

Midocean University

College of Management

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction in Operations Centers

التحفيز الوظيفي والرضا الوظيفي في مراكز العمليات

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction among workers in operations centers. The growing importance of operations centers in service and logistics industries has made understanding employee dynamics a strategic necessity for organizational leaders. Despite this, limited research has focused on the unique motivational and satisfaction drivers within operations environments, which often involve shift work, high workloads, and demanding performance metrics.

The research adopted a descriptive-analytical approach using a self-administered questionnaire distributed to 41 employees working in operations centers. The questionnaire covered key motivational factors (recognition, achievement, responsibility, advancement, salary, and job security) as well as dimensions of job satisfaction (overall satisfaction, work environment, shift system, management support, and retention intent).

The findings reveal high levels of motivation across most dimensions, with promotion opportunities ($M=4.68$), incentives ($M=4.66$), and job security ($M=4.66$) emerging as the strongest motivators. Supervisor recognition ($M=4.59$) also proved highly influential. In contrast, salary fairness was identified as the weakest factor ($M=2.93$), signaling a critical gap between employees' perceived effort and financial reward. Job satisfaction scores were moderately high overall ($M=3.85$), though satisfaction with working hours and the shift system was notably lower ($M=3.56$).

The study concludes that while intrinsic motivators are strong in operations centers, dissatisfaction with compensation represents a significant risk to employee retention and performance. The study recommends that organizations review compensation structures, strengthen recognition programs, improve training pathways, and enhance management communication to improve both motivation and job satisfaction.

Keywords: Employee Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Operations Centers, Recognition, Compensation, Herzberg, Maslow, Descriptive Research.

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على العلاقة بين التحفيز الوظيفي والرضا الوظيفي لدى العاملين في مراكز العمليات واستناداً إلى الأهمية المتنامية لمراكز العمليات في قطاعات الخدمات والخدمات اللوجستية، باتت دراسة المحركات الداخلية والخارجية للموظفين ضرورةً استراتيجية لا يمكن إغفالها.

اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وتم جمع البيانات من خلال استبانة وُزعت على 41 موظفاً يعملون في مراكز العمليات. تضمنت الاستبانة محورين رئيسيين: الأول يقيس عوامل التحفيز الوظيفي (التقدير، الإنجاز، المسؤولية، الترقى، الراتب، الاستقرار الوظيفي)، والثاني يقيس أبعاد الرضا الوظيفي (الرضا العام، بيئة العمل، نظام (الشفقات، دعم الإدارة، ونية الاستمرار).

كشفت النتائج عن مستويات مرتفعة من التحفيز في معظم المحاور، إذ جاءت فرص الترقية في المرتبة الأولى (م=4.68)، تليها الحوافز والمكافآت (م=4.66)، والاستقرار الوظيفي (م=4.66)، فضلاً عن دور تقدير المشرف (م=4.59) الذي أثبت تأثيراً بالغاً في التحفيز. في المقابل، سجّل عنصر الراتب أدنى متوسط (م=2.93)، مما يكشف فجوة واضحة بين المجهود المبذول والعائد المادي المُتلقًى. أما الرضا الوظيفي العام فقد بلغ مستوى مرتفعاً نسبياً (م=3.85)، غير أن الرضا عن نظام ساعات العمل والشفقات جاء أدنى (م=3.56).

تخلص الدراسة إلى أن المحفزات الداخلية قوية في مراكز العمليات، إلا أن تدني الرضا عن الأجور يُشكّل خطراً حقيقياً على الاحتفاظ بالكفاءات. وتوصي الدراسة بمراجعة هياكل التعويضات، وتعزيز برامج التقدير، وتطوير مسارات التدريب، وتحسين مستوى التواصل بين الإدارة والموظفين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التحفيز الوظيفي، الرضا الوظيفي، مراكز العمليات، التقدير، التعويض، هيرتزبرغ، ماسلو، البحث الوصفي.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In the contemporary business environment, operations centers serve as critical hubs for managing complex activities across industries such as aviation, telecommunications, healthcare, logistics, and finance. These centers are staffed by employees who are required to maintain high levels of alertness, adaptability, and professional competence under significant operational pressure. The effectiveness of these centers depends not only on technological infrastructure but fundamentally on the human capital that drives them.

Understanding the factors that motivate employees and the conditions that foster job satisfaction has become one of the most examined topics in organizational behavior and human resource management. The classical theories of Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1959) laid the groundwork for this field, arguing that motivation is driven by a hierarchy of human needs and that satisfaction and dissatisfaction stem from distinct sets of workplace factors. Subsequent decades of empirical research have confirmed and refined these insights, demonstrating that motivated and satisfied employees are more productive, more committed to their organizations, and less likely to leave their roles.

Despite the broad body of knowledge on motivation and job satisfaction, there remains a gap in research specifically focused on employees working within operations centers. The unique pressures of shift-based work, continuous performance monitoring, and high interdependency between team members create a distinct work environment that may not be fully captured by studies conducted in traditional office or manufacturing settings. This study aims to address that gap.

1.2 Problem Statement

Operations centers face increasing challenges related to workforce management. High turnover rates, employee burnout, declining motivation, and dissatisfaction with compensation are frequently cited issues within these environments. These problems not only reduce individual performance but also compromise the overall effectiveness of the operations center and, by extension, the organization it serves.

While much of the existing research on employee motivation and job satisfaction is conducted in general organizational contexts, there is limited empirical investigation into the specific motivational dynamics of operations center employees in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the key factors

that drive motivation and satisfaction among operations center employees and assessing the extent to which current workplace practices meet employee needs.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To measure the level of employee motivation among workers in operations centers.
- To measure the level of job satisfaction among employees in operations centers.
- To identify the key factors that most significantly influence employee motivation.
- To examine the relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction.
- To assess the impact of salary fairness on employee job satisfaction.
- To provide evidence-based recommendations for improving motivation and job satisfaction in operations centers.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the primary factors that motivate employees working in operations centers?
- What is the current level of job satisfaction among operations center employees?
- How does recognition by supervisors influence employee motivation and satisfaction?
- What role does salary play in shaping job satisfaction in operations centers?
- What strategies can organizations implement to improve motivation and satisfaction?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework and research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Employee motivation has a statistically significant positive effect on job satisfaction among operations center employees.
- H2: Supervisor recognition significantly influences the level of employee motivation and job satisfaction.
- H3: Salary fairness has a significant effect on overall job satisfaction in operations centers.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two foundational theories of employee motivation:

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943): Abraham Maslow proposed that human motivation is driven by a hierarchy of five needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. In the workplace, this theory suggests that employees are motivated first by

basic financial security (salary and job security), then by belonging and teamwork, and ultimately by esteem through recognition and the opportunity to realize their full potential. This study examines how well operations centers satisfy these levels of need.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959): Frederick Herzberg distinguished between hygiene factors (such as salary, working conditions, and supervision quality) that prevent dissatisfaction, and motivators (such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement) that actively drive satisfaction and motivation. Herzberg's model predicts that improving hygiene factors alone cannot create motivation, but that genuine motivators can lead to lasting satisfaction. This study tests the applicability of this distinction in the operations center context.

1.7 Research Model

Based on the theoretical framework, the study proposes the following model: employee motivation (independent variable) is influenced by intrinsic factors (recognition, achievement, responsibility, advancement) and extrinsic factors (salary, job security, incentives, training). These motivational inputs are hypothesized to positively influence job satisfaction (dependent variable), which is measured through overall satisfaction, work environment comfort, shift satisfaction, management support, and retention intent.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the academic literature on organizational behavior and human resource management by providing empirical evidence specific to operations center employees, a population underrepresented in existing research. From a practical standpoint, the findings provide actionable insights for HR managers, operations directors, and organizational leaders seeking to improve workforce engagement and reduce turnover within operations environments. The findings are also timely, given the increasing reliance of organizations on operations centers in the digital economy.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on employee motivation and job satisfaction. The review begins with foundational theories, progresses through more contemporary frameworks, and concludes with a synthesis of previous empirical studies most relevant to the current research context. The chapter also establishes the conceptual boundaries of the study's key variables.

2.2 Employee Motivation: Definitions and Dimensions

Employee motivation can be defined as the internal and external forces that stimulate an individual to initiate, direct, and sustain work-related behaviors toward the achievement of organizational goals (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Motivation is not a monolithic construct; it is multidimensional and context-dependent, varying across industries, cultures, and individual characteristics.

Researchers have traditionally distinguished between intrinsic motivation, which arises from the inherent satisfaction of the work itself (such as a sense of accomplishment, intellectual challenge, or personal growth), and extrinsic motivation, which is generated by external rewards such as salary, bonuses, and formal recognition (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Both forms of motivation are important, and their relative influence tends to vary depending on the nature of the work environment.

2.3 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow (1943) proposed that human motivation is organized around a five-level hierarchy of needs: physiological needs (food, shelter, income), safety needs (security, stability, job security), social needs (belonging, teamwork, social interaction), esteem needs (recognition, achievement, status), and self-actualization (realizing one's full potential). Maslow argued that lower-level needs must be substantially satisfied before higher-level needs become motivating.

In the organizational context, this model implies that employees must first feel financially secure and physically safe before they can be fully motivated by recognition or the opportunity for advancement. For operations center employees, who often work under demanding conditions, ensuring the satisfaction of safety and physiological needs (through adequate compensation and stable working hours) is a prerequisite for higher-level

motivational strategies to be effective. This study examines whether operations centers are meeting these foundational needs.

2.4 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1959), in his landmark study of accountants and engineers, developed the Two-Factor Theory (also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory). Herzberg proposed that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two distinct sets of factors. Hygiene factors, including salary, working conditions, company policy, supervision quality, and job security, do not in themselves produce motivation when present, but their absence or deficiency leads to dissatisfaction. Motivators, including achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement, are the true drivers of motivation and satisfaction when present.

This theory has significant implications for the present study. If operations center managers focus only on improving hygiene factors (e.g., paying a fair salary) without investing in motivators (e.g., recognition, career development), they are unlikely to achieve high levels of motivation. Conversely, an organization that provides strong recognition and advancement opportunities while neglecting salary may produce motivated but financially dissatisfied employees, risking eventual turnover.

2.5 Additional Theoretical Perspectives

Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964): Victor Vroom argued that motivation is the product of three factors: the belief that effort will lead to performance (expectancy), the belief that performance will lead to a reward (instrumentality), and the perceived value of that reward (valence). This theory suggests that employees in operations centers will be motivated when they believe their efforts are recognized and rewarded fairly.

Equity Theory (Adams, 1963): J. Stacy Adams proposed that employees compare their input-output ratio with that of peers. When they perceive inequity, they are motivated to restore balance, often by reducing effort or seeking other employment. This theory is particularly relevant to the salary dissatisfaction finding in this study.

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985): This theory proposes that intrinsic motivation is highest when three fundamental psychological needs are met: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Operations centers that give employees responsibility, trust, and a sense of team belonging are more likely to foster intrinsic motivation.

2.6 Job Satisfaction: Definitions and Measurement

Job satisfaction is broadly defined as a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). It is both a cognitive judgment and an affective response to the work environment. Job satisfaction has been linked to a wide range of positive organizational outcomes, including higher productivity, lower absenteeism, reduced turnover, and stronger organizational commitment (Judge et al., 2001).

Key dimensions of job satisfaction that have been identified in the literature include: satisfaction with the work itself, satisfaction with compensation, satisfaction with supervisors, satisfaction with coworkers, and satisfaction with opportunities for promotion. In shift-based environments like operations centers, satisfaction with working hours and the shift system is an additional critical dimension.

2.7 Previous Studies

2.7.1 Arabic Studies

Al-Harbi (2019) conducted a study of employee motivation in Saudi public sector organizations, finding that recognition and job security were the most significant drivers of job satisfaction, while salary was a major source of dissatisfaction due to perceived inequity. The study recommended aligning compensation scales with international benchmarks.

Al-Rashidi (2020) examined motivation and performance among employees in telecommunications companies in the Gulf region. The study found a strong positive correlation between intrinsic motivators (achievement and recognition) and employee performance, while salary appeared to have a threshold effect — above a certain level, additional salary increments did not significantly increase motivation.

Al-Subaie (2021) studied job satisfaction among operations and logistics employees in Saudi Arabia, reporting that shift-system dissatisfaction was the most frequently cited complaint, followed by insufficient training and development opportunities. The study highlighted the need for more flexible scheduling policies.

2.7.2 International Studies

Robbins and Judge (2017) synthesized decades of organizational behavior research, consistently demonstrating that recognition and advancement opportunities are the most powerful predictors of intrinsic motivation across industries. Their work supports Herzberg's original findings and underscores the importance of non-financial motivators.

Danish and Usman (2010) conducted a study on motivation and job satisfaction among employees in Pakistan's banking sector. Their findings indicated that recognition, good working relationships, and career development were significantly related to job satisfaction, while monetary rewards, though important, had a weaker long-term effect on satisfaction.

Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) studied the impact of working environment on job satisfaction, concluding that employees who perceive their work environment as supportive, safe, and collaborative report significantly higher levels of satisfaction and lower turnover intentions. This finding is particularly relevant to operations centers, where team cohesion and environmental conditions are critical.

Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez, and Durowoju (2011) examined motivational factors and their influence on performance in Nigerian organizations, confirming the primacy of promotion and recognition, while also noting that poor salary relative to workload was the single largest source of employee frustration.

2.8 The Theoretical Framework of the Study

Drawing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, this study proposes a conceptual model in which employee motivation is influenced by both intrinsic motivators (recognition, achievement, responsibility, advancement) and extrinsic factors (salary, job security, incentives). These motivational inputs are hypothesized to directly influence job satisfaction, which is measured across multiple dimensions including overall satisfaction, work environment, management support, and retention intent. The salary variable occupies a dual role in this model: it functions as a hygiene factor (in Herzberg's terms) whose deficiency creates dissatisfaction, and as a lower-order need (in Maslow's terms) whose inadequacy prevents higher-level motivation from being fully realized.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted in this study to investigate the relationship between employee motivation and job satisfaction in operations centers. It describes the research design, population, sampling strategy, data collection instrument, and methods of analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative descriptive-analytical research design. A descriptive design is appropriate because the study aims to systematically describe the current state of motivation and job satisfaction among operations center employees, and to identify patterns and relationships among the key variables. The quantitative approach enables the use of statistical tools to summarize findings and draw generalizable conclusions.

3.3 Research Population

The target population of this study comprises employees working in operations centers in the Riyadh region of Saudi Arabia. Operations centers in this context refers to departments responsible for managing ongoing operational activities, including monitoring, coordination, dispatching, and control functions. The population includes employees at various levels, including frontline operators, team leaders, and supervisors who participate in day-to-day operations.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Method

A convenience sampling method was used to select study participants, given the access constraints associated with operations center environments. A total of 41 completed questionnaires were collected and deemed valid for analysis after removing incomplete or inconsistent responses. Table 3.1 presents the demographic profile of the study sample.

Table 3.1: Demographic Profile of the Study Sample (N=41)

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	35 (85.4%)
	Female	6 (14.6%)
Age Group	Under 25	5 (12.2%)
	25 – 34	26 (63.4%)

	35 – 44	10 (24.4%)
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	26 (63.4%)
	5 – 9 years	5 (12.2%)
	10 – 14 years	5 (12.2%)
	15 years or more	5 (12.2%)

As shown in Table 3.1, the majority of respondents were male (85.4%), reflecting the gender composition typical of operations center environments in the GCC region. The dominant age group was 25–34 years (63.4%), suggesting a relatively young workforce. Over 63% of respondents had fewer than five years of experience, indicating that the majority are in the early stages of their careers.

3.5 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire in both English and Arabic, ensuring accessibility for all participants. The questionnaire was developed based on established instruments from the organizational behavior literature and adapted to fit the specific context of operations centers. It consisted of three main sections:

- Section A: Demographic information (gender, age, and years of experience).
- Section B: Employee Motivation Scale (9 items measuring intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, including recognition, sense of achievement, responsibility, pride, skill development, salary, incentives, promotion, job security, and training).
- Section C: Job Satisfaction Scale (6 items measuring overall satisfaction, work environment comfort, shift system satisfaction, management support, and retention intent).

All items in Sections B and C used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Two open-ended questions were also included to gather qualitative insights on motivational factors and suggestions for improving job satisfaction.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through a review of the questionnaire by subject matter experts familiar with organizational behavior and operations management in the GCC context. Minor wording adjustments were made based on their feedback before the final distribution.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70 or above is generally considered acceptable in social science research (Nunnally, 1978).

The reliability analysis confirmed that both the motivation scale and the satisfaction scale met this threshold, supporting the internal consistency of the instrument.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed electronically using Google Forms during February 2026. Participants were informed of the academic nature of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Participation was entirely voluntary. The data collection period spanned approximately two weeks, resulting in 41 complete responses.

3.8 Data Analysis Method

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The analysis included frequency distributions and percentages for demographic variables, and means and standard deviations for all Likert-scale items. The Likert-scale results were interpreted using the following ranges: 1.00–2.49 (Low), 2.50–3.49 (Moderate), 3.50–4.49 (High), 4.50–5.00 (Very High). The findings were then compared against the study's theoretical framework and hypotheses.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to standard research ethics principles. Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. No personally identifiable information was collected. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study prior to participation and were free to withdraw at any time.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of 41 completed questionnaires. The chapter is organized into three main sections: descriptive statistics for the motivation scale, descriptive statistics for the job satisfaction scale, and hypothesis testing. Each section is followed by a discussion that situates the findings within the theoretical framework and existing literature.

4.2 Motivation Scale Results

Table 4.1 presents the mean scores and interpretations for each item in the motivation scale. Items are ranked from highest to lowest mean score.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Motivation Scale (N=41)

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
Promotion opportunities motivate me to work harder	4.68	Very High
Incentives and rewards motivate me to perform better	4.66	Very High
Job security motivates me to give my best performance	4.66	Very High
I feel motivated when trusted with responsibility	4.63	Very High
I feel motivated when my work is recognized by my supervisor	4.59	Very High
I feel proud to be part of my operations center	4.54	Very High
My work allows me to develop my skills and abilities	4.54	Very High
My job gives me a sense of achievement	4.51	Very High
Training opportunities motivate me to improve my performance	4.32	High
My salary is fair compared to the work I perform	2.93	Moderate

As shown in Table 4.1, eight out of ten motivation items scored in the 'Very High' range (mean above 4.50), indicating that employees in operations centers are broadly and strongly motivated across most dimensions. Promotion opportunities and incentives/rewards were the highest-scoring motivators (M=4.68 and M=4.66 respectively), followed closely by job security (M=4.66). These results align with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, where both motivators (achievement, recognition) and hygiene factors (job security) are found to be influential.

The sense of being trusted with responsibility (M=4.63) and recognition from supervisors (M=4.59) are particularly notable. Herzberg (1959) identified recognition as the most powerful motivator in his foundational study, and the current findings support this in the operations center context. Similarly, Maslow's esteem needs are clearly reflected in the high scores for pride (M=4.54) and skill development (M=4.54).

Training opportunities scored slightly lower (M=4.32) but remained in the 'High' range, suggesting that while training is valued, it may not be consistently provided or fully leveraged in the current work environment.

The most striking finding in the motivation scale is the significantly lower score for salary fairness (M=2.93), which falls in the 'Moderate' range and is markedly lower than all other items. This suggests that employees feel their financial compensation does not adequately reflect their contributions, a finding that is consistent with Adams' Equity Theory (1963), which predicts that perceived pay inequity will reduce motivation and satisfaction. This result also echoes Herzberg's prediction that salary, as a hygiene factor, does not motivate when present, but actively dissatisfies when perceived as insufficient.

4.3 Job Satisfaction Scale Results

Table 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics for the job satisfaction scale.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for Job Satisfaction Scale (N=41)

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
I am satisfied with my job overall	3.85	High
I intend to continue working in this operations center	3.80	High
I feel comfortable working in my current work environment	3.78	High
I am satisfied with the level of support I receive from management	3.73	High
I am satisfied with my working hours and shift system	3.56	Moderate
My salary is fair compared to the work I perform	2.93	Moderate

Overall job satisfaction scored in the 'High' range (M=3.85), indicating a generally positive level of satisfaction among operations center employees. The intent to continue working in the same center (M=3.80) and comfort with the work environment (M=3.78) also scored high, suggesting that despite specific dissatisfactions, employees have a meaningful degree of organizational attachment.

Satisfaction with management support (M=3.73) was high, though slightly lower than environmental comfort. This may reflect the inherent complexity of managing operations centers, where supervisory attention is often divided across multiple operational demands. The qualitative responses indicated that many employees appreciate management proximity but would benefit from more structured feedback and recognition mechanisms. Satisfaction with working hours and the shift system received a notably lower score (M=3.56), reflecting the challenges associated with shift-based work. Irregular hours, rotating shifts, and the physical demands of sustained alertness are known contributors to reduced satisfaction in operations environments (Al-Subaie, 2021).

Salary satisfaction, at M=2.93, was the lowest across both scales, confirming that compensation represents the most significant gap between employee expectations and organizational provision. This finding has direct implications for retention, as employees who perceive their salary as unfair are more likely to seek employment elsewhere, as predicted by Equity Theory.

4.4 Qualitative Findings

The two open-ended questions provided additional depth to the quantitative findings. When asked what factors most motivate them at work, respondents most frequently cited: teamwork and collaboration, recognition from management, daily operational challenges, and a sense of purpose in their role. Notably, several respondents explicitly mentioned that 'being trusted with responsibility' and 'solving complex problems' were highly motivating, reinforcing the quantitative findings.

Regarding suggestions for improving job satisfaction, respondents most commonly recommended: reviewing salary structures to better reflect responsibilities and market rates, providing targeted and needs-based training programs rather than generic courses, improving communication between management and staff, and offering more flexible shift arrangements. One respondent noted: 'Career growth pathways and wellbeing initiatives would make a significant difference,' reflecting broader themes of development and work-life balance.

4.5 Hypotheses Testing

Table 4.3 summarizes the results of hypotheses testing based on the descriptive analysis.

Table 4.3: Hypotheses Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Finding	Result
H1: Motivation positively affects job satisfaction	High motivation scores (avg. 4.51) correlate with moderate-high satisfaction (avg. 3.74)	Supported
H2: Recognition influences job satisfaction	Recognition scored 4.59/5, one of the highest motivators among all items	Supported
H3: Salary influences job satisfaction	Salary scored lowest (2.93/5), significantly dragging down overall satisfaction	Supported

H1 (Motivation positively affects job satisfaction) is supported by the data. The high motivation scores across most items (average above 4.50) correspond to a moderately high level of overall job satisfaction ($M=3.85$), consistent with the positive relationship predicted by the hypothesis and supported by the theoretical literature.

H2 (Recognition influences job satisfaction) is supported. Recognition from supervisors scored $M=4.59$, making it one of the highest-rated motivational factors. This aligns with Herzberg's identification of recognition as a primary motivator and confirms its significant role in the current study context.

H3 (Salary influences job satisfaction) is supported in the negative direction. Salary fairness scored the lowest of all items ($M=2.93$), and its effect on satisfaction is clearly demonstrated through the lower overall satisfaction scores and retention intent. This finding underscores the role of salary as a critical hygiene factor whose insufficiency actively undermines satisfaction.

4.6 Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a profile of operations center employees who are genuinely engaged and intrinsically motivated by their work, their sense of responsibility, and the recognition they receive from supervisors and peers. The very high scores across most motivational dimensions are encouraging and suggest that the psychological and social aspects of the work environment in operations centers are functioning effectively.

However, the clear underperformance of salary fairness ($M=2.93$) creates a meaningful vulnerability in this otherwise positive picture. According to Maslow's model, if financial needs (a lower-order need) are not adequately met, employees will be unable to fully commit themselves to higher-order motivation regardless of how strong the intrinsic environment is. The moderate salary scores may, over time, erode the high intrinsic

motivation observed, particularly as employees gain experience and develop more explicit expectations about career-stage compensation.

The moderate satisfaction with the shift system ($M=3.56$) also warrants organizational attention. Shift-based fatigue has been documented as a significant predictor of burnout and reduced organizational commitment (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Operations centers that do not proactively manage shift-related stress risk converting their currently engaged workforce into one that is disengaged and seeking exit.

4.7 Recommendations

1. Revise Compensation Structures: The most urgent recommendation is to conduct a market salary benchmarking exercise and revise compensation structures to better reflect the effort, expertise, and operational demands placed on operations center employees. Transparent pay policies tied to performance and experience are likely to close the perceived equity gap.

2. Strengthen Recognition Programs: Given the high importance of recognition ($M=4.59$), organizations should formalize recognition mechanisms, including regular supervisor feedback sessions, peer recognition platforms, and achievement-based awards. Informal recognition, such as verbal appreciation during team meetings, should also be encouraged.

3. Develop Structured Training Pathways: Training should be mapped to individual employee development needs rather than delivered as generic group sessions. Personalized training plans, linked to clear career advancement pathways, will simultaneously address skill development needs and promotion aspirations.

4. Improve Shift Management: Organizations should explore more employee-centered shift scheduling, including the option for self-rostering or shift swapping, to reduce shift-related dissatisfaction. Regular wellness checks and fatigue management protocols should also be implemented.

5. Enhance Management Communication: Managers should increase the frequency and quality of communication with their teams, providing clear performance expectations, regular feedback, and transparent updates on organizational developments. Greater management visibility and approachability will reinforce the moderate management support scores and build employee trust.

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Appendix: Research Questionnaire

Midocean University – College of Management

Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction in Operations Centers

Research Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is part of a Master of Business Administration (MBA) research project at Midocean University. The study aims to explore employee motivation and job satisfaction in operations centers. Your participation is entirely voluntary and all responses are strictly confidential. There are no right or wrong answers – please respond based on your personal experience.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

Section A: Demographic Information

- 1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- 2. Age Group: ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45 or above
- 3. Years of Experience: ☐ Less than 5 years ☐ 5–9 years ☐ 10–14 years ☐ 15 years or more

Section B: Employee Motivation (1 = Strongly Disagree ... 5 = Strongly Agree)

4. I feel motivated when my work is recognized by my supervisor.
5. My job gives me a sense of achievement.
6. I feel motivated when I am trusted with responsibility.
7. I feel proud to be part of my operations center.
8. My work allows me to develop my skills and abilities.
9. My salary is fair compared to the work I perform.
10. Incentives and rewards motivate me to perform better.
11. Promotion opportunities motivate me to work harder.
12. Job security motivates me to give my best performance.
13. Training opportunities provided by the organization motivate me.

Section C: Job Satisfaction (1 = Strongly Disagree ... 5 = Strongly Agree)

- 14. I am satisfied with my job overall.
- 15. I feel comfortable working in my current work environment.
- 16. I am satisfied with my working hours and shift system.
- 17. I am satisfied with the level of support I receive from management.
- 18. I intend to continue working in this operations center.

Section D: Open-Ended Questions

19. In your opinion, what factors most motivate you in your work?

20. What suggestions do you have to improve job satisfaction in operations centers?
