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An assessment of selected factors affecting the work environment: a case study of the preferences of the employees within the Bureau of Personnel in the City of Atlanta

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AN ASSESSMENT OF SELECTED FACTORS AFFECTING THE WORK ENVIRONMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE PREFERENCES OF THE EMPLOYEES WITHIN THE BUREAU OF PERSONNEL IN THE CITY OF ATLANTA

A DEGREE PAPER
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BY
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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JULY 1986
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I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional incentives such as money and reliance on work ethics are no longer effective in today's work force. While the majority of workers, especially those who are older, still respond to the traditional incentives, a growing number within the work force are not challenged by their work or may be completely turned off.¹

With the current problem of cutback and resource constraints, one of the potential problems is that opportunities in the public sector will appear limited to employees who are concerned about incentives, promotions, pay raises, and job security. Additionally, because of the divergence of lifestyles of the 1980's from the conformity of previous years, employees' values have changed tremendously. Therefore, human resource planners need to understand the transition and be prepared to institute viable incentive programs.

¹Daniel Yankelovich, "Yankelovich on Today's Workers: We Need New Motivational Tools," Industrial Week, vol. 202, no. 3 (August 6, 1979), 60-68.
Motivating people requires a knowledge of what is important to them and what their needs are. Organizations have a moral obligation to improve and maintain job satisfaction, since a substantial amount of the employees' life is spent at work. The issues of what factors lead to job satisfaction, increased productivity, and better employee morale have left employers and organizations scrambling for answers. Recently, there has been a concern with the satisfaction of workers because of social concern for the quality of work life. Organizations because of their pervasive impact on members of society, have an obligation to ensure the mental health of those who work for them. Work can be a cause of role stress and tension and alienation. Society is interested in the specific quality of worklife apart from any immediate interest in productivity or profits.

In recent years, there has been a growing effort by organizations, both private and public, to attempt to secure greater efficiency and loyalty from their employees to participate in the profits derived from their efforts. Such

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participation has been partially accomplished through profit sharing and other incentive programs. Furthermore, organizational theorists have spent considerable amount of time researching the nature, cause, and the correlates of a variety of work related attitudes.

A persistent belief is that if an individual is satisfied or his/her morale is high, then his/her performance will be higher than that of an individual who is dissatisfied or whose "morale" is low. In contrast to this belief, researchers have speculated that there is no inherent relationship between satisfaction and performance, and that as a matter of fact, one can produce just about any sort of relationship between self-reports of satisfaction and performance that one wishes. 4 A worker may dislike some aspects of his (her) job yet still think that it is acceptable overall because "as jobs go, this isn't bad." Similarly, workers may dislike the job despite many desirable characteristics. 5

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In an attempt to consolidate research efforts, management consultants, organizational researchers, industrial psychologists, public administrators and educators are cooperating with industries to check the decline in workers productivity in the United States. The questions about why people work and their attitudes toward various incentives have not received convergent research findings. The role of money as a reward in modern industry continues to be poorly understood.

Work is defined as a form of activity that has social approval and satisfies a real need of the individual to be active, to produce, to create, to gain respect, to acquire prestige and incidently to earn money. Motivating employees to be more productive and to produce at a high level of quality often requires that a variety of incentives must be used in varying proportions as best estimated by managerial personnel. But because of differences in need patterns and their ever-changing nature, the incentives that may be best for one group or an individual may not be effective for another at a particular time. An understanding of the wide range of incentives that are available will give the manager a basis for

determining the most appropriate approaches to creating a healthy and most productive work environment. The satisfaction that individuals receive from their employment is largely dependent upon the extent to which the job and everything associated with it meet their needs and wants. By discovering attitudes and opinions on matters related to various types of incentives at the job, management can take corrective action and hopefully improve employees' satisfaction.

The primary goal of an incentive pay system is to promote worker's productivity. If incentive pay is to motivate workers either to do a job more efficiently or to remain with the company, the employers must be certain that the incentive offered meets the needs and desires of the employee. Incentive pay plans have been found effective in increasing motivation, especially when they take into consideration the needs and wants of the individual. The hope for giving incentives is that production will rise and the employees will feel better about their jobs. Such assumptions have yielded favorable results. An incentive system will

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will have a greater chance of success if all employees within the organization are afforded the opportunity to participate.

It has been documented that American productivity may be suffering as a consequence of the failure to motivate people by rewarding them for their performance and as a result of not utilizing their ideas and thoughts toward improving organizational effectiveness.⁹ The purpose of this study therefore, is to ascertain the preferences of employees within the Bureau of Personnel in the City of Atlanta towards selected factors affecting their work environment.

II. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Agency and Unit Description

The City of Atlanta is one of the largest employers in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Employing over 8,000 workers, its organizational structure consists of ten (10) city departments with (37) thirty-seven bureaus and three adjunct agencies (See Appendix A).

The mayor, as Chief Executive of the City, has responsibility for all administrative functions. Policy-making and legislative functions are carried out by an eighteen (18) member City Council which is presided over by a city-wide elected president. Atlanta's rapid growth and diversity creates an ever increasing need for the City of Atlanta to attract, employ and retain a variety of qualified people.

The Bureau of Personnel and Human Resources within the Department of Administrative Services manages the central personnel administration for the City of Atlanta. The bureau establishes policies and procedures, regulating personnel matters for city government and is responsible for recruiting
and employing candidates for employment with the city.\textsuperscript{10}

Thus, the bureau serves (1) the public; (2) all city departments, bureaus and divisions; and (3) all city employees.

The bureau serves the public by:

(a) providing information concerning employment opportunities with the city of Atlanta; and

(b) establishing contacts with potential applicant pools.

The bureau serves all other city departments, bureaus and divisions by:

(a) referring applicants for jobs to position vacancies in accordance with the Civil Service rules and regulations;

(b) maintaining and establishing the work and salary history of each employee;

(c) verifying employment and other information concerning past or current employees in accordance with confidentiality rules;

(d) checking payrolls quarterly and reporting discrepancies to the Payroll Division and;

(e) answering all questions (for applicants, employees and departmental officials) concerning employment procedures and Civil Service rules and regulations.

\textsuperscript{10}City of Atlanta, "Employee Handbook on Policy and Procedure Manual" (Atlanta, Georgia: 1985), pp. 2-4.
procedures and Civil Service rules and regulations.

The bureau is comprised of eight divisions, employing a total of forty-five employees, including the director and seven (7) division heads. These eight (8) divisions are:

(1) Administration  (5) Certification
(2) Recruitment      (6) Worker's Compensation
(3) Classification   (7) Evaluation
(4) Records          (8) Employee Development and Training

The Administration Division is the nucleus of the bureau. Its primary function include: (a) coordinating the activities of all other divisions; (b) coordinating all Civil Service Board functions; (c) coordinating the Performance Evaluation Program; (d) preparing annual budget and reviewing all division expenditures for city government; and (e) regulating all matters pertaining to personnel.

The Recruitment Division is responsible for identifying and recruiting the best available candidates for employment with the City of Atlanta.

The Classification Division has the primary responsibility for: (a) categorizing all positions in city government into similar occupational classes; (b) establishing standards of education, experience, skills and abilities (job analysis); (c) analyzing training and experience necessary for job classes; and (d) recommending
the creation and classifications of jobs, and making salary adjustments for all job classes.

The Records Division has primary responsibility for: (a) verifying employment by telephone or mail; (b) filing, storing and retrieving employees' folders; and (c) compiling statistical data as requested by other divisions.

The Certification Division is charged with: (a) answering any correspondence regarding employment; (b) contacting and informing candidates of scheduled interviews and appointments; and (c) making equal employment opportunity (EEO) checks and informing departments of the need to take corrective action.

The Evaluation Division is responsible for setting qualification standards for each job class and establishing evaluation criteria.

The Employee Development and Training Division assesses the training needs of city employees and coordinates both in-house and outside training programs.

Internship Experiences

From June 17, 1985 to September 6, 1985, the writer served a graduate internship as a Personnel Assistant in the Recruitment Division of the Bureau of Personnel and Human Resources.

Internship duties and responsibilities included:
(a) Interviewing and screening prospective applicants;
(b) Developing a recruitment source file, brochures and other recruitment literature;
(c) Compiling and analyzing turnover statistics as an indicator of future staffing needs and requirements.

Statement of the Problem

The increasing demand for more time for recreational activities and the influx of working mothers into organizations have forced organizations to reassess the kinds of benefits that are available to their workers. Competition among organizations to offer various incentives such as child care facilities, health programs, training, career advancement opportunities and attractive economic incentives to retain their current and attract prospective workers has also intensified.

During conversations with some of the employees, it was revealed that these workers are concerned about the conditions of employment, and some of them appeared to be dissatisfied with these conditions. Since the lack of favorable working conditions or incentives contributes toward organizational problems such as low morale and productivity, job dissatisfaction, high turnover and
absenteeism, the writer decided to embark upon this study in order to ascertain the preferences of the employees of the bureau towards selected factors that affect their work environment. It is the opinion of the writer that the responses from the employees should provide management with enough information to institute programs and policies that the employees consider to be important.
III. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One of the most outstanding areas of study in organizational behavior is job attitudes, or how people feel about what they do when they work. This interest in work satisfaction and incentives continue to attract research attention among organizational researchers, industrial psychologists, and public administrators. Evidence has shown that effective responses to job conditions are the bases for several organizational development strategies.\(^\text{11}\)

There is diversity of opinions held by industrial, organizational researchers and human behavior theorists concerning the factors influencing job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity. Solutions to such diversity are usually unresolved because researchers from different schools of thought are unable to agree on what is desired by employees.\(^\text{12}\)

Modern organization is made up of individuals


\(^{12}\)Ibid.
with diverse educational and occupational backgrounds. Because of their different roles in organization, they have acquired certain patterns of needs and aspirations that should be recognized by management if it is to create the proper motivational climate.\textsuperscript{13}

Job attitudes have been developed historically to enable organizational managers to manipulate performance, and through job attitudes, motivation and performance to enhance the outcomes achieved by the organization.\textsuperscript{14}

The measurement of the interrelationship of need, job characteristics, and attitudes suggests that attitudes are a function of the presence or absence of positively valued job characteristics. The implication is that the higher the person's needs for a certain characteristic, the higher the correlation between the presence of that characteristic and motivation or job satisfaction.\textsuperscript{15}

Chester Barnard, in his book \textit{The Functions of the}


Executives, makes the case that people are motivated by different kinds of incentives. People accommodate themselves to organization differently. Some employees exhibit highly aggressive and competitive behavior and are motivated by the desire to acquire organizational power and status. Similarly, people in organizations exhibit different perceptions as to what constitute a reward according to their value system. Patricia Renwick and Edward E. Lawler, in their recent survey on work attitudes concluded that there is considerable job restlessness which could create problems for business and the economy, and that loyalties seemed to be directed inward, to families, rather than to organizations. They advised that organizations may find it critical to pay more attention to the needs of their employees. These authors found that more and greater psychological satisfactions are desired along with (1) more opportunities to learn and grow; (2) more chance to exercise


talents and skills; and (3) more possibility of accomplishing something worthwhile.\textsuperscript{19}

It has been suggested that a personality can be stunted when confronted with a constant environment lacking challenge, and that the desire for need fulfillment diminished with the actual fulfillment.\textsuperscript{20} This assumption is consistent with Maslow's view of needs arranged hierarchically. Maslow asserted that human motives emerge sequentially according to a hierarchy of five need levels: (1) psychological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) affiliation needs, (4) achievement and esteem needs, and (5) self-actualization. Maslow also argued that the satisfied need was not a motivator of behavior. According to Maslow, as one need becomes fulfilled, its strength diminishes while the strength of the next need up the hierarchy increases.\textsuperscript{21}

Herzberg, Mausner and Synderman redefined needs into two categories which they labelled as "hygienes" and "motivators." Additionally, these authors stipulated that


\textsuperscript{20}Ibid.

satisfaction and dissatisfaction were not just opposite ends of a single continuum. While the absence of hygienes could make employees unhappy, merely furnishing ever more hygienes, such as pay, pleasant working conditions, and vacation, could not provide additional motivation. For there to be additional motivation, the critical variable is the nature of the work itself.

Survey data from 1979, 1980, and 1981 related to the motivation and incentive systems in the Senior Executive Service were analyzed by Patricia Ingraham and Charles Barrileaux. The survey results indicate that managers consider both nonmonetary and monetary rewards to be significant motivators for good performance. However, it has been argued that wage incentive systems that relate wage


directly to output are especially effective in stimulating production if standards are properly developed and the system is well administered.\textsuperscript{25}

In order to motivate employee and increase their level of satisfaction, some organizations have implemented such measures as merit raise systems, employee assistance programs, and other programs designed to raise employee morale. Despite all these measures, the level of satisfaction among employees continues to decline.\textsuperscript{26} Because of continuing decline in level of job satisfaction, some organizations are now brainstorming on ways to enhance employees' personal growth and development, and to provide them with services which will enhance satisfaction.\textsuperscript{27}

Factors related to job satisfaction are many and their relationships vary among occupations. An understanding of job satisfaction has not advanced at a pace commensurate with


\textsuperscript{26}A. J. Swartz, "Job Satisfaction and Enrichment," \textit{American Journal of Hospital Pharmacy} (March 1980): 353.

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid.
research result. There is confusion over whether the determinants lie solely in job itself (the intrinsic view), whether it resides solely in the worker's mind (the subjective view), or whether satisfaction is the consequence of an interaction between the worker and his/her environment. Frederick Herzberg, in his article, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?", maintains that "when it comes to understanding the behavior of people in their jobs, more than a plan of words is involved." Herzberg identified two needs of the individual: one set of needs can be thought of as stemming from his/her animal nature—the built in drive to avoid pain from the environment, plus drives which become conditioned to the basic biological needs. The other set of needs relate to the unique human characteristics, the ability to achieve and, through achievement, to experience psychological growth. Other proponents of this view maintained that most people bring three kinds of needs to their organizational existence. A need to be rewarded for what they achieve, a need to be accepted as a unique person, and a

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need to be appreciated not only for the function performed but also as human being. In order for employees to experience psychological "success" as a result of good performance, intrinsically satisfying job should (a) allow the workers to feel personally responsible for his/her performance (autonomy), (b) provide meaningful outcomes, and (c) provide adequate knowledge of result (feedback).

It is hypothesized that overall satisfaction will vary directly with the extent to which those needs of an individual which can be satisfied in a job are actually satisfied; the stronger the need, the more closely will job satisfaction depend on its fulfillment.

The challenge confronting all managers and students of public administration is to define approaches that will allow workers to participate or have input in designing effective incentive programs that will tie their rewards to their performance.

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Research findings have shown that when this occurs people will be more productive and the society will be healthier. Also, managers can benefit from an understanding of human work motivation, because such knowledge may help them contribute to the productivity of the work forces in their respective organizations, and indirectly, to the aggregate level of economic prosperity of the nation.\textsuperscript{33}

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study is basically a descriptive analysis of the employee's perception of selected factors that affect the work environment. Both primary and secondary data collection techniques were utilized to gather information for the study.

Primary Data

Primary data for this study were obtained by hand delivering questionnaires (see Appendix B) to the employees in the bureau. Of the forty questionnaires that were delivered, three were not returned and five were voided due to incomplete information. Of the thirty-two respondents, twenty-three were females and nine were males. The respondents were instructed to check their preferences ranging from very important to very unimportant against selected factors that affect their work environment.

Secondary Data

Secondary data for this study came from mainly books and journals.
V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A total of forty questionnaires was sent to employees, three were not returned. However, the writer voided five others because of incomplete information. Of the thirty-two responses utilized for the study, there were twenty-three women and nine men.

Of the nine men, those who attended and/or completed graduate or professional school are six, four year college = two, and high school = one. Of the nine men, six are married, two are single and one is divorced. Only one of the men has worked in the bureau for more than twelve years; the rest fall within these categories (a) less than 6 months = one, (b) less than 1 year = one, (c) between 1-3 years = two, (d) between 3-6 years = two and (e) between 9-12 = one.34

Of the 23 female respondents, twelve are married, nine are single and two are divorced. Those who attended and/or completed (a) high school are seven; (b) two year college = four, (c) four year college = five, (d) graduate/professional school = seven. Five of the female respondents have worked

34Data was compiled from responses to the questionnaire.
in the bureau for more than 12 years. The rest fall within the following categories: (a) less than 6 months = one, (b) less than 1 year = one, (c) between 1-3 years = seven, (d) between 3-6 years = 6 and between 9-12 years = 3.  

Salary  

Sixteen of the female respondents ranked salary as very important; while seven considered it important. (See Table 1). On the other hand, three male respondents ranked salary as very important; while six ranked it as important. (See Table 2)  

Attractive salary or pay is often considered as one of the most important factors in enticing qualified personnel to any organization. However, the notion of salary or pay serving as a motivator remains very controversial. According to Frederick Herzberg, the hygiene factors that include supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, company policies, and administrative practices, benefits and job security contribute to job dissatisfaction.  

35 Data was compiled from responses to the questionnaire.  

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Source: Data compiled from responses to the questionnaire.
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Source: Data compiled from responses to the questionnaire.
research conducted by Herzberg, he concluded that salary or pay is not a motivator. This conclusion is very controversial. As such, there is no consensus among researchers regarding the role of salary or pay in motivating the worker.

On the other hand, Edward Lawler, III suggests that many researchers remain convinced that pay could serve as a positive incentive, while others have suggested that pay should be used to recognize good work performance but not as an incentive device.37

Whether or not salary or pay is a motivator was not addressed in this study, however, it is quite evident from the responses that all the workers regard salary as very important or important.

Job Security

Nineteen of the female respondents ranked job security as very important, while three considered it important and one ranked it neither important nor unimportant. Five males ranked job security as very important; two ranked it important, and two considered it neither important nor unimportant. It is rather interesting that all the three respondents (one female, and two males) who ranked job

security as neither important nor unimportant hold graduate degrees and are under 30 years old. It is reasonable to assume that since these individuals are relatively young and are aware of their marketable skills, they are convinced that they can obtain other jobs elsewhere. On the other hand, all the high school graduates both male and female ranked job security as very important. Perhaps, due to the absence of marketable skills the high school graduates value job security.

Democratic Supervision

Four of the male respondents ranked democratic supervision as very important; while four others ranked it as neither important nor unimportant, while one ranked it as unimportant. On the other hand, eleven female respondents ranked it as very important; nine viewed it as important and three considered it as unimportant. The fact that 24 out of the 32 respondents ranked democratic supervision as either very important or important seems to suggest that majority of the workers are favorably predisposed to participative type of management, which appears to be the clarion call of today's workers. The responses of the majority seemingly indicate a rejection of the authoritarian, task oriented management style of the classical school. According to Larry Greiner, the democratic or participative style tends to develop more
commitment of the employees to action "when they have a voice in the decisions that affect them."³⁸

Authoritarian Supervision

Three males ranked authoritarian supervision as neither important nor unimportant; while four ranked it as unimportant and two ranked it as very unimportant. On the other hand, two females ranked it as very important, four ranked it as important, thirteen considered it neither important nor unimportant, two ranked it as unimportant, and the remaining two viewed it as very unimportant. (See Table 1) The responses to this question on the basis of sex are rather interesting. The male respondents totally repudiated authoritarian supervision while at least six female respondents considered it either very important or important. However, the majority of the respondents, that is, twenty-four out of total of thirty-two did not embrace authoritarian supervision. It is reasonable to assume that contemporary employees feel more comfortable with the human-oriented management style propounded by the behavioral theorists, and they seem to reject the impersonal and informal style of supervision that dominated the classical viewpoint.

Recognition

Thirteen female respondents ranked recognition as very important, eight viewed it as important and two regarded it as neither important nor unimportant. On the other hand, four male respondents ranked it as very important; two ranked it as important, two viewed it as neither important nor unimportant and one considered it unimportant. However, a majority of the employees, that is twenty-seven considered recognition as either very important or important. These responses seem to reaffirm the assertion by the behavioral theorists that social rewards, including recognition are important to workers.

Chance for a Raise

Eighteen of the female respondents indicated that a chance for a raise is very important; while four ranked it as important and one ranked it as neither important nor unimportant. Four of the male respondents ranked a chance for a raise as very important; another four male respondents indicated that it is important and one ranked it as neither important nor unimportant. While the debate still continues unabated among organizational theorists as to the role of salary or pay in motivating workers, these responses clearly indicate that economic rewards, that is, salary or pay and the opportunity to obtain such a reward is still important to employees.
According to Donald E. Klinger, "Compensation is a critical personnel activity because it symbolizes the relationship between employee contributions and organizational rewards."\(^{39}\)

That being the case, workers usually become disgruntled and often dissatisfied if their contributions to the organization are not rewarded or if the reward system is haphazard, arbitrary and not informed by any objective criteria. Unfair reward systems are one of the major sources of organizational discontent.

**Advancement**

Seventeen female respondents ranked advancement as very important; while four indicated it is important, one viewed it as neither important nor unimportant and one unimportant. On the other hand, five male respondents viewed it as very important and four indicated it is important.

An overwhelming majority, that is, thirty out of the thirty-two respondents indicated that they viewed advancement within the organization as either important or very important. It is abundantly clear from these responses that majority of the workers will not be satisfied with dead-end jobs or jobs that

that offer no opportunity for upward mobility. Charles Coleman asserted that: "when a person also sees himself in a job that can lead to other job if performance is satisfactory, then the job fit together in such a way that work itself may become a source of motivation."

Training Opportunities

Fifteen female respondents ranked training opportunities as very important; while six viewed it as important, and one considered it neither important nor unimportant, and one ranked it as unimportant. However, five male respondents ranked it as very important, and four considered it important. In all, thirty of the respondents ranked training opportunities as either very important or important. One can imply from the responses that the employees view training as providing the necessary preconditions for upward mobility. Donald Klinger defines training as:

a systematic and planned efforts to increase employees' job related skills. Employees view it as a reward for high performance, a break from routine jobs, or a means of learning skills that will hasten a move to a more desirable position.

Managers view it as a means of improving work unit productivity by increasing output or reducing costs. Of late, most organizations have come to the realization that investment in human resources is their greatest and most valuable asset. According to Willard Wirtz and Harold Goldstein, "Over five million persons complete formal training programs each year."

Company Sponsored Child Care Program

Five of the female respondents ranked company sponsored child care program as very important; three viewed it as important, ten ranked it as neither important nor unimportant and five ranked it as unimportant. Two of the male respondents ranked it as important; one ranked it as neither important nor unimportant; two viewed it as unimportant, and four ranked it as very unimportant. Of the thirty-two respondents, ten females and four males have children under six years old.

However, the responses from these workers appear to be contrary to a trend that is emerging especially in the

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private sector lately. With the increasing number of women flooding the job market, some private sector organizations have started building their own day care centers for the children of their employees. Others have reserved specific number of places in day cares, while others provide vouchers to employees to pay for child care services. Others provide subsidies to employees to pay for child care services.

Company Sponsored Health (Fitness) Program

Four female respondents ranked company sponsored health (fitness) program as very important. One viewed it as important and sixteen ranked it as neither important nor unimportant; one considered it unimportant and another one ranked it as very unimportant.

One male respondent ranked health program as very important; three ranked it as important, and two viewed it as neither important nor unimportant. Another two considered it unimportant, and one ranked it as very unimportant. In all, only nine of the respondents ranked the health program as either very important or important.

The responses from these workers also appear to run counter to the national trend. With organizations taking a wholistic approach towards the welfare of their employees, it would have appeared that more workers would have ranked a health program as either important or very important.
Moreover, one would have expected the male respondents to be more enthusiastic about such a program since the mortality rate of men is much higher than women in this society.

**Salary Raises Based on Merit**

Twelve female respondents ranked salary/raises based on merit as very important, seven ranked it important and four viewed it as neither important nor unimportant. On the other hand, five male respondents ranked it very important, three viewed it as important, and one considered it neither important nor unimportant. In all, a majority of the respondents, twenty-seven, viewed merit raises as either important or very important.

One of the respondents indicated that most workers are not opposed to merit raises to reward superior performance. However, if there are no objective criteria for determining merit, it degenerates into patronage and cronyism. In the opinion of this writer, the absence of standard criteria for deciding merit raises creates more problems within an organization and contributes to dissatisfaction and low morale.

**Salary Raises Based on Longevity**

Seven female respondents ranked salary/raises based on longevity as very important. Eight ranked it as important; while six viewed it as neither important nor unimportant, and
two considered it unimportant. Interestingly, only one male respondent ranked it as important; six viewed it as neither important or unimportant. One considered it unimportant and another male respondent viewed it as very unimportant.

On the other hand, one of the female respondents who ranked salary raises based on longevity as unimportant asserted that raises based on longevity is one of the main problems facing the city's employees. She maintained that the employees realize that they will receive the annual one step salary increase whether they perform or not. She concluded that such a system nourishes an atmosphere of low job performance.

In the words of Robert Lee, "Longevity increases are defended as rewarding employees who have been "faithful" to the jurisdiction, but they have been criticized for rewarding laziness and retaining "dead wood." 43 Lee further argues that:

> From a purely rational standpoint, a jurisdiction may not need to provide longevity increases to retain long term employees; the employee who is at the top step in a grade and has been with the jurisdiction for more than fifteen years is unlikely to resign. 44


44 Ibid.
The writer disagrees with Lee's argument. Implied in Lee's argument is that workers who have stayed longer with an organization should be ignored and taken for granted. On the contrary, this writer is of the opinion that such workers should be valued because their presence and work efforts contributed in no small way to whatever success the organization might have attained. The argument that senior workers may become "dead wood" is only valid based on the extent which the organization lacks training programs to hone the skills of these individuals as well as to expose them to new trends and knowledge in their areas of expertise.

On the other hand, this writer is of the opinion that if longevity becomes the only basis for promotion and raises, then such a situation is loaded with potentials for employee discontent. As such, longevity step raises should be equally balanced with merit raises to reward those who perform superbly.

**Flextime**

Ten female respondents ranked flextime as very important; six viewed it as important and seven regarded it as neither important nor unimportant. On the other hand, only one male respondent ranked it as very important, while four ranked it as important. Three male respondents viewed it as neither important nor unimportant, and one ranked it as unimportant.
While twenty-one out of the thirty-two respondents ranked flextime as either very important or important, it appears that flextime and other conditions of work such as job sharing will remain permanent fixtures of the work environment for a while. This is especially so because of the fact that, in order to enjoy and maintain a decent quality of life, both husband and wife must be working mates. However, the influx of working mothers with younger children into the work force, of necessity, demands a re-arrangement of the traditional 9-5 working hours. Flextime is one of the options that provide such a re-arrangement.

While there are both proponents and opponents of flextime, flextime seems to be very ideal for a working mother. It enables a working mother to go to work and see her children off to school, or alternatively she may choose to go to work early in order to be home earlier in the afternoon, when her children are out of school. In addition, flextime can provide the opportunity for friends or spouses to arrange their schedules in order to share transportation without arriving at work either too early or too late. In this way, an individual's work can better fit his or her lifestyle. According to Heinz Allenspach, "Flextime provides
opportunity for persons to shop, do errands, or meet appointments within a normal workday.\textsuperscript{45}

VI. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to ascertain the preferences of the employees within the Bureau of Personnel in the City of Atlanta regarding selected factors that affect their work environment. Rather than finding out which factors within the work environment that the employees are dissatisfied with, the writer elected to find out employees' preferences. This was done in order that the study may not be easily dismissed by management as the usual employee gripes.

In pursuing the study along this line, the writer is of the opinion that management will be much more receptive to the findings. In addition, it will also provide the basis for the management to institute programs and policies that will take advantage of those factors that the employees considered either very important or important.

The study revealed that traditional factors such as salary, job security, chance for a raise, advancement training opportunities and salary based on merit are still very important to these employees. On the other hand, the authoritarian leadership style that dominated classical managerial thought was considered as neither important nor
unimportant by a majority of the workers.

Interestingly, the majority of the male respondents did not look favorably on salary/raises based on longevity. On the other hand, fifteen of the twenty-three female respondents regarded such raises as either very important or important.

Surprisingly, recent employee benefits such as company's sponsored child care and health (fitness) programs that seem to dominate the contemporary work environment were not perceived to be that important to these workers.

Twenty-one respondents indicated that flextime is either very important or important. Again, with the large influx of working mothers into the work environment the establishment of such a program will allow especially working mothers as well as other employees who need to carefully balance their working hours with other personal commitments to do so.
Source: Classification Division, City of Atlanta, March 1985.
# DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

Please complete the following and check the items as they apply to you:

1. **SEX:**
   - Male
   - Female

2. **MARITAL STATUS**
   - Single
   - Married
   - Divorced

3. **AGE**
   - Under 20 years
   - 20 - 29
   - 30 - 40
   - 40 - 50
   - 60 and above

4. **Education**
   - 8th - 11th Grade
   - High School
   - Two years College Graduate
   - Four year College Graduate
   - Graduate School
   - Professional School

5. **MONTHLY SALARY**
   - $350 - $500
   - $500 - $800
   - $1200 - $1500
   - $1500 - $1800
   - $1800 - $2000
   - $2000 and above

6. **RACE**
   - White
   - Black

7. **Years of Employment with the Bureau of Personnel**
   - Less than 6 month
   - Less than 1 year
   - 1 - 3 yrs.
   - 3 - 6 yrs.
   - 9 - 12 yrs.
   - 12 years and above

8. **Your Job Title**

9. **Do you have children under age 6**
   - Yes
   - No
**PILOT OPINIONNAIRE**

**INSTRUCTION:** Different people want different things from their work. Please indicate how important each of the following rewards is to you. There are no right or wrong answers, therefore, make sure you report your preference as accurately as possible.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY


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