

Unprejudiced scientific analysis of tense labor relationships may reveal that the weight of different factors contributing to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the workers may be very different from that assigned to them by industrial lore. The fact that the activities of the organized labor movement are so largely focused on improving the workers' economic situation, together with the prestige money has in our culture, leads frequently to thinking of wage raising as the panacea of industrial unrest. Yet the studies of job satisfaction indicate decisively that wages play a smaller role than would be expected.¹²⁵

A group of 157 unemployed young men, American-born, unmarried, between the ages of 16 and 24, when questioned about the reasons why one job they held before was most appealing to them, gave the answers shown in Table 21.

The importance of factors contributing to employees' satisfaction that comes with the recognition of each employee as a *person* was demonstrated in the study of Hull and Kolstad.¹²⁶ They measured the general employee morale by a questionnaire containing 10 items, such as "To what extent are you made to feel that you are really a part of the organization?" or "Generally speaking, how does the Company compare as a place to work with other companies that you know about or have worked for?" The respondent checked one of the five graduated answers. The total maximum score was 100 points. The mean score for a sample of about 44,000 cases obtained by combining 141 separate groups of rank-and-file employees was 69.7.

TABLE 22

Average Scores of General Morale (Maximum Score = 100) in Reference to Satisfaction with Selected Specific Factors in the Job Situation¹²⁶

Specific factor	General morale score of		Difference
	Satisfied	Not satisfied	
1. A fair hearing and square deal on grievances	80.2	59.8	20.4
2. The prospect of a satisfactory future	80.4	61.6	18.8
3. Company's knowledge of the employee's qualifications and progress	78.9	60.7	18.2
4. Recognition of and credit for constructive suggestions offered	78.1	60.4	17.7
5. Friendly and helpful criticism of work or correction of errors	77.8	60.1	17.7
6. Pay increases when deserved	83.4	66.8	16.6
7. Recognition or praise for unusually good work	82.4	66.2	16.2
8. Selection of best-qualified employee for promotion when vacancies arise	84.7	68.7	16.0
9. Amount of work required not unreasonable	77.1	62.5	14.6
10. Pay at least as high as elsewhere for the same type of work	79.0	64.5	14.5
11. Freedom to seek help when difficult problems arise in work	79.8	65.5	14.3
12. Freedom from unjust reprimand	80.2	66.4	13.8
13. Satisfactory daily working hours	77.4	64.3	13.1
14. The company's vacation policy	80.8	68.7	12.1
15. Approval of the company's employee magazine	77.1	72.2	4.9

¹²⁵ R. L. Hull and A. Kolstad, in *Civilian Morale*. Reynal and Hitchcock, New York, 1942.

The relationship to general morale of attitudes on specific topics, such as satisfaction with handling of grievances, was studied by computing the average general morale score for those who were satisfied and for those who were dissatisfied with the particular aspect of personnel policy; the size of the difference indicates the relative importance of the specific factor to general morale. The results for a group of more than 10,000 department store employees located in various parts of the country are summarized in Table 22.

The study of Hull and Kolstad points out how large a part immediate supervision plays in determining employee morale. Furthermore, the satisfaction or

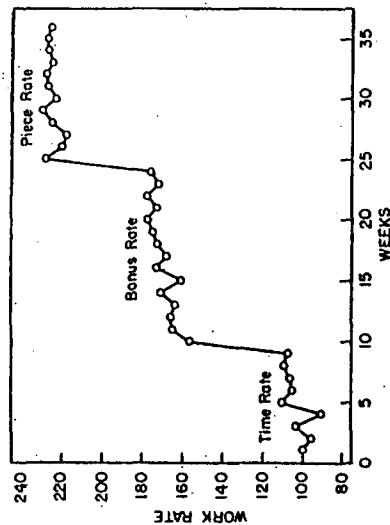


FIG. 18. Effect of different systems of payment on rate of improvement and average level of output for 10 young women employees.¹²⁶

dissatisfaction engendered through the contacts with foremen or department managers carries over to factors that are not controlled by the immediate supervisor. A company with a number of similar departments is cited as an example. In the first department 71 per cent felt satisfied with the handling of grievances, in the second department only 23 per cent did; the percentages of workers who thought the people immediately above them were fair in their treatment of the employees were 54 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively; the percentages of employees believing that they were not reprimanded unjustly were 61 per cent and 14 per cent; on the average, the two departments differed 26 points in their morale scores. At the same time, 61 per cent of the workers in the first department and only 37 per cent in the second department felt satisfied with the rate of pay, *although both departments had identical basic rates of pay and identical physical working conditions.*

"Under these circumstances it would seem impossible to create high morale in the second department by means of pay increases, shorter hours, longer vacations, better physical working conditions, or any of the other tangible considerations which are so often the points of issue at labor disputes. Yet it can readily be seen that those employees might express their low morale in terms of such demands."

¹²⁶ S. Wyatt, *Ind. Health Research Board (London)*, Rept. No. 89 (1934).