

Business Studies – Investigating three shops***Introduction***

The following assignment investigates people and work at three different stores. The first is Sainsbury's Savacentre, a hypermarket located in Beckton. Very wide ranges of items are sold here, not just groceries but clothes and technology too. I have also chosen two specialist shops, each selling a product available in the hypermarket. I have selected 'The Card Shop' as one of my specialist shops. This is a store, local to my area, specialising in the sale of greetings cards, one of the products made available by the hypermarket. In addition to this, I have chosen Kashmir Store as a specialist shop. This small family run business specialises in the selling of halal meat and certain Asian foods. The Savacentre hypermarket has recently begun to sell some of these products in-store.

The aim of this report is to address certain key ideas related to work and industry. This assignment hopes to demonstrate the key ideas in a work environment. The principal key ideas tackled in this project are listed below.

- 1) There is an important relationship between the level of technology and the nature of work.
- 2) Workers in different industries are interdependent and modern industry is characterised by specialisation.
- 3) The way in which industry is organised has an important effect on job satisfaction.

Key idea number one suggests that certain types of work require higher levels of technology than other types of work. For example, I would expect office workers to use more technology in the way of photocopiers and computers than builders who use less technology such as cement mixers.

Key idea number two suggests that workers from different industries are interdependent. That is to say, the computer manufacturing industry is dependent on the retail industry to sell its product. One cannot survive without

the other. Furthermore, the key idea states that modern industry is characterised by specialisation. This means that industry today is specialised and specific or fills a niche. Overall, this key idea implies that because industries are very specific, they may be limited and therefore need to be interdependent. This is analogous to a newspaper and a newsagent. The production of a newspaper is a specialised industry as is the newsagent. Both however are interdependent as the paper cannot be sold without the newsagent and the newsagent will suffer financially without the newspaper.

Finally, the third key idea suggests that job satisfaction is influenced by the way in which industry is organised. Job satisfaction is a term to describe how much a person enjoys their job and finds it fulfilling. Industry organisation can lead to poor or very good job satisfaction. This can affect workers quite drastically. For example, poor job satisfaction may lead to inefficient work and high employee turnover, which is not good for the company or industry.

In order to find out if these hypotheses are true for the retail industry and more importantly, for the shops that I have chosen, I will carry out two methods of investigation, a questionnaire and general observation.

By collecting data using a questionnaire, a large sample can be targeted and answers compared amongst respondents. Due to time restrictions and work place limitations, a structured interview will not be employed. Instead, a questionnaire will be used so that staff can respond in their own time.

However, questionnaires are rather limited in the types of data they generate. Boredom in filling out the forms can also lead to falsified results. To combat this, I will directly observe workers. This technique allows for study of behaviour in the 'natural setting'. The interaction between workers can be studied, as can the behaviour and attitude of individuals. In an ideal situation,

I would use participant observation instead but as it is unrealistic to take up employment in order to join the workers, I will just observe as a customer.

I will carry out direct observation by visiting the stores and making notes on employee behaviour. I will then obtain questionnaire information by ringing the stores in question for permission to carry out my research. Once this has been established, I will visit the shops and then distribute questionnaires amongst the staff. The research will be carried out in this order to prevent staff from changing their behaviour after filling in their questionnaires.