaction of clients, and be willing to try new ideas (Denison & Mishra, 1993). Adaptability can be divided into three traits namely creating change, customer focus and organizational learning. Each trait is consisted of three indexes which show the specific facets of the traits (Denison & Mishra, 1995). Several studies revealed that organizational adaptability significantly and positively affects employee job satisfaction (Coetzee & Stoltz, 2015; Cullen, Edwards, Casper, & Gue, 2014; Sony & Mekoth, 2016).

2.3. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction assesses the employees' working conditions and by this, it can be measured the organizational prosperity (Zahid et al., 2017). Job satisfaction is considered as the perceptions of employees on their working environment, employee relations and, promotion opportunities (Belias & Koustelios 2014). Employee satisfaction is an emotive and optimistic feature, which supports to take maximum appraisals, also with large extent of corporate experiences (Zahid et al., 2017).

2.4. Factors affecting Employee Job Satisfaction

According to the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire developed by Martins & Proenca (2012), there are ten factors to measure employee job satisfaction likewise: The chance to work alone on the job; The chance to do different things from time to time; The chance to be "somebody" in the community; The way my boss handles his/her workers; The competence of my supervisor in making decisions; The chance to tell people what to do; The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities; The freedom to use my own judgment; The chance to try my own methods of doing the job; The praise I get for doing a good job (Martins & Proenca, 2012).

2.4.1. Hypotheses Development

Several studies revealed that creating change significantly and positively affects employee job satisfaction ((Bonsu, 2014; Parlalis, 2011; Chen, Hou, & Fan, 2009). Moreover, according to literature, it found that there is a positive significant relationship between customer focus and employee job satisfaction (Goedegebuure & Xu, 2005; Yaacob, 2014; Bulgarella, 2005). Further Several studies revealed that organizational learning significantly and positively affects employee job satisfaction (Dekoulou & Trivellas, 2015; Rahman & Karim, 2018; Rose, Kumar, & Pak, 2009). Therefore, by considering the above literature, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H 1: There will be a positively significant relationship between creating change and job satisfaction of employees in local government sector.

H 2: There will be a positively significant relationship between customer focus and job satisfaction of employees in local government sector.

H 3: There will be a positively significant relationship between organizational learning and

job satisfaction of employees in local government sector.

3. Methodology

In this study, primary data was collected through questionnaires since, this is a quantitative research based on the survey method (Bradley & Harrell, 2009). The survey questionnaire was developed based on organizational adaptability and employee job satisfaction. Denison organizational cultural survey (DOCS) which was developed by Gillespie et al, (2008) was used to measure adaptability and it was consisted with 09 questions. Here the scale measured three sub variables; namely creating change (three items), customer focus (three items) & organizational learning (three items). Figure 01 shows the developed conceptual framework for the study. Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ) which was developed by Martins & Proenca, (2012) was used to measure employee job satisfaction and it was consisted of 10 questions. Refer table 01 for the detailed operationalization of independent and dependent variables.

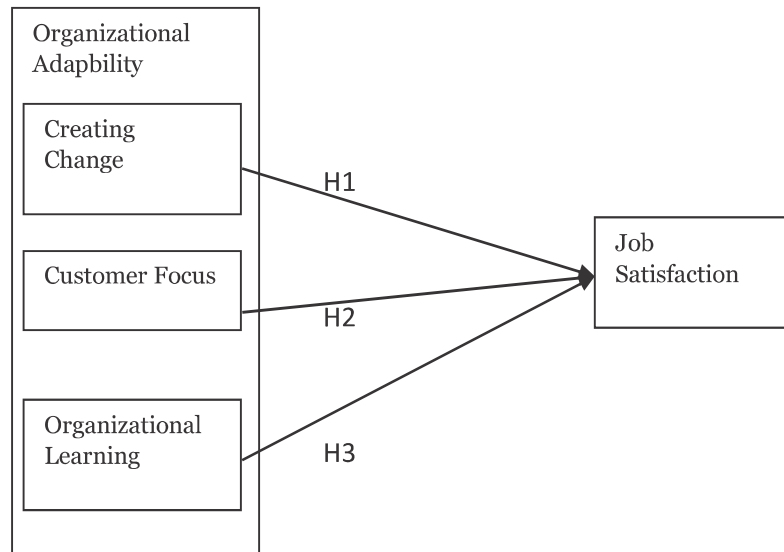


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the independent and dependent variables

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part one was consisted of demographic profile of respondents with 09 questions. Part two was consisted of 19 closed ended questions to measure the independent variable, adaptability and the dependent variable, job satisfaction. 5- point Likert scale was used to measure the questions in part two. Here the scale was anchored at 5 points 3 being the mid-point. For this study, the target population was all the local government sector employees in Sri Lanka. Sampling frame was consisted of employees

of local government organizations in Matara district. Weligama Pradeshiya Sabha, Matara Municipal Council and Weligama Urban Council was selected as the local government organizations for this study.

Table 1: Operationalization of variables

Sub Variable	Item code	Item Description	Source
Creating Change	ACC 1	This organization is very responsive and changes easily	Gillespie et al, 2008
	ACC 2	Different parts of the organization often cooperate to create change	
	ACC 3	This organization continually adopts new and improved ways to do work	
Customer Focus	ACF 1	Customer comments and recommendations often lead to changes in this organization	
	ACF 2	Customer input directly influences our decisions	
	ACF 3	We encourage direct contact with customers by our people	
Organizational Learning	AOL 1	We view failure as an opportunity for learning and improvement	
	AOL 2	Learning is an important objective in our day-to-day work	
	AOL 3	We make certain that we coordinate our actions and efforts between different units in this organization	
Job Satisfaction	JS 1	The chance to work alone on the job	Martins & Proenca, 2012
	JS 2	The chance to do different things from time to time	
	JS 3	The chance to be "somebody" in the community	
	JS 4	The way my boss handles his/her workers	
	JS 5	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions	
	JS 6	The chance to tell people what to do	
	JS 7	The chance to do something that makes	

	use of my abilities
JS 8	The freedom to use my own judgment
JS 9	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job
JS 10	The praise I get for doing a good job

Source: Martins & Proenca, 2012; Gillespie et al, 2008

For this study, data was gathered from local government organizations in Matara district because, in many times, service receivers faced problems or socially excluded or faced problems in getting service from local government organizations in Matara district. Receiving the public services are lower than the satisfactory level of people. Local government organizations in Matara district are still lack of proper supply of basic services such as infrastructure development, town planning, social welfare, public utility, and health (Pradeep & Sivakumar, 2011). The sample was drawn using employee directory by using simple random sampling method. For the present study, sample consisted of 150 secondary level employees of the local government organizations in Matara district, namely, Weligama Pradeshiya Sabha, Weligama Urban Council and Matara Municipal Council. A pilot study was conducted for the present study, by using ten secondary level employees in a local government organization and the questionnaires were modified accordingly to increase the validity of the questionnaire.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Creating Change	03	0.639
Customer Focus	03	0.638
Organizational Learning	03	0.702
Job Satisfaction	10	0.887

Source: Survey Data, 2019

The researchers conducted reliability analysis which revealed that all scales measuring the four variables were with high to moderate reliabilities. Any value above 0.6 is considered reliable (Santos,1999). Refer to table 02 for more details. Moreover, table 03 provides the details on the correlation & VIF values. As far as correlations among independent variables are concerned, highest recorded value is 0.632 which is less than the 0.8 cutoff levels for threats of multicollinearity. As far as VIF values are concerned highest recorded is 2.090, which is well below the even considering the conservative cutoff of 3.33 (Andreev, et.al, 2009), thus ensuring that model does not have threats of multicollinearity.

According to the table 1, values have high moderate and high reliabilities. So, the alpha values

of this study indicated that the study's instrument and data were reliable (Field, 2009).

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

	Satisfaction	Creating Change	Customer Focus	VIF
Creating Change	.601**			2.090
Customer Focus	.552**	.623**		1.692
Organizational Learning	.632**	.629**	.503**	1.712

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey Data, 2019

When considering the relationship between two variables, table 2 shows that those variables are significantly correlated with one another (sig. level $p < 0.01$).

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The conceptual framework of this study is consisted of three independent variables and a single dependent variable. Therefore, to test the hypotheses, standard multiple regression analysis was employed. According to the data presented in table 04, around 50% of the variation in employee job satisfaction is explained by the three independent variables used by the model. Further table 05 ANOVA test depicts that the model is significant (significant value of F statistics shows the value .000 and it is less than 0.05) defining that the researchers can interpret the regression model.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.705 ^a	.497	.486	.43595

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational learning, Creating change, Customer focus

Source: Survey Data, 2019

From the table 04, 49.7% variation in employee job satisfaction is explained by the three independent variables (by R square is .497 and adjusted R square is .486).

Table 05 represents the acceptability/ overall significance of the model by a statistical perspective. Because of the significant value of F statistics shows the value .000 and it is less

than 0.05, this model is statistically significant.

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.367	3	9.122	47.999	.000 ^a
	Residual	27.747	146	.190		
	Total	55.114	149			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational learning, Customer focus, Creating Change,

b. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: Survey Data, 2019

Table 06 explains the coefficients of the regression model. Accordingly, organizational learning is the most contributing independent variable, defining that when you increase the ability within the organization to learn by one unit, job satisfaction increases by 0.38 ($p=0.000$). Ability to creating change and level of customer focus also positively contribute towards employee job satisfaction respectively (0.225 & 0.221). Both those variables are significant at 99% confidence level ($p<0.01$).

Table 6: Coefficients of the Regression model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.703	.238		.004		
Creating Change	.219	.082	.225	.009	.478	2.090
Customer Focus	.229	.079	.221	.004	.591	1.692
Org Learning	.323	.065	.379	.000	.584	1.712

Source: Survey Data, 2019

Based on the research findings the study has empirically supported all three hypotheses initially developed by the study. The 1st hypothesis stated that there is a positive relationship between ability to create change and employee job satisfaction, this was supported ($B=0.225$, $sig=0.009$). The 2nd hypothesis which stated that there is a positive relationship between customer focus of the organization and the employee job satisfaction also supported by the data ($B=0.221$, $sig=0.004$). Final hypothesis stated that there is a positive significant relationship between the ability for the organization to learn and employee job satisfaction

was also supported by the data generated by the study ($B=0.379$, $\text{sig}= 0.000$).

4.1. Discussion

Adaptability explains a given organizations' capacity to change according to the changing external conditions (Kodama,2019). Here, the organization's ability to change, quickly by reacting according to the current changes and also the organizational ability in gaining knowledge, while encouraging innovation and developing capabilities in the process (Pollok, et.al,2019) have been identified as sources for employee satisfaction. There are several studies in literature which support that, there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational adaptability with employee job satisfaction such as, a study conducted in South African automotive industry (Coetzee & Stoltz, 2015), a study conducted in United States retail store (Cullen et al., 2014), and another study based on an Indian business firm (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). Further, Alghiani & Ghahremani (2016) revealed that, there is a significant positive relationship between adaptability and employee job satisfaction, according to a study conducted in ministry of education in Iran with its employees. Also Davoodalmousavi (2013) revealed that there is a positive impact of adaptability on employee job satisfaction, according to a study conducted in biotechnology companies in Iran with their employees.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Accordingly, findings of the current study prove that adaptability is important in improving the level of employee job satisfaction within the local government sector in Sri Lanka. So, based on these findings, it highlights the importance of providing more autonomy to employees in the state sector organizations. The study found evidence that with increased adaptability employees will be satisfied in their jobs which has known to increase commitment and loyalty to respective organizations, thus creating more synergies in the process by making state sector organizations is even more productive. Here, it is recommended that the capacity to change according to the external conditions, ability to create the adaptive changes, quickly reacting according to the current changes and, the organizational ability in gaining knowledge, encouraging innovation, and developing capabilities for the employees will increase the employee job satisfaction.

When discussing the potential limitations of the study, single point/ cross sectional data collection using quantitative research design has been used to gather data from respondents and this limits data collection to one point in time. Due to that reason, future researchers could use longitudinal design to clarify the effect of each organizational culture traits. Secondly, the research was done by focusing on a narrow context which makes it indicative

but not fully conclusive. So, future studies in this area could be conducted in a broader scope to include other organizations and increase conclusiveness of the findings.

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