



***DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF JOB SATISFACTION INSTRUMENT  
FOR OFFSHORE CATERING EMPLOYEES IN MALAYSIA***

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FOR OFFSHORE CATERING EMPLOYEES IN MALAYSIA**

By

**MOHD ALIFF ABDUL MAJID**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti  
Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**May 2019**

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Hjh. Manah Kasim and my wife, Syazwani Joblee for their support, encouragement and prayers.

I love and thank both of you to the moon and back.

And to all offshore catering crews, you are truly the unsung heroes.

- Aliff



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in  
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**May 2019**

**Chair : Assoc. Prof. Mohhidin Othman, PhD**  
**Faculty: Food Science and Technology**

Job satisfaction is essential in offshore catering. Understanding their satisfaction can be a valuable approach to enhance organizational performance. However, the employees view offshore catering job as a stepping stone rather than a long-life career path and retaining the employees become challenging. Studies on job satisfaction have been conducted but less is known about job satisfaction among these employees and its relationship towards intention to leave and industry commitment. The purpose of this study was to develop a job satisfaction instrument based on the experiences of offshore catering employees in Malaysia. The instrument was named as 'Satisfaction with Offshore Job Instrument' (SwOJI). An exploratory sequential mixed methods design was employed, corresponding to DeVellis' (2012) scale development guidelines. The results of qualitative phase by analyzing interviews of 13 participants (n=13) using thematic analysis revealed 70 codes. A preliminary instrument based on the qualitative findings was constructed and after consulting the content experts, the SwOJI consisted of 71 items. The instrument was administered to offshore catering employees in Malaysia and 309 usable questionnaires (n=309) were collected and analyzed. The psychometric properties of SwOJI were examined using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The EFA revealed an eight-factor solution and the final model fit of the measurement model ( $\chi^2/df=2.22$ , CFI=.90, IFI=.90, TLI=.88, RMSEA=.06) was found to be acceptable, confirming the convergent and discriminant validity. In relation to criterion-related validity, it was found that job satisfaction had a moderate, negative relationship to intention to leave ( $r=-.33$ ) and had a strong, positive relationship ( $r=.69$ ) with industry commitment, indicating both hypotheses were supported. Significantly, this study produced a bespoke instrument to accurately measure the job satisfaction among offshore catering employees. The current study provides fresh insight in the context of employees working in offshore catering and concludes a better nomological understanding of the relationship between job satisfaction, intention to leave and industry commitment. In addition, the study extends the existing body of knowledge

within the human resource and organizational research. The practitioner may use the findings to formulate strategies to manage and effectively improve offshore catering employees' job satisfaction that will enhance their commitment to the industry and reduce their intention to leave the job



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

## **PEMBANGUNAN DAN KESAHAN INSTRUMEN KEPUASAN TERHADAP KERJA BAGI PEKERJA KATERING LUAR PESISIR DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

**MOHD ALIFF ABDUL MAJID**

**Mei 2019**

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Kepuasan kerja adalah penting bagi katering luar pesisir. Memahami kepuasan mereka adalah pendekatan yang berharga dalam meningkatkan prestasi syarikat. Walau bagaimanapun, para pekerja melihat pekerjaan katering luar pesisir sebagai batu loncatan dan bukan sebagai kerjaya jangka masa panjang dan mengekalkan pekerja adalah mencabar. Kajian mengenai kepuasan kerja telah dijalankan, tetapi kurang diketahui mengenai kepuasan kerja di kalangan pekerja ini dan hubungannya terhadap keinginan untuk meninggalkan kerja dan komitmen industri. Tujuan kajian ini ialah untuk membangunkan instrumen kepuasan kerja berdasarkan pengalaman pekerja katering luar pesisir di Malaysia. Instrumen tersebut dinamakan sebagai *Satisfaction with Offshore Job Instrument* (Instrumen Kepuasan dengan Kerja Luar Pesisir; SwOJI). Reka bentuk kaedah gabungan penerokaan berurutan telah digunakan berpadanan dengan panduan pembangunan skala DeVellis (2012). Hasil fasa kualitatif dengan menganalisis temuduga 13 peserta ( $n=13$ ) menggunakan analisis tematik mendedahkan 70 kod. Penyelidik membina instrumen rintis berdasarkan dapatan kualitatif dan setelah berunding dengan pakar kandungan, SwOJI mengandungi 71 item. Instrumen diserahkan kepada pekerja katering luar pesisir di Malaysia dan 309 soal selidik ( $n=309$ ) yang boleh diguna pakai telah dikumpulkan dan dianalisis. Ciri-ciri psikometrik SwOJI telah dinilai menggunakan analisis penerokaan faktor (EFA) dan analisis pengesahan faktor (CFA). EFA mendedahkan penyelesaian lapan faktor dan padanan model akhir bagi pengukuran model ( $\chi^2/df=2.22$ , CFI=.90, IFI=.90, TLI=.88, RMSEA=.06) didapati boleh diterima dan boleh dipercayai, mengesahkan kesahihan menumpu dan pembezaan. Melalui kesahan berkaitan kriteria, kajian semasa mendapati kepuasan kerja mempunyai hubungan yang sederhana, negatif terhadap keinginan untuk meninggalkan kerja ( $r=-.33$ ) dan mempunyai hubungan yang kuat, positif ( $r=.69$ ) terhadap komitmen industri, menunjukkan kedua-dua hipotesis disokong. Nyata sekali, kajian ini menghasilkan instrumen yang disesuaikan untuk mengukur dengan tepat kepuasan kerja di kalangan pekerja katering luar pesisir. Kajian semasa memberikan pandangan baru dalam konteks pekerja katering luar pesisir dan

menyimpulkan pemahaman nomologis yang lebih baik tentang hubungan antara kepuasan kerja, keinginan untuk meninggalkan kerja dan komitmen industri. Di samping itu, kajian ini menambah pengetahuan sedia ada dalam penyelidikan sumber manusia dan organisasi. Pengamal boleh menggunakan dapatan ini bagi merangka strategi untuk menguruskan dan meningkatkan dengan berkesan kepuasan kerja pekerja katering luar pesisir yang akan mempertingkatkan komitmen mereka terhadap industri dan mengurangkan keinginan untuk meninggalkan kerja tersebut.



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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 27 May 2019 to conduct the final examination of Mohd Aliff bin Abdul Majid on his thesis entitled "Development and validation of job satisfaction instrument for offshore catering employees in Malaysia" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Composite Reliability
CTT	Classical Test Theory
DF	Degree of Freedom
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EM	Expectation-Maximization
FDP SO	Floating Drilling Production Storage and Offloading
FSO	Floating Storage and Offloading
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFI	Goodness-of-Fit Index
GNP	Gross National Product
HSE	Health, Safety and Environment
IC	Industry Commitment
ICE	Isolated, Confined and Extreme
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
IOR	Index of Organizational Reactions
IRT	Item Response Theory
ITL	Intention to Leave
JCM	Job Characteristics Model
JDI	Job Description Index
JDS	Job Diagnostic Survey

JPS	Job Perception Survey
JS	Job Satisfaction
JSS	Job Satisfaction Survey
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MCAR	Missing Completely At Random
MI	Modification Indices
MSC	Malaysian Skills Certification
MSQ	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire
NFI	Normed-Fit Index
NKEA	National Key Economic Areas
NVTC	National Vocational Training Council
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OIM	Oil Installation Manager
OOITF	Offshore Outsourced IT Firms
POB	Person-on-board
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SCOs	Safety Critical Organizations
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SwOJI	Satisfaction with Offshore Job Instrument
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
UKCS	UK Continental Shelf

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief outline of the research settings and is organized into eleven sections. This chapter covers the research background, the statement of the problem, the research questions and research objectives, the research process and the scope of the study. In addition, this chapter presents the theoretical support that underpinned the study. Moreover, it also consists key terms, significance of the study and the structure of the thesis.

### 1.1 Research Background

In today's competitive era, the primary source in gaining competitive advantage and organizational performance is determined by how employees are treated (Todorović, Čabarkapa, Tošić-Radev & Miladinović, 2017; Kandasamy & Ancheri, 2009; Lawler 2005). No organization would be able to achieve its organizational goals or financial aim without its employees (Johari, Yahya & Ahmad, 2012). Tews, Michel and Bartlett (2012) mentioned that hiring competent employees is an elementary phase in ensuring a productive workforce and effective organizational performance. In line with the statement, Tracey and Hinkin (2000) affirmed that qualified employees are the strength in achieving organizational objectives. Through the lens of the importance of human resource, employees are regarded as a substantial asset of an organization, regardless of industry.

Truly, capable and satisfied employees are necessary to solve operational problems (Nekoeui, Othman, Jarud & Ahmad, 2014). Previous literature demonstrated that reduced job satisfaction was significantly related to employee turnover (Scanlan & Still, 2013; Shen & Zhu, 2012; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Carsten & Spector, 1987), poor organizational commitment (Kim, Leong & Lee, 2005; Meyer & Smith, 2001) and low job performance (Patterson, Warr & West, 2004; Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001). On the contrary, job satisfaction leads to higher employee commitment, reduced employee turnover and improved organizational performance. The understanding of employee job satisfaction is crucial as without proper understanding of the theory, organizations would simply increase salaries or improve working conditions (Bader, Hashim & Zaharim, 2013) with the belief that it enhances job satisfaction. Organizations in different environments or fields need to take into consideration of the nature of the job. This implies that different fields have different job characteristics; thus, the factors behind the satisfaction of employees also vary.

A similar situation is required in the catering service. Unlike onshore catering employees, offshore catering crews are restrained from their normal activities. Individuals working in offshore catering are commonly called as crews. However, the term employees will be used hereafter. The offshore working group presents a unique situation that needs to be explicitly addressed compared to the onshore working environment (Afzainizam, Embong, Yaacob, Sabina, Ashgaftaki & Elsayed, 2016; Ross, 2009). According to Krohne and Magnusen (2011), these employees usually perform repetitive tasks of preparing and serving food and providing laundry service. Living away from home, these employees provide services to attend to the needs of other offshore employees. The employees are transported and stay on the vessel for a minimum of 45 days. As a result of this opportunity, attention should be paid to the outcomes of working in this challenging working environment.

Research in unusual and challenging environment has become a central concern to a substantial number of psychology scholars (Sandal, Leon & Palinkas, 2006). However, very little is known regarding the actual behavior of people working in unusual environments (Zimmer, Cabral, Borges, Côco & Hameister, 2013; Suedfeld, 1998). Kanas (1997) asserted that the study of isolated and confined extreme (ICE) environments is of major interest to understand the concept of adaptation. Sandal et al. (2006) mentioned that these environments have a significant influence on behavioral functioning. The aforementioned environments share similar characteristics of working far from home, being exposed to dangerous conditions and social isolation, working in a narrow working space, facing high workload and experiencing communication constraints with the outside world (Tafforin, 2002; Lugg & Shepanek, 1999; Wood, Lugg, Hysong & Harm, 1999; Sutherland & Flin, 1989). This shows that the offshore working characteristics are very different from any other known food establishments.

Offshore catering shares similar characteristics as other ICE environments. Offshore catering employees are an interesting occupational group and many aspects of their working situations are practically comparable to other employees who work in ICE environments. Hence, maintaining employees' satisfaction in the offshore context is challenging. Elliot (1985) described the offshore working environment as difficult, dangerous and socially isolated. Besides that, the offshore working environment exposes its workers to high rates of hazards, calamity and accidents (Bergheim, Nielsen, Mearns & Eid, 2015). It illustrates that the industry is described as 'high risk', where offshore catering employees face a challenging work environment. However, the main areas of studies on offshore employees have been primarily related to risk management issues, health, safety, and environment (HSE), and job stress (Harun, Salleh, Memon, Baharom & Abdullah, 2014; Rundmo, 1992). Generally, the investigation of offshore catering is relatively low compared to the research focusing on other offshore jobs. This reflects the little attention received on the importance of identifying the employees' job satisfaction. This notion holds true especially for offshore catering, where only slight attention has been devoted to job satisfaction. Yuen, Loh, Zhou and Wong (2018) asserted that job satisfaction plays a vital role in retaining these employees.

Although job satisfaction is widely researched, there is a potential area to be explored (Astrauskaite, Vaitkevicius & Perminas, 2011). Despite the amount of research on job satisfaction in urban and hypothetical organizations, attention should be paid to investigate offshore catering employees' job satisfaction to devise strategies in retaining available employees. Therefore, it is anticipated that developing an instrument that can assess job satisfaction in the offshore catering context will bridge this gap of knowledge. Despite the results and inferences from previous studies, the most common questions to be answered are: (1) What do offshore catering employees want from work? (2) What motivates them to put effort into their work?

In the Malaysian context, there is a lack of empirical studies that investigated employee's job satisfaction and its consequences. Specifically, offshore context has not received much attention dealing with job satisfaction and its consequences. The current study attempts to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, intention to leave and industry commitment. The concept of intention to leave is regarded as when an employee is willingly or voluntarily giving up their existing job or organization for another job or organization (Vigoda-Gadot & Ben-Zion, 2004). On the other hand, the concept of industry commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to the industry rather than to the organization (Maloni, Campbell, Gligor, Scherrer & Boyd, 2017). The two consequences are in opposite directions where the intention to leave is a negative consequence of job satisfaction while the industry commitment is a positive outcome of job satisfaction. Previously, most researchers conducted research on job satisfaction towards performance (Yuen et al., 2018), safety perception (Bergheim et al., 2015), absenteeism (Ulleberg & Rundmo, 1997) and stress (Harun et al., 2014). Therefore, this study attempts to provide an empirical relationship between job satisfaction, intention to leave and industry commitment.

More importantly, the narration of offshore catering employees' job attitudes requires an investigation as they work and live in an isolated environment for a prolonged period. It is important to understand these common experiences in order to develop the instrument. More in-depth understanding about their experiences is therefore critical to identify important attributes and themes to form an instrument to assess the participants' job satisfaction. Reflecting on this, the purpose of this study was to develop a job satisfaction instrument for offshore catering employees in Malaysia. The instrument developed in this study is hitherto referred to as the Satisfaction with Offshore Job Instrument (SwOJI). Such instrument could provide substantial evidence to organizations to signify the existence of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as well as the specific attributes of job satisfaction that are most lacking.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The human resource issue of the offshore catering job is the primary concern of the study. The number of employees working in the industry continues to drop, and younger employees feel less attracted to work in this industry as most of them prefer onshore jobs (Li, Yin, Luo & Wang, 2014). The shortage and low retention rates had placed a burden on recruitment and increased the associated costs (Li et al., 2014). Furthermore, offshore catering jobs are considered as the lowest rank in the oil and gas industry; thus, onshore jobs are perceived to provide better job opportunities. The notion holds true as Dickey, Watson and Zangelidis (2011) purported that the willingness of people to accept offshore jobs is dependent on the nature and quantity of onshore jobs. It is said that, offshore job will be accepted as a substitute job when they are unable to fill the job at onshore.

Wybrow (1988) reported that the wage levels of offshore catering employees are the lowest in the North Sea. Similarly, in the United States, it is reported that the salary ranges between USD10 to USD12 per hour (Indeed, 2018). This is much lower compared to other jobs such as riggers or scaffolders who earn approximately USD24 and USD33 per hour, respectively (Indeed, 2018). The issue remains true for offshore catering in Malaysia. Anecdotal evidence emphasizes that the employees view the offshore catering job as a stepping stone rather than a long-life career path. According to M. K. Ahmad (personal communication, October 26, 2018), catering employees tend to look for other offshore job opportunities such as riggers, scaffolders, and able-bodied seamen that offer a higher salary. The employees use offshore catering as a ticket to look for other job opportunities at offshore. Hence, offshore catering suffers from employee retention due to higher turnover rates.

As the offshore catering services are roughly identical to the hotel industry, Chuang, Yin and Dellmann-Jenkins (2009) found that a chef's job satisfaction influences the quality and volume of productivity in hotel foodservice operations. Reflecting on this statement, it is assumed that the job satisfaction of offshore catering employees may affect the quality of food being served. Also, this incorporates the quality of laundry and cleaning services provided by these employees as part of their job scope. Quality food is essential at offshore because it affects the wellbeing of other offshore workers. As highlighted by Mette, Garrido, Harth, Preisser and Mache (2017), the employees have no options; therefore, they rely on the food served and service offered by the catering employees.

Measuring employees' job satisfaction is complex as offshore catering jobs are different from onshore jobs. Various instruments were developed in different work contexts, primarily concerning manufacturing workers. Fields (2002) reviewed 23 validated job satisfaction scales that have been employed in various industries; however, none of the scales were purposely developed for the offshore-related context. The existing scales (e.g., JDI, JSS, MSQ, and

JDS) were mainly developed in management and professional sectors. There is a concern that the existing instruments could be cultural and job-dependent. Applying them to other nationalities or companies other than those originally intended to be measured might pose weighty limitations. The absence of a suitable instrument to assess employees' attitudes on job satisfaction might not capture the employees' real feelings about their satisfaction with the job.

Previous studies have been conducted on job satisfaction with other related variables and only few researchers conducted empirical studies on commitment and intention to leave. These variables are closely related to the highlighted issue of challenging in retaining the employees. As mentioned by Maloni et al. (2018) industry commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to the industry rather than to the organization. While, intention to leave refers to the probability of an employee to leave the job (Vigoda-Gadot & Ben-Zion, 2004). So far, no study has been conducted by any researcher on the relationship between job satisfaction and industry commitment in offshore context. Moreover, the inclusion of the intention to leave was to test whether the assumption of high job satisfaction could reduce the probability to leave the job. Therefore, industry commitment and intention to leave are included in the study to provide empirical evidence of the relationship and to examine the criterion-related validity of the developed instrument.

In short, the literature has mirrored the need of a bespoke instrument measuring offshore catering employee's job satisfaction. This new scale can assist job satisfaction scholars and practitioners to understand the perception of the employees pertaining to job satisfaction in general. The following research questions are formulated in order to guide the study.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the attributes of job satisfaction that would most likely suit offshore catering employees?
2. What is the underlying factorial structure (construct validity) of SwOJI among offshore catering employees?
3. Is SwOJI related to other theory-related instruments?

## 1.4 Research Objectives

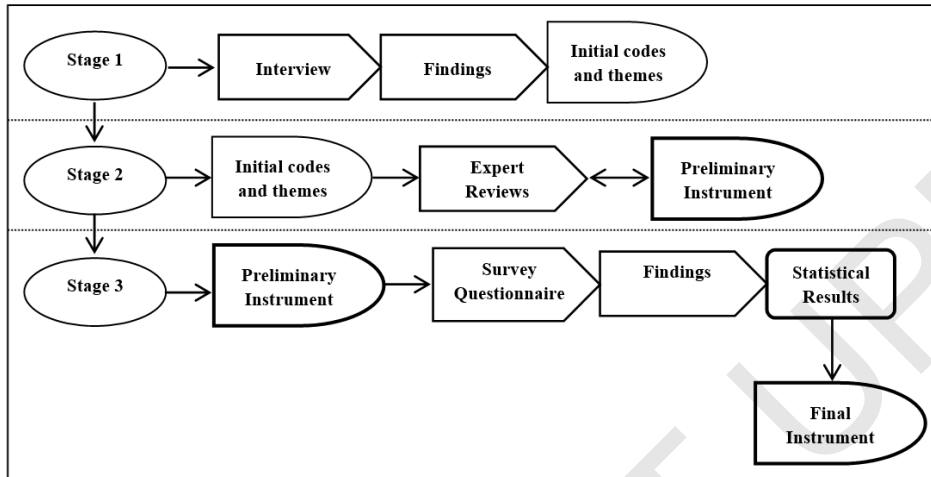
The purpose of the study was to develop and validate a job satisfaction instrument for offshore catering employees in Malaysia. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Explore and identify the attributes of job satisfaction among offshore catering employees;
2. Assess the underlying factorial structure (construct validity) of SwOJI;
  - i. To examine the convergent validity of SwOJI.
  - ii. To examine the discriminant validity of SwOJI.
3. Investigate the criterion validity of SwOJI;
  - i. To determine the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to leave among offshore catering employees in Malaysia.
  - ii. To determine the relationship between job satisfaction and industry commitment among offshore catering employees in Malaysia.

## 1.5 Research Process

In the process of developing and validating a job satisfaction instrument for Malaysia's offshore catering, the notation of the study can be represented as qual → QUAN. It signifies the importance of quantitative phase in the study. Specifically, the research was divided into three important stages (see Figure 1.1) as detailed below:

- i. **Stage one (qualitative phase):** In this stage, the attributes of job satisfaction were identified using themes and patterns. It was sorted out from in-depth interview responses with purposefully-selected offshore catering employees (n=13).
- ii. **Stage two (expert reviews):** In the second stage, the attributes of job satisfaction from the first stage were used to form a preliminary instrument. Academic and industrial panelists (n=6) reviewed the preliminary instrument to offer feedback pertaining to its content validity.
- iii. **Stage three (quantitative phase):** In this stage, the developed instrument was distributed to the respondents (n=309). The collected data was analyzed to validate the factorial structure of the improved instrument.



**Figure 1.1: Research process of the study**

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

The study aimed to produce a new job satisfaction instrument for offshore catering employees in Malaysia. The offshore catering service within the oil and gas industry was the focus of the study. This study focused on factors influencing job satisfaction among these employees. The qualitative research method was conducted to identify the attributes of job satisfaction, rather than the narration of the employees' work life. Most importantly, the qualitative findings were deemed significant to provide quality data for the next phase.

By looking at the detailed exploration of the factors influencing job satisfaction, any investigation towards other aspects related to job satisfaction were delimited from this research. The statistical analyses were limited to achieve the research objectives of the study. It was the essential focus of the study to establish a new bespoke job satisfaction instrument for offshore catering employees. The analysis was employed to validate the measurement model of the study and the validity of the instrument relied on the quantitative analysis.

## 1.7 Theoretical Framework

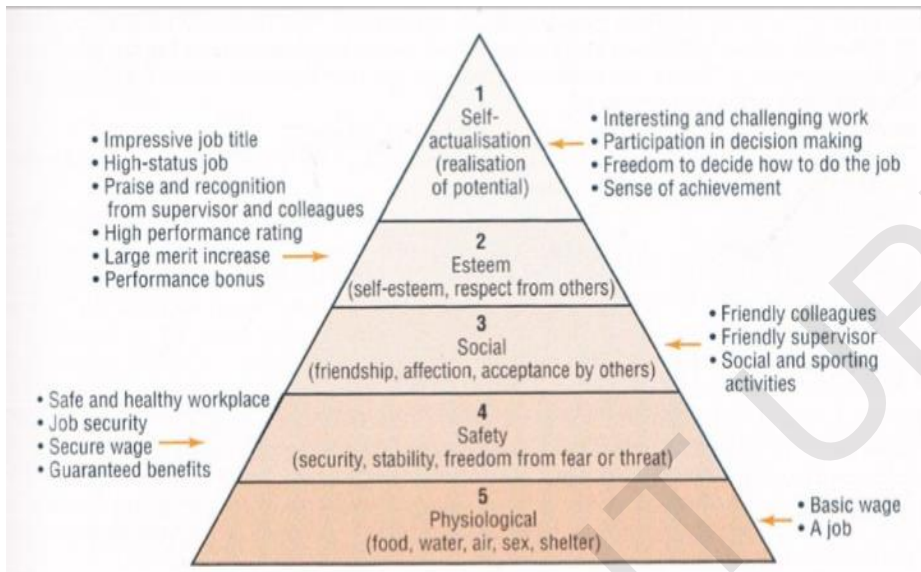
This section provides an overview of the theoretical supports that underpinned the study. In this study, the primary elements of the theoretical approaches involve Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Fraser (1983) and Dunnette (1976) supported the notion that these motivational theories are appropriate to interpret job satisfaction. These theories provide an understanding of what people want, need and desire from their work which refers to content

theories of motivation. Moreover, these theories provide an account of the factors that influence job satisfaction and its development.

In addition, Social Exchange Theory is used in this study to describe the relationship between employee and employer, involving the element of reciprocity. It explains the relationship between the variables of the study. Other than that, Item Response Theory is used to support the main purpose of the study to develop a new scale. Thus, it is necessary to be discussed in order to understand the theory of measurement. The theories are discussed in the following sections.

#### **1.7.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory**

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a prominent theory discussing job satisfaction and motivation, and has remained popular within the organizational context (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2017). The hierarchy of needs is an appropriate theory to explain the motivation of human behavior (Rauschenberger, Schmitt & Hunter, 1980). The main assumption of the theory is that human behavior is mainly based on the outcome of hierarchical needs. The needs are divided into five basic needs which are basic physiological needs, safety and security needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualizations needs (Maslow, 1943; Gruneberg, 1979). The first three needs are classified as lower order needs while the fourth and fifth are higher order needs. Figure 1.2 illustrates the theory.



**Figure 1.2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

[Source: Stone (2005, p.415)]

The concept of needs provides an apt framework for managers to improve employee behavior (Cangemi, 2009). In its application to the workplace setting, practitioners and managers could translate the needs into substantial elements such as salary and fringe benefit as an effort to improve employees' work motivation (Lamberton & Evans, 2002). However, it can be assumed that this framework differs among individuals day to day because each person has his/her own motivational framework.

In the working situation, the theory may predict that the employee would seek satisfaction of higher order needs after the lower order needs are satisfied. Moreover, it is predicted that employees with lower level occupations are likely to be motivated by lower order needs such as salary and security (Gruneberg, 1979), while those in higher level occupations who already fulfilled these basic needs may be interested in fulfilling higher order needs such as achievement from the work itself (Gruneberg, 1979).

### 1.7.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

As job satisfaction is seen to comprise of various factors, Hoppock (1935) saw the concept of job satisfaction as a directional assumption. He assumed that if the presence of factors in a job leads to satisfaction, the absence of the factors would lead to job dissatisfaction. However, Herzberg et al. (1959) opposed this traditional view. He put forward his famous Two-Factor Theory, explaining that the factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two separate continuums rather than a single one. They further explained that job satisfaction requires

the presence of motivators such as recognition, achievement, interesting work, responsibility and advancement, whilst job dissatisfaction is linked with the occurrence of hygiene factors such as company policy, supervision, pay, working conditions and interpersonal relations. Table 1.1 illustrates the factors, which Herzberg et al. (1959) classified into two groups.

**Table 1.1: Classification of motivators and hygiene factors**

<b>Motivators</b>	<b>Hygiene</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Work itself</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Advancement</li> <li>• Growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company policy and administration</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Relationship with supervisor</li> <li>• Work condition</li> <li>• Salary</li> <li>• Relationship with co-workers</li> <li>• Relationship with subordinates</li> <li>• Status</li> <li>• Security</li> </ul>

Herzberg (1966) and Guerrier (1999) classified the factors as intrinsic and extrinsic. The author stated that intrinsic factors involve the content of the job itself that depend on how interesting and demanding the job is, while extrinsic factors relate to the context of the work such as physical environment and supervisor. For example, in the hospitality industry, it was found that extrinsic factors were more important than intrinsic factors (Smith, Gregory & Cannon, 1996; Simons & Enz, 1995). If the notion holds true, given the similar low-level occupation, the offshore catering employee might find that extrinsic factors (e.g., salary, supervision) are more appealing to them.

The theory involves the role of organizational context as a variable to understand and manipulate motivational levels in the workplace (King, 1970). Linking to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, if motivators such as achievement and advancement are present in the job, it leads to satisfaction, but the absence of the factors does not lead to dissatisfaction (Gruneberg, 1979). Meanwhile, a sufficient amount of hygiene factors does not lead to job satisfaction, but when inadequate, it leads to job dissatisfaction (Gruneberg, 1979). Therefore, what was explained by Herzberg did not simply state that hygiene factors contribute to dissatisfaction and motivator factors lead to satisfaction.

Although Herzberg et al. (1959) identified hygiene and motivator factors as separate factors to explain the theory, this study focused on identifying the motivator factors as the factors influencing offshore catering employees' job satisfaction. However, the presence of hygiene factors as indicated by Herzberg et al. (1959) was expected to be present as the motivators in this study. This is because employees are motivated by more than the motivator factors. Hygiene factors are widely used to motivate people in their work to perform better and learn new skills (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). For example, financial rewards are potentially powerful motivators although Herzberg viewed them mainly as hygiene. The presence of extrinsic and

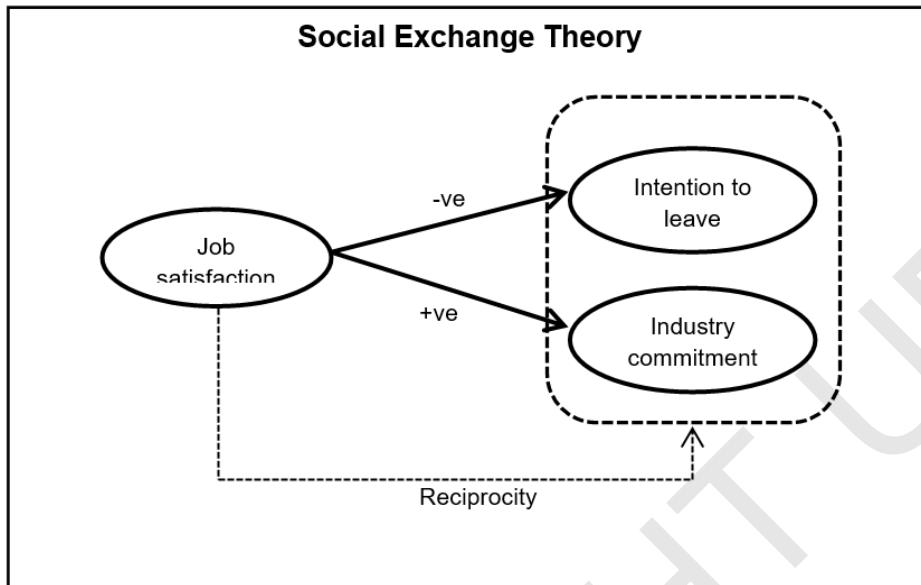
intrinsic factors is crucial to measure job satisfaction. This is in accord with Mun (2015) who mentioned that the lack of one or the other would create an imbalance quality of work life between the intrinsic value of the role and the extrinsic value of the environment of which the employee is subjected to. Therefore, all intrinsic and extrinsic factors identified in this study will be considered as motivators, indicating the dimensions to measure employees' job satisfaction.

### **1.7.3 Social Exchange Theory**

Ideally, employees can extend their satisfaction and influence positive outcomes for both employees and employers. The theoretical basis for the proposed relationship is explained using the social exchange theory (Blau, 1960, 1964). The theory describes the relationship between employee and employer as an exchange of valued resources (Mearns, Hope, Ford & Tetrick, 2010). The social exchange theory suggests that when a person provides valued services to another party, the party typically responds with a certain level of obligation in exchange for the services (Blau, 1964). Thus, in improving employee's satisfaction, it might be reciprocated in some form by the employees to benefit the employer in other ways.

Implicitly, it includes the element of reciprocity between employee and employer. Reciprocity has an important role in this relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960). When both parties uphold their obligations, the relationship is likely to sustain (Maloni et al., 2017). Previous studies suggested that the relationship between employees and employer is social in nature and can be explained using this theory (Lee, Kim & Kim, 2014). Hence, the social exchange theory was used to understand the relationship between job satisfaction, industry commitment and intention to leave as shown in Figure 1.3.

Researchers adopted the social exchange theory to explain organizational-related variables pertaining to job satisfaction (Lo & Ramayah, 2011; Mearns et al., 2010; Lapierre & Hackett, 2007). It can be expected that when employees are treated fairly and receive valued benefits, they tend to reciprocate with high levels of commitment and reduce the tendency to leave. Therefore, from the social exchange theory perspective, the intention not to leave and industry commitment represents the employee's efforts to respond to the satisfying work experiences provided by the employer or service providers.



**Figure 1.3: Proposed framework of job satisfaction influences intention to leave and industry commitment**

#### 1.7.4 Item Response Theory

Since this is a scale development study, it is necessary to at least discuss adequately the underlying theory of measurement. This theory is an alternative to the classical measurement theory, which is also known as the classical test theory (CTT). The item response theory (IRT) shares several fundamental principles as CTT (DeVellis, 2012). For instance, the unidimensional scale is a requirement for both approaches. This means that items should share only one underlying construct to combine into a scale. Under both theories, the items must share a single common cause and correlate to one another. As a factor analysis might reveal multiple factors, each factor should be dealt with separately (DeVellis, 2012).

#### 1.8 Key Terms

The key terms of the variables included in this study are as follows:

- a) **Validation** – Psychometric validation of a research instrument which encompasses the estimates of reliability, validity and responsiveness using statistical techniques (Murphy & Davidshofer, 2005; Cohen & Swerdlik, 2004).
- b) **Offshore catering employees** – Employees working offshore who prepare and serve meals and provide cleaning and laundry services (Krohne & Magnussen, 2011).

c) **Camp boss** – Offshore catering supervisor; plays an important role between the employee, the team and the company (Krohne & Magnussen, 2011).

d) **Job satisfaction** – The feeling of employees about their job and different aspects of their job (Spector, 1997).

e) **Intention to leave** – The probability of an employee to leave his/her job within a certain period (Cho, Johanson, & Guchait, 2009).

f) **Industry commitment** – Employees' emotional attachment to the industry rather than to a specific job or organization (Maloni et al., 2017).

## 1.9 Significance of the Study

### 1.9.1 Academic significance

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the existing literature and relevant body of knowledge on the subject of job satisfaction. This study is one of the first few attempts to investigate job satisfaction in the context of Malaysia's offshore catering employees. This study increases our understanding by identifying the level of the employees' job satisfaction using a self-reported questionnaire. Moreover, the findings of this study provide empirical support for the relationship between job satisfaction, intention to leave and industry commitment.

Another significant theoretical significance of this study is the development and validation of a new instrument for assessing Malaysian offshore catering employees' job satisfaction. The instrument is uniquely suited to the offshore catering services. Specifically, this study adds to the literature of organizational behavior in ICE settings by introducing a new instrument to measure offshore catering employees' job satisfaction in the Malaysian context (non-Western setting). This study, therefore, provides a significant platform for future investigation due to the fact the findings could stipulate a specific form of empirical data in this area of research. The instrument of this study can be utilized to provide a valid and reliable result to measure job satisfaction.

### 1.9.2 Practical significance

This study opens up new directions for offshore catering since limited studies have been carried out in this area. The findings would be particularly noteworthy for policy makers, the management and supervisors in offshore catering companies and other related contexts, and scholars in various fields. It would provide an understanding of how to improve employees' job satisfaction at work and provides a new theoretical insight about job satisfaction,

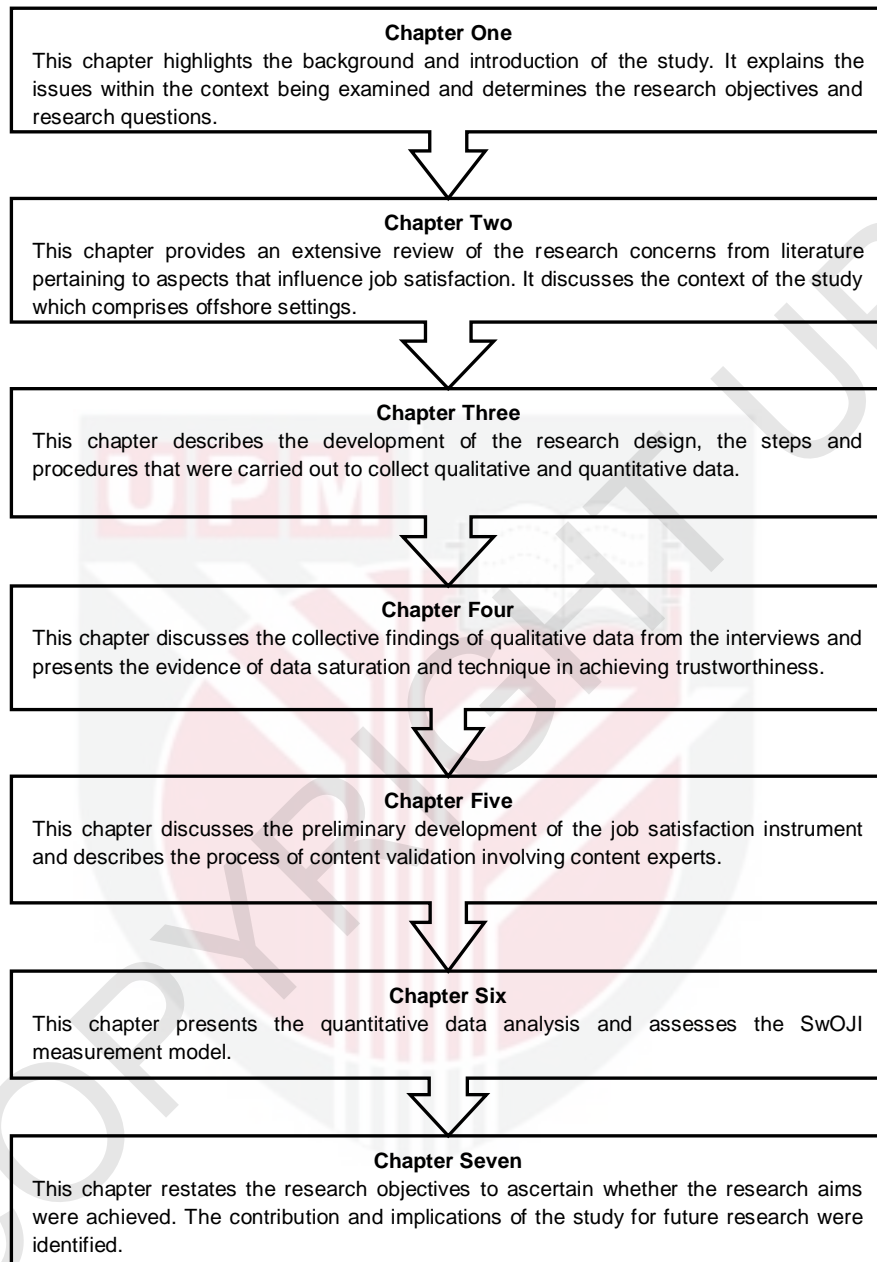
particularly in the offshore catering context. The outcomes of this study would lead to a firm conclusion on the dimensions of job satisfaction in offshore catering as a part of a broader ICE work setting. Thus, it is hoped for this study to change the way the management assesses their employees in the future and how the company evaluates ways to improve their employees' wellbeing.

The findings could be significantly contributed to the oil, gas and energy industry that comprises one of the 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs). This industry has generated 20 percent of Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past decade and is essential to the nation's economic growth (Economic Transformation Programme, 2013). Similarly, transforming Malaysia into a high-income country by 2020 requires full effort from many sectors. As part of the industry, the finding of this study is to ensure the oil, gas and energy industry strives at its best by retaining qualified and capable employees within the industry. This way, the finding will play a significant role in capacity-building that would assist future economic development within the industry in Malaysia.

Moreover, the oil, gas, and energy industry is expected to create 52,300 jobs by the year 2020 (Economic Transformation Programme, 2013). It is reasonable to assume that if the existing employees are not happy with their work, it is a challenge for the industry to reduce the turnover rate. High turnover adds to the amount of upcoming job opportunities, which consequently requires more employees to fill in the jobs. This study, therefore, provides a more significant explanation in managing and improving employee satisfaction. As part of the broader industry, managing employee satisfaction at work assists the industry to reduce the employee turnover rate and increase productivity and performance. Thus, the objective of Malaysia to offer new careers to potential recruits would not be impeded by the turnover rates.

#### **1.10 Structure of the Thesis**

The study consists of seven chapters and the following diagram outlines the organization of the thesis.



**Figure 1.4: Organization of the thesis**

### **1.11 Summary of the Chapter**

The chapter aims to provide a general overview of the study. The key concept and rationale of the study were justified. The research process that consisted of three important stages, namely qualitative, expert reviews and quantitative

stages was explained. Thus, the chapter serves as the groundwork for further investigation of the research, which will be discussed in the following chapters. The next chapter will review and discuss the literature about the aspects of the study.



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