Workforce Perceptions:
Employer Assessment of the Workforce in a Mississippi Delta County

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Purpose of the Study

- Implications of globalization and the workforce
- Traditional factors of industry retention and recruitment
- Create strategies

Mississippi Delta County

- Population: 60,345
- Demographics: 35% white, 65% black
- Per-capita income: 13,430
- Median Household income: 25,757
- 35% of the population without a high school diploma.

Source: United States Census (2000)

Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1: There is a difference in perceptions of the workforce between those companies that are introducing new technology and those companies that are not introducing new technology. The group introducing new technology will have a lower average workforce rating perception.

- Hypothesis 2: There is a difference in perceptions of the workforce based on the number of years the company has been in the region. The longer a company has been established in the community, the higher the average workforce rating perception.

- Hypothesis 3: There is a difference in perceptions of the workforce based on whether the company is a manufacturer or service provider. Manufacturers are expected to have lower average perceptions of the workforce than service providers.

Methods

- Design
- Interviewers
- Background information
- On-site interviews
- Questionnaire

Independent Variables

- Technology Introduction
- Years in the Community
- Type of Company

Dependent Variables

- Quality of the Workforce
- Stability of the Workforce
- Availability of the Workforce
- Productivity of the Workforce

Analysis

- Cross-Tabulations
- Mean/mean rank comparisons

Results

Perceptions of Availability of Workers by Introduction of New Technology

Perception of Availability of Workers	New Technology		Total
	No	Yes	
Poor	13.0	10.7	11.9
Fair	17.4	25.0	21.6
Average	21.7	14.3	17.6
Good	26.1	21.4	23.5
Excellent	21.7	28.6	25.5
Total	100.0 (n=23)	100.0 (n=28)	100.0 (n=51) X^2=1.14, p≤0.89
Mean	3.3	3.3	3.3
Mean Rank	23.2	24.0	312.5
MWU			p ≤ 0.90

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Quality of Workers by Introduction of New Technology

Perception of Quality of Workers	New Technology		Total
	No	Yes	
Poor	4.5	17.9	12.0
Fair	9.1	35.7	24.0
Average	68.2	28.6	46.0
Good	18.2	14.3	16.0
Excellent	0.0	3.6	2.0
Total	100.0 (n=22)	100.0 (n=28)	100.0 (n=50) X^2=16.6, p≤0.03
Mean	3.0	2.5	2.8
Mean Rank	30.0	22.0	208.5
MWU			p≤0.04

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Stability of Workers by Introduction of New Technology

Perception of Stability of Workers	New Technology		Total
	No	Yes	
Poor	.0	7.1	3.9
Fair	13.0	17.9	15.7
Average	39.1	32.1	35.3
Good	39.1	39.3	39.2
Excellent	8.7	3.6	5.9
Total	100.0 (n=23)	100.0 (n=28)	100.0 (n=51) X^2=2.6 p≤.63
Mean	3.43	3.14	3.29
Mean Rank	27.9	24.5	278.5
MWU			p≤.38

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Productivity of Workers by Introduction of New Technology

Perception of Productivity of Workers	New Technology		Total
	No	Yes	
Poor	0.0	4.0	2.2
Fair	9.5	0.0	4.3
Average	42.9	36.0	39.1
Good	23.8	44.0	34.8
Excellent	23.8	16.0	19.6
Total	100.0 (n=21)	100.0 (n=25)	100.0 (n=46) X^2=5.05 p≤.28
Mean	3.62	3.68	3.65
Mean Rank	22.6	24.2	244.0
MWU			p≤.67

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Availability of Workers by Years in the Community

Perception of Availability of Workers	Years Company in the Community		Total
	25 years or less	26 or more years	
Poor	0.0	18.2	11.8
Fair	16.7	24.2	21.6
Average	22.2	15.2	17.6
Good	38.9	15.2	23.5
Excellent	22.2	27.3	25.5
Total	100.0 (n=18)	100.0 (n=33)	100.0 (n=51) X^2=6.82, p≤0.15
Mean	3.67	3.09	3.38
Mean Rank	29.5	24.0	233.5
MWU			p≤0.20

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Quality of Workers by Years in the Community

Perception of Quality of Workers	Years Company in the Community		Total
	25 years or less	26 or more years	
Poor	22.2	6.3	12.0
Fair	16.7	28.1	24.0
Average	38.9	50.0	46.0
Good	22.2	12.5	16.0
Excellent	0.0	3.1	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(n=18)	(n=32)	(n=50)
			X^2=4.63, p≤0.33
Mean	2.61	2.78	2.70
Mean Rank	24.6	26.0	295.5
MWU			p≤0.98

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Stability of Workers by Years in the Community

Perception of Stability of Workers	Years Company in the Community		Total
	25 years or less	26 or more years	
Poor	0.0	5.1	3.9
Fair	11.1	18.2	15.7
Average	50.0	27.3	35.3
Good	33.3	42.4	39.2
Excellent	5.6	6.1	5.9
Total	100.0 (n=18)	100.0 (n=33)	100.0 (n=51) X^2=3.41, p≤0.49
Mean	3.33	3.24	3.63
Mean Rank	26.0	26.0	272.5
MWU			p≤0.74

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Productivity of Workers by Years in the Community

Perception of Productivity of Workers	Years Company in the Community		Total
	25 years or less	26 or more years	
Poor	6.3	0.0	2.2
Fair	0.0	6.7	4.3
Average	43.8	36.7	39.1
Good	31.3	36.7	34.8
Excellent	18.8	20.0	19.6
Total	100.0 (n=16)	100.0 (n=30)	100.0 (n=46) X^2=3.17, p≤0.53
Mean	3.56	3.70	3.29
Mean Rank	22.6	24.0	226.0
MWU			p≤0.73

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Worker Availability by Type of Company

Perception of Availability of Workers	Type of Company		Total
	Manufacturer	Service Provider	
Poor	17.2	0.0	10.9
Fair	20.7	29.4	23.9
Average	10.3	23.5	15.2
Good	20.7	23.5	21.7
Excellent	31.1	23.5	28.3
Total	100.0 (n=29)	100.0 (n=17)	(n=46) X^2=4.75, p≤0.31
Mean	3.28	3.41	3.35
Mean Rank	23.2	24.1	237.0
MWU			p≤0.82

Results Cont…

Table 10: Perceptions of Worker Quality by Type of Company

Perception of Quality of Workers	Type of Company		Total
	Manufacturer	Service Provider	
Poor	7.1	17.6	11.1
Fair	21.4	29.4	24.4
Average	50.0	35.3	44.4
Good	21.4	11.8	17.8
Excellent	0.0	5.9	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(n=28)	(n=17)	(n=45)
			X^2=4.04, p≤0.40
Mean	2.86	2.59	2.73
Mean Rank	24.5	20.5	196.0
MWU			p≤0.30

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Worker Stability by Type of Company

Perception of Stability of Workers	Type of Company		Total
	Manufacturer	Service Provider	
Poor	3.4	0.0	2.2
Fair	17.2	11.8	15.2
Average	27.6	47.1	34.8
Good	44.8	35.3	41.3
Excellent	6.9	5.9	6.5
Total	100.0 (n=29)	100.0 (n=17)	100.0 (n=46) X^2=2.22, p≤0.70
Mean	3.34	3.35	3.35
Mean Rank	23.8	23.0	238.0
MWU			p≤0.84

Results Cont…

Perceptions of Worker Productivity by Type of Company

Perception of Productivity of Workers	Type of Company		Total
	Manufacturer	Service Provider	
Poor	3.8	0.0	2.4
Fair	3.8	0.0	2.4
Average	34.6	46.7	39.0
Good	34.6	40.0	36.6
Excellent	23.1	13.3	19.5
Total	100.0 (n=26)	100.0 (n=15)	100.0 (n=41) X^2=2.05, p≤0.73
Mean	3.69	3.67	3.68
Mean Rank	21.4	20.3	184.5
MWU			p≤0.78

Summary of Findings

Summary of Workforce Perceptions

Perceptions of Workforce	New Technology	Years in Community	Type of Company
	No/Yes	25 or less/26 or more	Manufacturing/Service
Availability	No ~ Yes	New > Old	Man. < Serv.
Quality	No > Yes*	New < Old	Man. > Serv.
Stability	No > Yes	New > Old	Man ~ Serv.
Productivity	No < Yes	New < Old	Man > Serv.

Significance of the Study

- Understand influence that globalization has had on company dynamics
- Identify companies that may be at risk or expanding
- Influence policy

Limitations of the Study

- Interviewers used
- Total reliance on employers perceptions