

JOB SATISFACTION, ATTITUDE AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

A study of perception of news photographers during elections

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Abstract

Along with reporters and editing desk members news photographers also contribute to success of newspaper organizations. They also play crucial role in making the newspaper interesting, useful to the reader and profitable to the organisation. During elections the expectations from the readers as well as the managements towards news photographers increase tremendously. Hence, an effort was made to study the perceptions of news photographers to find out how they coped with the situation, the photos covered and the facilities provided for that occasion. From the study it was understood that the respondents were satisfied with the work pattern style to some extent but on the whole they had more expectations from the managements in the form of facilities and benefits.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Job dissatisfaction, Photojournalism, News Photographers,

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Introduction

Job satisfaction is considered to be important as it reflects fairness and good treatment meted out to the people by any organisation. Job satisfaction also influences organizational citizenship behavior, turnover intentions, behavior, and absenteeism (Spector, 1997). It was depicted as favorable attitude that an employee holds towards his or her job (Arnold & Feldman, 1986), or in other words “the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs” (Spector, 1997, p. 2). Locke (1976, p. 1300) refers to job satisfaction as: “A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976 in Daneshfard & Ekvaniyan, 2012). Within the field of organizational behavior job satisfaction is considered one of the most prominent attitudinal variables studied by researchers(e.g. Mahmoud, 2012; AL-Hussami, 2008; Astrauskaitė, Vaitkevičius, & Perminas, 2011; Borooah, 2009; Byrne, 2010; Paul, 2011; Hasnain, Khan, Awan, Tufail, & Ullah, 2011; Spector, 1985).This was studied with special reference to empirical investigation conducted in the sector of services (e.g. healthcare, banking, and education) where service quality is indicated by customer satisfaction (Al-Khalil & Mahmoud, 2012). Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) is a widely-used measuring scale for employee’s attitudes towards their job facets. The survey originally developed by Spector (1985), has thirty six items measuring job satisfaction towards nine facets, which are: Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. According to Spector (1985; 1997) JSS is applicable to all organizations, though it was originally developed for use of human service organizations. Though the nine-facet dimensionality was originally formulated in the U.S., it has been found that JSS could be of less than nine dimensions (e.g. Mahmoud, 2012; Astrauskaitė, Vaitkevičius, & Perminas, 2011).

Job satisfaction

Research on job satisfaction stretches more than five decades (Herzberg et al, 1959) making it one of the most frequently studied variables in research on organizations behavior (Spector, 1997). Studies have looked at the influence of job satisfaction on individual’s quality of life or sense of wellbeing (Kalleberg, 1974). However, it was found that job satisfaction also contributes to the successful operation of an organization by influencing commitment, turnover, productivity and other factors (Spector, 1997). In the early 1960s, Vroom (1964) noted that: job

satisfaction” and “job attitudes” seemed to be used interchangeably “since both refer to the affective orientation of the individual toward the work role he is occupying”. Later, Carroll (1973) defined job satisfaction as the evaluation of one’s job. Scholars have disagreed about whether job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are separate constructs or simply different sides of the same conceptual coin. Others have argued that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are different concepts (Herzberg et al, 1959). According to them job satisfaction is affected by factors such as the work itself, recognition, responsibilities, achievement and advancement, while job dissatisfaction on the other hand is a function of things like pay, administration, company policy, relationships with colleagues, and working environment.

In the field of media also satisfaction has been considered to be an important element as the success or failure of the organization as well as their service motive is more dependent on the performance of the individuals i.e. journalists which includes reporters, news photographers, proof readers and others related to journalism. Hence, the working conditions, benefits generally extended by the employer are quite different from other industries. Though pay scales are meager when compared with the amount of work done by them, perks and other facilities like accreditation card etc. would help them considerably.

Stamm and Underwood (1993) in USA and found that perception about the business and journalistic goals of the employed affected job satisfaction. If journalistic quality was perceived to be increasing, job satisfaction was higher, but if business goals were perceived to be hurting quality, job satisfaction suffered. Berkowitz (1993) studied whether two different organizational roles of being a TV producer and being a TV reporter or anchor were associated with different perceptions of journalistic values and attitudes toward work. TV news workers who most strongly believe the journalistic values guide news choices (as opposed to programming or resource considerations) had the highest satisfaction with their jobs. Demers (1994) looked at the impact of organizational size on job satisfaction among top editors at US dailies. Arguing that one’s position within the organization’s hierarchy would affect the relationship between organization size and job satisfaction. He hypothesized that this relationship would be conditional for non-managers and size would be positively related. Miller and Miller (1995) observed that approximately three fourths of the respondents reported that they were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their jobs. Pollard (1995) looked at the conflict between occupational and organizational values. He proposed that the profession and the organization

govern journalists in complex organizations and found that journalists were more satisfied with their jobs if they had more autonomy, authority, and control. It also indicates the feelings, high values and positive attitudes of a person of his occupation (Chandan, 1997). 2001 *Columbia Journalism Review* article, reported that 84% of those in a self selected survey of 127 journalists said employee morale was low (Hickey, 2001). In an organisation supervisors and managers find it difficult to measure the amount of job satisfaction (Watson et al, 2007 and Liu and Borg, 2004).

Photojournalism is an understudied area of academic research. Not only at national level event at international level and in the well developed countries also studies on perception, performance, practices of professional values and ethics are very limited. Especially the attitude and satisfaction of photographers were not studied. Hence the researchers have made an attempt to study the attitudes and satisfaction levels of news photographers with special reference to elections held in Andhra Pradesh during April and May, 2014.

According to the 'Hierarchy of Influences Model' the size and scope of a news organization will also mediate the way in which photojournalists operate. News is a product created by journalists who are influenced by outside factors. Five levels of forces – the individual, media routines, organizational, extra media and ideological limit as well as help in shaping the way news is made (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Journalists' norms and routines, the way they go about their jobs define the second tier of influence. The third level encompasses organizational constraints, including size and scope of the news outlet. Hierarchy of Influences approach says higher-level forces influence lower level forces (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) and lower-tier levels are seen as more influential from journalists' perspective (Johnson & Fahmy, 2010). Though by the nature of work news paper photographers need to work for more long time which may range from 15- 20 hours some times on occasions like elections are subjected to heavy work load which extends form few weeks to months some times. They cannot afford to enjoy minimum facilities like weekly off, leaves etc but are subjected to severe mental as well as psychological stress. Their physical presence would be required in other places that are distant form their beats as they are expected to cover special assignments and have to places which are not generally covered by them. Sometimes place of insignificance assume importance by events or individuals who are contesting elections.

In this context the researchers studied the satisfaction levels of news photographers during elections which were held in the month of April and May 2014. 25 journalists from reputed newspaper organizations who were completely involved in elections were identified and interviewed for this purpose. They were selected from *Eenadu*, *Sakshi*, *Andhra Jyothi*, *The Hindu*, *The Indian express* etc. Basing on the previous studies new scales were developed and adopted to study this special purpose. Since all the factors adopted by Spector and others were not apt only those that are related were studied.

Objectives of the study

The study tried

1. To find out the type of facilities provided to the news photographers
2. To find out the type photos that were contributed during elections
3. To find the treatment given to photographs taken during elections
4. To find their level of satisfaction with regard to this election work.

An interview schedule was prepared by the researchers and the data was tabulated in the following tables.

Data analysis

When work load of taking photographs was analyzed the in the general category 48% news photographers have contributed for news 'to some extent', and 56% to stories as well as regular features. When asked about their contribution to election related news, stories as well as features 68% worked for them "to a great extent". When general and elections tasks were analyzed 48 % said they dealt with both general news and elections on an average basis. 56% said they handled general stories and election stories on a average rate and 60% worked on photos for features and election features on an average extent.

Table 1 Percentage distribution of contribution during elections

| Sno | Work load during elections | To a great extent | To some extent | Average | Rarely | Very rarely |
|-----|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 1 | News | 8 | 48 | 44 | | |
| 2 | Stories | 4 | 56 | 40 | | |

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|----|--------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 3 | Regular Features | 4 | 56 | 40 | | |
| 4 | Election news | 68 | 20 | 12 | | |
| 5 | Election stories | 68 | 20 | 12 | | |
| 6 | Election features | 68 | 20 | 8 | 4 | |
| 7 | Both news and elections news | | 40 | 48 | 4 | 8 |
| 8 | Both stories and election stories | | 36 | 56 | | 8 |
| 9 | Both features and elections features | | 32 | 60 | | 8 |
| 10 | Paid news | | | | 12 | 88 |
| 11 | Others | | | | | |

Many of them seem to have expressed satisfaction with the way the photos were treated in the pages during elections. 36% said very rarely the photographs were edited with wrong interpretations and 60% said rarely meaning was not conveyed exactly. All of them said very rarely they were manipulated. Among the sample 60% felt that rarely they were blown out of proportion and 60% said that rarely captions were not meaningful.

Table 2 Percentage distribution of treatment of photos during elections

| Sno | Treatment of photos | To a great extent | To some extent | Average | Rarely | Very rarely |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 1 | Edited with different interpretations | | 4 | 20 | 28 | 36 |
| 2 | Meaning not conveyed exactly | | 4 | 20 | 60 | 4 |
| 3 | Manipulated | | | | | 100 |
| 4 | Blown out of | | 4 | 16 | 60 | 8 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|----|----|----|----|
| | proportion | | | | | |
| 5 | Made insignificant | | 4 | 48 | 36 | |
| 6 | Captions not meaningful | | 4 | 12 | 60 | 12 |
| 7 | Captions manipulated | | | 4 | 32 | 64 |
| 8 | Denied bylines | | 8 | 36 | 44 | 12 |
| 9 | Mismatch of photos | | | 4 | 68 | 28 |
| 10 | Photos shared with television channels | | | | 76 | 24 |
| 11 | Photos published in web editions | 36 | 16 | 44 | 4 | |
| 11 | Others | | | | | |

Many of them expressed extreme satisfaction with regard to taking photos(76%) and rest are also satisfied. But many of them expressed displeasure about the facilities (60%) and one fourth were satisfied. This is evident with regard to the benefits like compensatory leave, monetary benefit etc also. Regarding presentation and makeup they were neither completely satisfied not dissatisfied. But regarding editing 56% were satisfied and 32% satisfied on an average basis.

Table 3 Percentage distribution of respondent's satisfaction with the assignments during elections

| | | Extremely satisfied | Satisfied | Average | Not satisfied | Not at all satisfied |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Taking photos | 76 | 24 | | | |
| 2 | Editing | 8 | 56 | 32 | 4 | |
| 3 | Presentation and makeup | 8 | | 72 | 20 | |
| 4 | Facilities | 8 | 28 | 4 | 60 | |
| 5 | Benefits | 8 | 28 | 8 | 56 | |
| 6 | Others | | | | | |

Conclusion

For the study it was evident that the news paper photographers were satisfied with the work pattern style to some extent but on the whole they had more expectation from the managements in the form of facilities and benefits.

- Since physically, psychologically more than 100 % of work is put in by all of them irrespective of newspapers they work in managements should take extra care during such occasions.
- Special leave package, cell phone CUG SIM facility, extra conveyance facility should be provided. Special insurance coverage may be extended from the side of employer also.
- DPROs should arrange for special media centers.
- They should also be allowed to work under Election commission of India as there will not be much of activity for documenting during elections
- Special insurance coverage by insurance corporations for individual news photographers and the equipment will help them discharge duties.
- Special accreditation may be extended to additional number of news photographers during this period as every media organizations will engage more number of news photographers on temporary basis. They should be provided immunity from police and other related department regarding the security passes for VIP meetings and official meetings held by government.

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