



## JOB SATISFACTION AND PROFESSIONALISM OF SELECTED LICENSED CUSTOMS BROKERS IN PARAÑAQUE CITY

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**Abstract:** The increasing trade volumes in the Philippines have made the Customs Brokers' work a very demanding one. Amidst this are the controversies of corruption in the Bureau of Customs, the main government agency tasked to facilitate trade, which affected the public perception to the Customs Brokers' profession. Thus, in order to shed light and provide concrete statistical evidence, the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the selected Licensed Customs Brokers in Parañaque City was determined in this study. The level of job satisfaction was assessed in terms of: pay; promotion; supervision; fringe benefits; contingent rewards; operating procedures; co-worker; nature of work; and communication. The level of professionalism perception of the Licensed Customs Brokers clients were also sought and compared to the perception of the Licensed Customs Brokers themselves to find out if there was a significant difference. The Licensed Customs Brokers and their respective clients were grouped according to their respective profile and subsequently, their level of professionalism perception was compared in order to see if there was a significant difference. Lastly, the significant relationship between level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the Licensed Customs Brokers was investigated.

Two (2) sets of standardized questionnaires were used in gathering the necessary data and the following statistical tools were used in the treatment of the obtained data: Percentage; Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); Independent sample t-test; Weighted Mean and Pearson r correlation. It was found that in terms of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, co-workers, nature of work and communication the selected Licensed Customs Brokers were satisfied and they were dissatisfied with the operating procedures. The level of professionalism perception of the Licensed Customs Brokers and their respective clients were the same which was said to be high. There was no significant difference in the level of professionalism perception of the Licensed Customs Brokers when they were grouped according to position, monthly salary, and ports of operation; however, there was a significant difference when they were grouped according to their years of experience. With regards to the clients, when they were grouped according to their sector and place of transaction, there was no significant difference in their level of professionalism perception; however, when they were grouped according to their nature of transaction with the Bureau of Customs and years in transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker, there was a significant difference. Lastly, it was found out that there was no significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction in terms of the nine (9) facets and the level of professionalism of the selected Licensed Customs Brokers in Parañaque City.

Keywords: job satisfaction; professionalism; customs brokers



## 1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

The dynamics of trade facilitation continues to evolve as countries around the world recognize the value of cooperation and closer integration of national economies through the liberalization of trade. Various agreements have been signed establishing multilateral, regional and bilateral trading arrangements (e.g. WTO, AFTA, AANZFTA, and PJEPA). These have resulted to an increase in the volume of trade around the world. According to the World Trade Organization (n.d.), an exceptional growth in world trade has been achieved with merchandise exports growing annually by 6%.

Such an increase is seen as a great opportunity for the professionals involve in trade facilitation. However, such arrangements have made border formalities and control a much more complex environment. On the other hand, business sectors engaged in international trading have placed a greater value in the short transit time of goods necessary in their operations. A short transit time is considered a competitive advantage.

Thus, transportation, processing and releasing of goods within the shortest possible time while complying with the strict and various requirements of border authorities is a must. This makes trade facilitation a challenging and a demanding work. Greater emphases have been put on the effectiveness and efficiency of those at the forefront of trade facilitation.

Such circumstances have inspired the researchers to inquire on how satisfied a professional in trade facilitation is of his/her job. Arnold, Cooper and Robertson have stated two reasons that justify the importance of the job satisfaction concept. First, the general mental well-being of a person can be indicated through his/her job satisfaction. Second, happiness at work and being motivated are generally assumed in job satisfaction (as cited in Berghe, 2011, p. 6).

The researchers also believe that the level of job satisfaction of the professional affects his/her professionalism at work. Professionalism (n.d.) is the key to quality and efficiency. It is more than mere compliance to rules and regulations in the conduct of trade facilitation. Eric Lippert, a software expert, once wrote (as cited in Cross, 2009, para. 6):

*Professionalism is not about adherence to the policies of a bureaucracy. Professionalism is about having the integrity, honesty, and sincere*

*regard for the personhood of the customer, in the context of always doing what is best for the business. Those two things do not need to be in conflict.*

Indeed, professionalism is a must in work and it entails adherence to the ethical standards governing such profession. Moreover, the primary concern of a professional is public service. Hence, it is interesting to know the perception of the people they serve with regards to their professionalism.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

Job satisfaction assessment became common in the 1930's as interest in employee attitudes increased (Latham & Budworth, 2007). It can be said that job satisfaction is one of the most researched concept in the field of industrial/organizational psychology, and surprisingly, it is gaining much attention in economics. But still it remains a complex social attitude due to the following reasons: varying definitions (Judge, Heller and Klinger, 2008); various measuring instruments (Vasiliki and Efthymios, 2013). Hence, there is diversity in the results of job satisfaction studies.

One of the most-used definitions of job satisfaction is that of Locke who described it as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (as cited in Zarate, 2012, p. 67). From that definition, various authors have concluded that job satisfaction is dependent on the attitude of the individual towards the various dimensions of his/her work and such attitude has cognitive (evaluative) and affective (emotional) components.

Building on the conceptualization that job satisfaction is composed of various facets, Spector (2008) have devised a methodological tool in measuring job satisfaction. It is called as "Job Satisfaction Survey" (JSS), a 36-item scale that includes nine factors: pay; promotion; supervision; benefits; contingent rewards; operating procedures; co-workers; nature of work; and communication. Such instrument is a common tool in various studies. Given the attitudinal character of job satisfaction, it has been correlated in an array of workplace behaviours, such as (Judge, Heller and Klinger, 2008): attendance at work; turnover decision; decisions to retire; psychological withdrawal behaviours; prosocial and organizational citizenship; and job performance. It has also been applied to various works and professions, mostly those in the education sector.

In this study, it was applied to the point of interest of the researchers, which is the customs

brokers' profession and will be correlated to their professionalism. When it comes to international shipments, firms hire the services of an expert in trade facilitation- the customs broker. Grant, Lambert, Stock and Ellram (2006) stated two critical functions that a customs broker performs: facilitating product movement through customs; and handling the necessary documentation that must accompany international shipments.

It is long been considered that customs brokers' profession is a lucrative career. However, in the Philippine context, such perception is tainted with negativity because in the eye of the public anyone who is associated or transacting with the Bureau of Customs has in some way or another committed corruption and elicited money from it. The Bureau of Customs is tagged as the most corrupt government agency. A news article (Almonte, 2013, para. 2 & 3) reported the following:

*Customs Brokers admit they have been hit by recent reports of colleagues being linked to smuggling, the latest of which was about one of their own being charged along with Phoenix Petroleum for alleged oil smuggling. But the most controversial case was that of about 1,700 containers of imported goods vanishing in thin air while being trucked to Batangas City, two hours south of the Philippine capital Manila, in 2011.*

As a profession, customs brokers follow a code of ethics. But given that the working environment of customs brokers is plagued with allegations of corruptions and other illegal activities, it can have an adverse effect on the commitment of the customs brokers to adhere to the code of ethics. The core values of professionalism such as competence, respect, integrity, justice, and fairness are imbued in the code of ethics. These values are the abstract concepts that were articulated in the said code and that every member of the profession must honour. Adherence or non-adherence to it will affect their level of professionalism.

As this research was studied further, a better understanding and statistical evidence has been gained about the licensed customs brokers' attitude on the various dimensions of their work and their professionalism-according to their perception and their clients. Also if the level job satisfaction of the licensed customs brokers affect their level of professionalism.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study have sought to determine the level of job satisfaction of selected licensed customs brokers and their level of professionalism as

perceived by themselves and their respective clients in Parañaque City. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the two groups of respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1. Licensed Customs Broker
    - 1.1.1. Position
    - 1.1.2. Monthly salary
    - 1.1.3. Years of experience
    - 1.1.4. Ports of operation
  - 1.2. Clients
    - 1.2.1. Sector
    - 1.2.2. Nature of transaction in Bureau of Customs
    - 1.2.3. Years transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker
    - 1.2.4. Place of transaction
2. What is the level of job satisfaction of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of:
  - 2.1. Pay
  - 2.2. Promotion
  - 2.3. Supervision
  - 2.4. Fringe benefits
  - 2.5. Contingent rewards
  - 2.6. Operating procedures
  - 2.7. Co-workers
  - 2.8. Nature of work
  - 2.9. Communication
3. What level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers is as perceived by themselves and by their respective clients?
4. Is there a significant difference on the perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and clients regarding the level of professionalism of Licensed Customs Brokers when grouped according to their respective profiles?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers?

### 1.4 Hypothesis

Ho1. There is no significant difference between perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and clients regarding the level of professionalism when respondents are grouped according to their respective profiles.

Ho2. There is no significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers.

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

This study endeavoured to assess the job satisfaction and level of professionalism of selected licensed customs brokers in Parañaque City. The results of this study will benefit the following:

**Licensed Customs Brokers.** It will provide them a clear, general outlook of their job satisfaction and their perceived adherence to the code of ethics. This will serve as a guide in addressing issues in their working life, in particular, and in their profession, in general.

**Clients.** This will enable them to understand better the customs brokers' profession and their working conditions.

**Bureau of Customs.** Since customs brokers are considered quasi-officials of the Bureau of Customs, it will provide them information that can be used in shaping their reform legislations affecting customs brokers' profession.

**BSCA Students.** It will provide an insight into the kind of working life that their chosen career has to offer. This will enable them to make preparations and adjustments in addressing particular aspects of customs administration work field that they feel is of great importance to them.

**Professors/Instructors of BSCA.** Being considered as the "potter" of the future customs brokers, will be encouraged to provide dynamic approaches in developing proactive students that is up to the challenges of their future working life.

**Future Researchers.** It will provide additional information and new insights on such interesting topics as job satisfaction and professionalism in which there is a limited local literature and studies.

### 1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the following theories:

**Job Satisfaction.** In Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory, there are two sets of needs of people that are affected by the work environment: the need related to the avoidance of pain; and the need related to the desire for psychological growth (as cited in Quick and Nelson, 2009, p. 161). Components of work that affects the need to avoid pain were tagged as hygiene factors while those that affects the desire for psychological growth were called as motivation factors. Hygiene factors pertain to job context or the factors that are extrinsic to the job. These factors are also called dissatisfiers because their absence will produce dissatisfaction but their presence will generally motivate individuals in an organization. Examples of these are: company policy and administration; supervision; interpersonal relations; working conditions; salary; status; security;

relations; working conditions; salary; status; security.

On the other hand, motivational factors pertain to job content or the factors that are intrinsic to the job. These factors are also called satisfiers because their presence produces satisfaction but their absence will produce dissatisfaction. Examples of these are achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. In some studies, it was shown that salary is also a motivational factor (Quick and Nelson, 2009).

According to Statt, the theory of Herzberg is one of the most specific and complete theories in understanding job satisfaction (as cited in Vasiliki and Efthymios, 2013, p. 2). Hence, in this study, such theory was used in understanding the dimensions of job satisfaction of the selected licensed customs brokers. The variables in which the job satisfaction of the said individuals was measured contain the motivation factors (i.e. promotion, contingent rewards, and nature of work) and the hygiene factors (i.e. pay, supervision, fringe benefits, operating procedure, and co-worker).

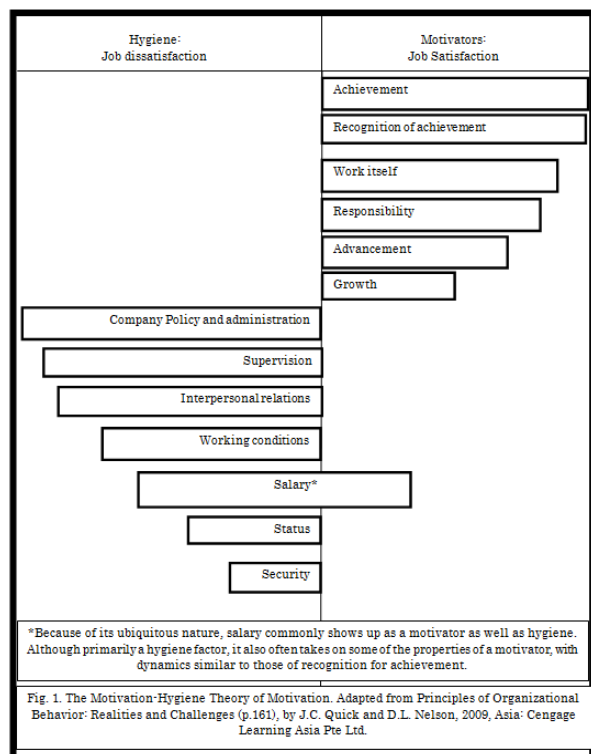


Figure 1. Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory on Job Satisfaction



*Professionalism.* Under the Deontological ethical theories, an act can be justified as ethical behaviour if it is based on principles of obligation or duty and with respect to the rights of others (Bowie and Schneider, 2011). In the perspective of a deontologist, an individual has moral duties and thus obligated to act in moral ways. Rules are given primary consideration when making a moral decision but exemptions to such rules are also permitted, especially, when a conflict between rules arises. One of the prominent deontologists is the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. He viewed that actions can be considered as morally right if it is carried out as a duty not an expectation of a reward.

This theory underscores the importance of adherence to duty. In relation to the subject of this study, when a person becomes a licensed customs broker, he/she assumes certain duties that define the role of a customs broker. One of these duties is to follow the code of ethics. It prescribes the ethical behaviour that every member of the profession must follow. Such is in place to ensure professional integrity, moral uprightness, maturity and professional responsibility. Thus, the degree of adherence to such code will generally describe their professionalism.

### 1.7 Conceptual Framework

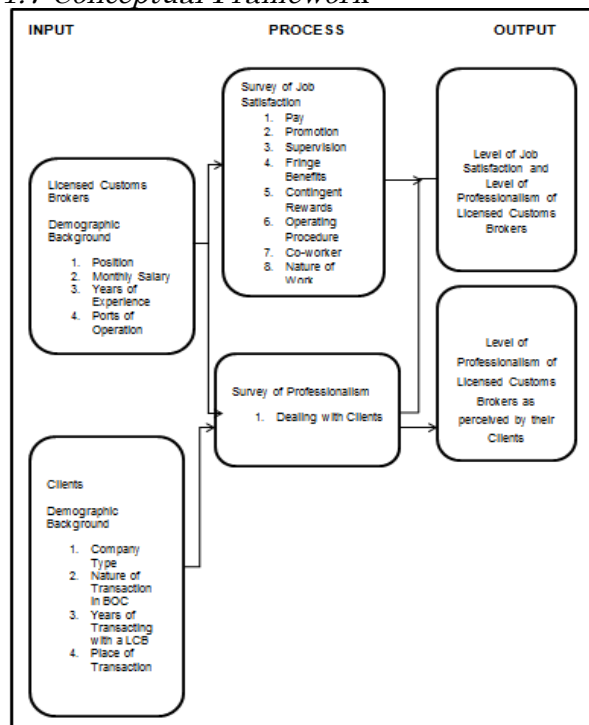


Figure 2. Research Paradigm

The demographic background of the Licensed Customs Brokers was ascertained by factors such as position, salary, years of experience and ports of operation. For employers or clients, factors such as company type, nature of transaction in the Bureau of Customs, years of transacting with a licensed customs broker and place of transaction was used in ascertaining their demographic background.

The job satisfaction was gauged in terms of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedure, co-worker, nature of work and communication for Licensed Customs Brokers. The level of professionalism was ascertained using the factors such as dealing with clients according to the code of ethics for customs brokers.

From the schematic diagram, the Input (I) as represented by the Licensed Customs Brokers and clients refers to the independent variables. While the demographic profiles of the two respondents represent the intervening variables. The Process (P) refers to the evaluation of the job satisfaction and professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers. The Output (O) refers to the level of job satisfaction of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and the level of professionalism as perceived by themselves and by their respective clients.

### 1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted to assess the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of selected Licensed Customs Brokers employed by freight forwarders and other logistics firms having an office address in Parañaque City. In assessing the level of professionalism, the perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers' clients was also sought. The respondent Licensed Customs Brokers were classified according to the following: position, salary or income, years of experience and ports of operation. While the respondent clients were classified according to the following: company type, nature of transaction in BOC, years transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker and place of transaction.

This study has a limited number of participants. The researchers used the purposive sampling technique because the respondents were selected if they meet the criteria or the certain characteristics that the researchers needed in the conduct of data gathering in the stated city. This study was conducted from June 2014 to October 2014.



### 1.9 Definition of Terms

**Client** – a respondent of this study. A person who avails the services of a licensed customs broker.

**Communication** – refers to the communication within an organization. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Contingent Rewards** – refers to appreciation, recognition, and rewards for good work. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Co-workers** – refers to people which an individual work with. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Fringe Benefits** – refers to monetary and non-monetary fringe benefits. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Job Satisfaction** – the dependent variable in this study. Reflects the attitude of an individual towards his or her job.

**Licensed Customs Broker** – a respondent of this study. A bona fide holder of a valid Certificate of Registration/Professional Identification Card issued by the Professional Regulatory Board and Professional Regulation Commission (Sec. 4, Article I of R.A. 9280).

**Nature of Work** – refers to job task. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Operating Procedures** – refers to operating policies and procedures. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Pay** – refers to pay and remuneration. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Professionalism** – the dependent variable in this study. The strict adherence to courtesy, honesty and responsibility when dealing with individuals or other companies in the business environment (Vitez, n.d.).

**Promotion** – refers to promotion opportunities. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

**Supervision** – refers to immediate supervisor. One of the facets of job satisfaction of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

The correlational survey method of research was used in this study. According to Calmorin and Calmorin (2011), it is used in determining the relationship between two variables and whether such relationship is perfect, very high, high, marked or moderate, slight or negligible. In this study, the relationship of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of selected licensed customs brokers was determined. From that assessment, a perfect positive correlation happens if the level of job satisfaction is the same with the level of professionalism of selected licensed customs brokers. Otherwise, a perfect negative correlation happens if the level of job satisfaction is inversely proportional on the level of professionalism of the selected licensed customs brokers.

### 2.2 Sample and Sampling Technique

The subjects of this study were the licensed customs brokers that are employed by freight forwarding companies and other logistics firms in the city of Parañaque and including their respective clients. In selecting the sample respondents, purposive or judgemental sampling was used. Hence, the respondents situated in the stated city were selected based on the following characteristics: first, they must be a licensed customs brokers; second, they are the ones who sign the import and export entries; third, their office address must be located in Parañaque city; fourth and last, they must have clients. A minimum of 10 licensed customs broker and a minimum of 5 of their clients was the target number of samples of the research.

### 2.3 Research Instrument

A combination of checklist and rating scale type of research questionnaire was used in gathering the data needed for the study. It was in two sets: the first set was for the assessment of the level of job satisfaction and professionalism of the respondent licensed customs brokers; and the second set was also about the level of professionalism of the preceding respondents, but the response was based on the perception of the respondent clients.

The first set of the instrument has three parts: part one has sought to establish the profile of the respondent licensed customs brokers; part two has sought to determine the level of job satisfaction of the said respondents in terms of the nine facets (pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedure, co-workers,

nature of work, communication) contained in the Job Satisfaction Survey scale of Spector (2008); part three focused in assessing the level of professionalism of the said respondents which was based on the code of ethics for customs brokers particularly Article II (Dealing with clients). The researchers have sought the permission of Spector (2008) to use the said Job Satisfaction Survey scale and had an affirmative reply (see Appendix D).

The second set of the instrument is for the respondent clients and it has two parts: part one has sought to establish the profile of the respondents; part two gauged the perception of the respondents with regards to the level of professionalism of the respondent licensed customs brokers.

For the purpose of ascertaining the validity of the parts of the research instrument, with the exemption of part 2 of the first set because it is standardized, the first draft was submitted to the researchers' adviser for corrections and suggestions. Items considered irrelevant to the study were discarded. The revised form was then given to the head of Customs Administration Department of AIMS and to one of the practicing licensed customs broker for further validation. For economic and convenience purposes, an electronic survey (e-Survey) form of the instruments was used in gathering the data.

#### 2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

Having found the research instrument valid, the researchers handed over a letter to the licensed customs brokers in their respective offices, asking their permission to participate in this study by giving their electronic mail address including also their clients' e-mail addresses. After an affirmative reply, the researchers sent the questionnaires in the form of e-Survey to the given electronic mail addresses.

The respondent licensed customs brokers who refused to disclose the e-mail addresses of their respective clients for some reasons were given an alternative. The researchers, in their e-mail to the said respondents, included a link to the e-Survey (for the clients) that the respondent licensed customs brokers sent to the respective e-mail addresses of their clients. The questionnaires were distributed on the fifth week of Y-term 1st semester of academic year 2014-2015. The responses went directly to the e-mail account of the researchers.

#### 2.5 Statistical Treatment

*Percentage.* This was used in the determination and presentation of the profiles of the respondents as stated in part one of the two sets of questionnaires.

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100 \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

where:

$f$  = frequency of each variable  
 $N$  = total number of population

In determining the level of job satisfaction of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers, the scoring interpretation method of Spector (n.d.) was used (see Appendix H).

*Weighted Mean.* This was used in the determination of the level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Broker as perceived by themselves and by their clients.

$$X = \frac{\sum fx}{f} \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

where:

$F$  = Anova Coefficient  
 $MST$  = Mean sum of squares due to treatment  
 $MSE$  = Mean sum of squares due to error

*Analysis of Variance.* This was used in the determination of the significant difference between the perception of the licensed customs brokers and their clients regarding the level of professionalism when the respondents are group according to their respective profile.

$$F = \frac{MST}{MSE} \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

where:

$\bar{X}$  = Weighted mean  
 $f$  = no. of frequency  
 $x$  = weight

*Independent Sample t-test.* This was used in the determination of the significant difference on the level of professionalism of the customs brokers when the clients were grouped according to sector.

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2 + s_2^2}{n}}}$$

where:

$\bar{x}_1$  = the mean of the first sample

$\bar{x}_2$  = the mean of the second sample

The Variance is the standard deviation squared (hence  $s^2$ )

*Pearson r correlation.* This was used in determining the relationship between the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the respondents licensed customs brokers.

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

where:

$r$  = Pearson correlation coefficient

$x$  = values in first set of data

$y$  = values in second set of data

$n$  = total number of values

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Profile of the two groups of respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of position.

Position	F	%
1 - Declarant / Signing Customs Broker	9	40.9
2 - Supervisor / Signing Customs Broker	2	9.1
3 - Brokerage Manager / Signing Customs Broker	11	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 shows that of the 22 respondent Licensed Customs Brokers, 50% (11) of them have a designation as brokerage manager/signing customs broker while 40.9% (9) are declarant/signing customs broker and the remaining 9.1% (2) are supervisor/signing customs broker. It appears therefore that of the three most common position of a Licensed Customs Broker in a freight forwarding/logistics firm, majority of the respondents are concentrated in the entry level (declarant/signing) and top level (brokerage manager/signing) positions. One reason could be that

the supervisory positions are sometimes held by someone who is not a graduate of customs administration but of some other business-related course.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of Monthly Salary

Monthly Salary	F	%
16 k - 20 k	7	31.8
21k - 25k	4	18.2
26k & above	11	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 reveals that of the 22 respondent Licensed Customs Brokers, 50% (11) of them have a monthly salary range of 26 thousand pesos and above while 31.8% (7) fall in the range of 16 to 20 thousand pesos and the remaining 18.2% (4) have a 21 to 25 thousand pesos monthly salary. It is important to note that the 26 thousand pesos and above monthly salary range is what a brokerage manager/signing customs broker normally earns while the 1st (16k-20k) and 2nd (21k-25k) range corresponds to the salary of a declarant and supervisor/signing customs broker, respectively. However, only the percentage of respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in who sit as a brokerage manager in Table 1 tallied with that of the 26 thousand pesos and above percentage in the preceding table.

Furthermore, in Table 1, it shows that there are only two (2) respondents who sit as a supervisor while their corresponding monthly salary range registered (4) respondents, up by two (2). The declarant position registered nine (9) respondents while there corresponding monthly salary range registered only seven (7) respondents, down by two (2). In such case, it can be said that there are two (2) respondents who sit as a declarant whose monthly salary fall between 21 thousand and 25 thousand pesos, much higher than their contemporaries. This implies that there are freight forwarding/logistics firms that offer a better compensation in terms of salary.





Table 3. Distribution of the Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of Years of Experience

Years of Experience	F	%
1 to 3 yrs	3	13.6
4 to 6 yrs	7	31.8
7 to 9 yrs	4	18.2
10 yrs & above	8	36.4

Table 3 reveals that 36.4% (8) of the 22 respondent Licensed Customs Broker have been in the profession for 10 years and above while 31.8% (7) have been in the practice for 4 to 6 years, 18.2% (4) have been in the practice for 7 to 9 years and the remaining 13.6% (3) have been practicing the profession for 1 to 3 years now. This could mean that the said respondents are very well adept and experienced in customs administration and therefore credible enough in evaluating their job satisfaction and professionalism.

Table 4. Distribution of the Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of Ports of Operation

Nature Transaction	Frequency	%	Ranks
IMPORT	160/166	96.39	1
EXPORT	22/166	13.25	2
WAREHOUSING	0/166	0	3
Nature Transaction	Frequency	%	Ranks

Table 4 presents that 100% (22) of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers operate or file and process their import/export entries at the Bureau of Customs situated at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) while in Port of Manila and Manila International Container Port, only 86.36% (19) of the 22 respondents indicated that these are one of their ports of operation. There are also 27.7% (6) of the respondents who do not only operate at NAIA, MICP and POM but also in other ports of the country.

Interestingly, not all of the respondents operate in MICP and POM, unlike NAIA. Some indicated other ports of the country which could mean that the respondents' evaluation of their job satisfaction and professionalism is also reflective of

the atmosphere outside the three busiest and controversial ports of the country.

Table 5. Distribution of the Clients in terms of Sector

Sector	F	%
PRIVATE	165	99.4
GOVERNMENT	1	.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Sector	F	%

Table 5 presents that 99.4% (165) of the 166 respondent clients belong to the private business sector while 0.6% (1) is in the government sector, probably a government owned and controlled corporation. This means that nearly all of the respondent clients are paying duties and taxes for their importations. These clients usually want to have a lower duties and taxes to pay in order to minimize the additional cost and maximize the profit on the said imported goods.

Table 6. Distribution of the Clients in terms of Nature of Transaction in Bureau of Customs

Ports of Operation	Frequency	%	Ranks
NAIA	22/22	100	1
Port of Manila	19/22	86.36	2
MICP	19/22	86.36	3
Others	6/22	27.27	4

Table 6 presents that of the 166 respondent clients, 96.39% (160) have an importation related transactions with the Bureau of Customs while only 13.25% (22) have an export related transactions with the said government agency. None of the respondent clients have a warehousing related transaction with BOC. Clearly, the data indicates that most of the clients have "for consumption" entries in the BOC. This means that it must be released from the custody of customs as fast as possible.

Table 7. Distribution of the Clients in terms of Number of Years Transacting with the Licensed Customs Broker

Year Transacting with the License Broker	F	%
BELOW 1 YR	24	14.5
1 TO 3 YRS	62	37.3
4 TO 6 YRS	74	44.6
7 TO 9 YRS	4	2.4

Table 7 shows that 44.6% (74) of the 166 respondent clients have been transacting or have been hiring the services of a Licensed Customs Broker for about 4 to 6 years now while 37.3% (62) of the said respondents have been hiring the services of a Licensed Customs Broker for 1 to 3 years, 14.5% (24) have not yet reached a year in transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker, 2.4% (4) have been served by a Licensed Customs Broker for about 7 to 9 years now and a 0.6% (1) of the said clients have been transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker for 10 years and above. Unfortunately, the remaining 0.6% (1) of the respondent clients has failed to indicate his/her response in the above parameter of profiling, thus, indicated as a missing system.

With reference to the above result, it can be said that most of the respondents have long been transacting with their respective respondent Licensed Customs Broker, thus, credible enough to evaluate their professionalism.

Table 8. Distribution of the Clients in terms of Place of Transactions

Place of Transaction	Frequency	%	Ranks
NAIA	123/166	74.09	1
Port of Manila	97/166	58.43	2
MICP	93/166	56.02	3
Others	6/166	3.61	4

Table 8 reveals that of the 166 respondent clients, 74.09% (123) indicated Ninoy Aquino International Airport as one of the place where most of their goods are landed and cleared in the Bureau of Customs by their respective respondent Licensed Customs Broker. More than half of the clients

indicated that their goods clearance are also being carried out in the following ports: Port of Manila (58.43% or 97) and Manila International Container Port (MICP) (56.02% or 93). Only a handful of respondents (3.61% or 6) have indicated other ports of the country.

It can be inferred from the above data that most of the respondent clients' goods are transported via air. This mode of transport is expensive and suitable for urgent and highly valuable items. This means that they are most likely paying higher duties and taxes and require a fast customs clearance.

### 3.2 Level of Job Satisfaction of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers.

Table 9. Level of Job Satisfaction of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers

Facets	Satisfied		Ambivalent		Dissatisfied	
	F	Percentage	F	Percentage	F	Percentage
Pay	12	54.6	5	22.7	5	22.7
Promotion	13	59.1	7	31.8	2	9.1
Supervision	20	90.9	2	9.1	nil	nil
Fringe Benefits	11	50	3	13.6	8	36.4
Contingent Rewards	16	72.8	3	13.6	3	13.6
Operating Procedures	1	4.5	8	36.4	13	59.1
Co-worker	21	95.5	1	4.5	nil	nil
Nature of Work	22	100	nil	nil	nil	nil
Communication	20	90.9	2	9.1	nil	nil

Table 9 reveals the level of job satisfaction of the 22 respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of the nine (9) facets of their job. It can be gleaned that most of the respondents are satisfied in the following facets: pay; promotion; supervision; fringe benefits; contingent rewards; co-workers; nature of work; and communication.

It is only in terms of operating procedures wherein majority of the respondents are dissatisfied (59.1% or 13) and ambivalent (36.4% or 8). This implies that there are rules and procedures in their work that make doing a good job difficult and that

their efforts to do a good job are sometimes blocked by red tape. With regards to the respondents who are ambivalent towards the said facet, they were described by Goodboy and McCroskey (2007) as never truly comfortable in an organization. Ambivalent is one of the three organizational orientations or predisposition of an individual towards job satisfaction (Papa, 2008).

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that it is only in terms of nature of work facet wherein all (100% or 22) of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers are satisfied. This would mean that they are passionate about their profession and its related activities.

### 3.3 Level of Professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers as perceived by themselves and by their respective clients.

Table 10. Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers as Perceived by Themselves

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. I do not take advantage of my client's innocence, ignorance and credulity which results him/her to commit illegal acts by evading or minimizing the payments of duties and taxes under the guise of cost cutting.	5.77	Agree very much
2. I exercises due diligence over documents and of the cargoes entrusted to me for clearance from the customs custody till the delivery thereof to the final destination.	5.82	Agree very much
3. I do not over-charge or under-charge my clients on the professional service I render.	5.46	Agree moderately
4. I do not reveal any trade secrets or confidential information of my clients, past, present, which may consequently be detrimental to them.	5.96	Agree very much
5. I exercise prudence and	6.00	Agree very

utmost caution in dealing with my walk-in clients.		much
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>5.80</b>	<b>High</b>

*Likert Scale:*

*5.50-6.00 – Agree very much,*

*4.50-5.49 – Agree moderately,*

*3.50-4.49 – Agree slightly,*

*2.50-3.49 – Disagree slightly,*

*1.50-2.49 – Disagree moderately,*

*1.00-1.49 – Disagree very much*

*For overall mean:*

*4.01-Above – High,*

*4.00-3.00 – Moderate,*

*2.99-Below – Low*

It can be gleaned from the Table 10 that the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers generally view their professionalism in terms of dealing with clients as high. It is only in item three (3) wherein the respondents moderately agree with statement. This implies that the said respondents feel that sometimes they over-charge or under-charge their clients for the professional services they render.

Table 11. Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers as Perceived by their respective Clients.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. He/she does not take advantage of my innocence, ignorance and credulity which results for me to commit illegal acts by evading or minimizing the payments of duties and taxes under the guise of cost cutting.	5.47	Agree moderately
2. He/she exercises due diligence over documents and of the cargoes entrusted to him/her for clearance from the customs custody till the delivery thereof to the final destination.	5.30	Agree moderately
3. He/she does not over-charge or under-charge his/her professional service he/she render.	5.29	Agree moderately
4. He/she does not reveal any trade secrets or confidential information	5.48	Agree moderately

from his/her clients, past, present, which may consequently be detrimental to said clients.		
5. He/she exercises prudence and utmost caution in dealing with his/her walk-in clients.	5.63	Agree very much
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>5.43</b>	<b>High</b>

*Likert Scale:*

- 5.50-6.00 – Agree very much,
- 4.50-5.49 – Agree moderately,
- 3.50-4.49 – Agree slightly,
- 2.50-3.49 – Disagree slightly,
- 1.50-2.49 – Disagree moderately,
- 1.00-1.49 – Disagree very much

*For overall mean:*

- 4.01-Above – High,
- 4.00-3.00 – Moderate,
- 2.99-Below – Low

A look at Table 11 shows that the respondent clients commonly see a high professionalism when the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers deal with them. Interestingly, in dealing with walk-in clients, the respondent clients agree very much with the statement. This could mean that there are respondent clients who have sought the services of the Licensed Customs Brokers by personally going in to their respective offices and have always experienced the prudent and cautious attitude of the latter.

*3.4 Significant difference between the perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and Clients regarding the Level of Professionalism when respondents are grouped according to their respective profiles.*

Table 12. Analysis of Variance between Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and their Profile.

Profile	F-value	Df	Computed p	Interpretation
Position	1.995	2 & 19	0.164	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Monthly Salary	1.107	2 & 19	0.351	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Years of Experience	3.295	3 & 18	0.044	$P < 0.05$ Significant
Ports of Operation	.387	2 & 19	0.684	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant

Shown in Table 12 is the computed ANOVA between levels of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers in terms of their position, monthly salary, years of experience and ports of operation. Between level of professionalism in terms of position, monthly salary, and ports of operation profile, computed p (0.0164, 0.351, and 0.684 respectively) is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; hence, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the level of professionalism perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers when they are grouped according to their position, monthly salary and ports of operation.

This implies that a Licensed Customs Broker who sits as a brokerage manager, earning a monthly salary of 26 thousand pesos and above and operates at the three major ports of Metro Manila has the same assessment of his/her adherence to the code of ethics with that of another Licensed Customs Broker who sits as a declarant, earning a monthly salary of 16 thousand to 20 thousand pesos and operates only at NAIA and other ports of the country.

Meanwhile, between level of professionalism in terms of years of experience, computed  $p = 0.044$  is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; hence, the null hypothesis is



hereby rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the level of professionalism perception of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers when they are grouped according to their years of experience. It can be said that a Licensed Customs Broker who have been in the practice of the profession for 10 years and above view his/her adherence to the code of ethics differently to that of a Licensed Customs Broker who have not yet reached a year in the actual practice.

Table 13. Analysis of Variance between Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Broker and the Clients' Profile.

Profile	F-value	Df	Computed p	Interpretation
Nature of transaction in Bureau of Customs	7.237	2 & 163	0.001	$P < 0.05$ Significant
Years Transacting With a licensed custom broker	8.747	7 & 158	0.000	$P < 0.05$ Significant
Place of Transaction	2.174	4 & 160	0.074	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant

Table 13 presents the ANOVA between levels of professionalism of the Licensed Customs Brokers when respondent clients are grouped in terms of nature of transaction in the Bureau of Customs, years transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker and the place of transaction. Between level of professionalism in terms of clients' nature of transaction in the Bureau of Customs and years transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker computed p (0.001 and 0.000, respectively) is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers when the respondent clients are grouped according to their nature of transaction in the Bureau of Customs and

years in transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker.

It can be said that a client who is engaged in importation has a different evaluation of the Licensed Customs Broker's adherence to the code of ethics from that of a client engaged in exportation. This can be due to the differences in the requirements and processes of each transaction. The same is true between the clients who have long been hiring the services of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and those who have a shorter period of transaction with the said Licensed Customs Brokers. Definitely, the extent of the clients' assessment would depend on how well they know the Licensed Customs Brokers which would then depend on their length of transactional relationship.

Table 14. Significant Difference between Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers and the Clients' Profile in terms of Sector.

Sector	N	Mean	s.d.	d.f.	Computed t	Computed p	Interpretation
Private	165	27.18	2.76	164	-1.305	0.302	$p > 0.05$ Not Significant

Table 4.14 shows the computed  $t = -1.305$  with degree of freedom = 164 and computed  $p = 0.302$  between the extent and the level of professionalism perception of the clients in terms of their sector. The computed  $p = 0.302$  is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; hence, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the level of professionalism perception of the respondent clients when they are grouped according to their sector. It can be said that regardless of their sector, clients have a congruent assessment on the professionalism of their respective Licensed Customs Brokers.

### 3.5 Significant relationship between the level of Job Satisfaction and Level of Professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers.

Table 15. Significant Relationship between the Level of Job Satisfaction and Level of Professionalism of the Respondent Licensed Customs Brokers.

Items	Computed Pearson "r"	Computed p	Interpretation
Professionalism vs Pay	0.256	0.250	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Promotion	0.271	0.221	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Supervision	0.018	0.937	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Fringe Benefits	0.343	0.118	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Contingent Rewards	0.188	0.401	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Operating Condition	0.089	0.694	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Co-worker	0.021	0.926	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Nature of Work	0.184	0.413	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant
Professionalism vs Communication	0.220	0.324	$P > 0.05$ Not Significant

It is evident in the results shown in Table 15 that all of the computed p value of the nine facets of job satisfaction is not significant at 0.05 level of probability; thus, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This means that there is no significant relationship between the level of job satisfaction and level of professionalism of the respondent licensed

customs brokers. It can be inferred that the attitude of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers towards the mentioned facets of their job does not affect their adherence to the provisions of their code of ethics and vice versa.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

1. Half of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers are employed by freight forwarding/logistics firms as manager of brokerage department or division and earning a monthly salary of 26 thousand pesos and above. They have been in the practice of the profession for 10 years and above and their ports of operation/practice are the 3 major ports in Metro Manila: Manila International Container Port (MICP); Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA); and Port of Manila.

Nearly all of the clients belong to the private business sector and mostly engaged in importation. Four (4) to six (6) years is the average length of time that these clients have been hiring their services. Most of these clients' shipment are being landed and cleared through customs also at the three (3) major ports in Metro Manila: Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA); Port of Manila; and Manila International Container Port (MICP).

2. Majority of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers are satisfied in terms of the following facets of their job: pay; promotion; supervision; fringe benefits; contingent rewards; co-workers; nature of work; and communication. However, majority are dissatisfied in terms of operating procedures. It is only in terms of the nature of work facet that all of the said respondents are satisfied. Therefore, even if there are rules and procedures in the workplace of the Licensed Customs Brokers that do not contribute to their effectiveness and efficiency, notwithstanding the presence of red tape, they are still passionate about their profession and they take pride in it.

3. The level of professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers as perceived by themselves is high in which their clients also share the same evaluation. Hence, the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers are adherent to the provisions of the Code of Ethics and exhibits the core values of professionalism such as competence, respect, integrity, justice, and fairness specifically in dealing with clients.

4. There is no significant difference in the level of professionalism perception of the



respondent Licensed Customs Broker when they are grouped in terms of their position, monthly salary and ports of operation; however, there is a significant difference in terms of years of experience. With regards to the clients, there is a significant difference in the level of professionalism perception when the clients are grouped according to their nature of transaction with the Bureau of Customs and years in transacting with a Licensed Customs Broker while there is no significant difference in terms of place of transaction and sector. Thus, the position, monthly salary and ports of operation of the Licensed Customs Brokers do not have a bearing in how they perceived their professionalism. The same is true with the clients in terms of place of transaction and sector.

5. There is no significant relationship between the level of Job Satisfaction and level of Professionalism of the respondent Licensed Customs Brokers. Therefore, the attitude of the Licensed Customs Brokers towards pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-worker, nature of work, and communication factors of their job do not affect their adherence to the provisions of their Code of Ethics and vice versa..

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