

REVIEW ON JOB SATISFACTION FROM DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Job satisfaction is a construct that is perceived by employees in an organization. It is perceived in different ways that might have been influenced by employees' demographic characteristics. This study reviews on the employees' job satisfaction whether it is affected by their demographic characteristics in different contexts. Regarding the dimensions of job satisfaction, it consists of physiological and psychological constructs. In physiological constructs, salary, incentives, benefits, facilities and similar others that fulfil the biological needs of employees are included whereas psychological construct contains emotional activities such as symbolic rewards such as verbal rewards, conducive environment and similar components. From the analysis of the past studies on the effect of employees' demographic characteristics, it is concluded that the findings are not generalizable in wider context. They are contextual, for example, effect of gender is significant in one organization and it is not true for another. The author suggests that the future researchers need to examine that what are the factors that are responsible for maintaining the consistent result on the effect of demographic characteristics on the employees' job satisfaction.

Key Words: Job Satisfaction, Demographic Characteristics, Gender, Age, Experience

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is a construct that is perceived by employees in an organization. Hoppock(1935) defined job satisfaction as "any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say, I am satisfied with my job" (as cited in Aziri, 2011). It is itself the verbal or bodily expression of an individual's evaluation of his life. Luthans (2008) expresses that job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience that involves cognitive, affective, and evaluative reactions or attitudes. Further, he states that there are generally three dimensions of job satisfaction. First is emotional response to job situation, second how well outcomes meet or exceed expectations and third, several related attitudes. Job satisfaction is perceived by individuals in their own ways. For example, a study carried out in medical sectors shows that 105 doctors of teaching hospitals age and sex both were significant predictor of satisfaction whereas experience, designation and marital status of the doctors were not (Suresh, Kodikal&Kar, 2015). Yapaa, Rathnayakeb, Senanayakec&Premakumarad's (2014) study, in the context of University, shows that the age was significant factor on job satisfaction whereas gender had no significance on it. These inconsistent findings regarding the effect of demographic characteristics raised the issue that whether job satisfaction is demographic characteristics specific or context specific. This study will review on the employees' job satisfaction how it is affected by their demographic characteristics in different contexts.

2. Job Satisfaction

First, the author reviews on how job satisfaction is defined in different contexts. It is defined as the compositions of different aspects of job. For examples, Paula (1984) states with regard to job satisfaction that there is considerable in the literature so as to scope and nature of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. There is general agreement that they refer to the teachers'

“composite” attitude or emotional response towards a job. Since any job has many diverse features, it then can be constructed as the balance of positive and negative feelings towards a particular job. Similarly, Blum and Naylor (1904) say, “Job satisfaction is a general attitude which is the result of many specific attitudes in ‘three areas, namely, specific job factors, individual characteristics, and group relationships outside the job’”. It is also expressed in the literature as a pleasurable or positive, emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. In other words, it is the favourableness or unfavourableness which employees perceive their work. The stated definitions focus on compensation, attitude, nature of an individual and work environment as the factors of job satisfaction and these factors compositely work to influence an individual's job satisfaction.

By nature, job satisfaction can occur through intrinsic and extrinsic processes. As intrinsic form, it is related to individual's natural and biological needs whereas extrinsic satisfaction concerns with socio-cultural and other environmental factors. Tang, Kim and Tang (2002) say that genetic influence will be stronger for intrinsic job satisfaction indicators than for extrinsic job satisfaction variables and ‘extrinsic’ satisfaction is highly influenced by situational and environmental factors (e.g. company policy, supervision and pay). On the basis of review of job satisfaction studies, Siegel (1974) comes to the conclusion that all the results may be "conveniently grouped under two headings on the basis of their pertinence to factors (i) intrinsic or (ii) extrinsic to the job itself". Factors intrinsic to job include pay, job security, participation and personal recognition, hours and working conditions and occupational status. Among the factors, extrinsic to job is the perceptions about supervision, sex, age, level of intelligence, job experience, or length of service and personal adjustment. According to Lambert, Hogan and Barton (2002), high levels of job satisfaction have been linked to positive behaviours such as support for rehabilitation and performance, and low levels of job satisfaction have been linked to negative behaviours such as absenteeism and turnover. Singh (1984) states that satisfaction influences absenteeism and dropout. Regarding job-related attitudes, it indicates the gap between expectations and reality. For instance, a frustrated and disappointed employee is likely to have a low level of job satisfaction. Accordingly, job satisfaction could be a highly subjective attitudinal indicator rather than an objective indicator, and the level of job satisfaction is partially a function of the gap between expectations and the reality of the current job.

From the different definitions, opinions and statements regarding job satisfaction, job satisfaction is a composition of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that reflect on the behaviour of an employee. Intrinsic and extrinsic both factors cause to determine the level of job satisfaction. Matching between organizational goal and individual goal, relation among working members, environment inside and outside the organization have crucial role to determine the level of job satisfaction.

3. Dimensions of Job Satisfaction

While discussing about the dimensions of job satisfaction, Luthans (2008) states five dimensions as important characteristics of a job and about which employees have effective responses. They are work itself, pay, promotions opportunities, supervision and co-workers. Shrestha (1989) cites from Happock (1935) that there are six major components of job satisfaction, viz. (i) the way the individual reacts to unpleasant situations, (ii) the facility with which one adjusts oneself to other persons, (iii) one's relative status in the social and economic group with which one identifies oneself, (iv) the nature of the work in relation to one's abilities, interests, and preparation, (v) security, and (vi) loyalty. She cites from Pestonjee (1973) that job satisfaction is as a summation of employees' feelings in four important areas: job, management, social relations and personal adjustment. Herzberg and his associates (1957) in their review of job attitude studies revealed ten major factors constituting job satisfaction with nearly 150 specific aspects. These major factors are: intrinsic aspects of job, supervision, working conditions; wages, opportunity for advancement, security, company and management, social aspects of job, communication, and benefits.

The dimensions of job satisfaction seems varied by nature of organization context, or individual. So, different researchers have taken different dimensions for analysing the job satisfaction. Foley, Lee, Wilson, Cureton and Canham (2004) states six variables influencing job

satisfaction which are autonomy, interactions, organizational policies, pay, professional status and task requirements .

To ensure job satisfaction, autonomous in their work place, recognition to their work and job, working condition and many others are also considered as the dimensions. In this regard, Castillo and Cano (2004) enlist the five factors to facilitate job satisfaction that are achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement. The five factors identified by Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson, and Capwell (1957) are policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (1998) say state that the more the work unit begins to unravel and the more unhappy employees become. They state that the job satisfying factors which are recognition, achievement, possibility of growth, advancement, salary, interpersonal relations, supervision, responsibility, policy and, administration, working condition and work itself (Padilla-Velez, 1993, pp. 20-21; Bowen, 1980, pp. 13-14).

Some researchers analyse the job satisfaction from different dimensions like personal factors, social factors and organizational factors. Sargent and Hannum (2003) conducted a survey research on the topic “Keeping teachers happy: job satisfaction among primary school teachers in rural China” whose one of the intentions was to test the hypotheses about three types of factors associated with teachers’ satisfaction. The factors were community factors, school environment and teacher background. Similarly, Lambert, Hogan and Barton (2002) state the factors influencing job satisfaction as personal characteristics (educational level, race and ethnicity, gender, age and tenure, and marital status), work environment (tangible and intangible conditions: characteristics of organization, degree of centralization, financial rewards, integration, characteristics of job), stressors and work/ job stress, centralization, autonomy and participation, supervision and administration, position, security level and dangerousness.

As stated by Mathis and Jackson (2000), performance appraisal is useful for administering compensation, provide feedback for development, other administrative decisions like promotion, termination, layoff and transfer assignment. Performance appraisal is inseparable part of job dimension which plays important role for job satisfaction. Mathis and Jackson (2000) say, “Performance appraisal is the process of determining how well employees do their jobs compared with a set of standards and communication that information to employees”. They, further, show sequence of performance appraisal as follows:

Productivity → Performance Appraisal → Rewards

From the study of literature, job satisfaction is reflected on the above stated factors (productivity, performance appraisal and rewards). So these factors can be considerable dimensions of job satisfaction. Further, different studies in literature show that job satisfaction is interpreted from the different perspectives such as monetary aspect (pay, incentives and benefits), work itself and environment, autonomy, stress and performance appraisal. But, there is similarity in almost researches which concern with job satisfaction. In essence, job satisfaction is attributed by financial and non-financial, individual and organizational or personal and professional components.

4. Job Satisfaction from Demographic Perspectives

The major intent of this study is to review on the demographic characteristics that they might have been influencing on the employees' job satisfaction. A research survey was conducted on Primary School context by De Nobile and McCormick (2006). This study revealed that sex was a significant predictor of job satisfaction; female staff members were more satisfied than their male colleagues. The study also showed that age was a significant predictor of job satisfaction, older staff members (aged 31 or over) were generally more satisfied with various aspects of work than younger colleagues, particularly those in the 20-30 age group. The study presented that employee’ overall job satisfaction declines as they become older, partly because of a decrease in job excitement or an increase in the gap between their expectations and the reality of their jobs. There were statistically significant differences in perceived job satisfaction—measured by attitudes towards wages, job security, task, work environment, personal development, and communication or human relations—among age groups in the combined data set collected from public, non-profit, and private employees. It was also explored, there was no statistical difference among different age groups in the public and non-profit sectors in the sense that the younger employees of the private sector had a higher level of job satisfaction than older employees do, whereas age had no effect on

the job satisfaction of public employees. However, there was no significant gender difference in employee satisfaction with job content. Inconsistent gender differences were found in the employees' perceived satisfaction with job security, personal development, and human relations. A survey research made by Sargent and Hannum (2003) showed that younger, better-educated teachers were less satisfied, and suggested that teachers may be more satisfied in schools with an organizational climate that supports collaboration and in communities where village leaders support education. Jung, Moon and Hahm (2007) reviewed on Public Personnel Administration through a research study entitling "Do the Age, Gender, and Sector affect Job Satisfaction?" Results drawn from the Korean Labor and Income Panel Data indicated there was a gender effect on job satisfaction, particularly for wages and work environment.

Sargent and Hannum (2003) found from their study that gender does not have a significant bivariate relationship with teacher satisfaction. The younger teachers were less satisfied than older teachers. They assumed that there might be a survival effect, as the composition of older teachers is likely to be weighted towards teachers who liked the profession enough to persist in it. Singh (1984) states that Sergiovanni (1967) replicated the Herzberg studies with secondary and elementary school teachers concluded that the dissatisfaction factors identified by teachers are related to the work environment, they expect these factors to be maintained at acceptable level. They expect fair supervision, supportive policies, friendly interpersonal relationships, pleasing working conditions. Denial of fair and just treatment by the leader on matters and issues that are deemed important to them by organization members lead to a low level of satisfaction of members (Patchen, 1960). Shrestha (1989) states that teaching is generally regarded as a prestigious, suitable and compatible job for women. Majority of the female college teachers, however, were dissatisfied with their job. Less than one third of the respondents were satisfied with their job.

Herzberg et al. (1957) report data compiled from 16 different studies and involving over 11,000 employees which gives an indication of how workers rank different factors in terms of their importance: Security, opportunity of advancement, appreciation, company and management, intrinsic aspects of job, wages, supervision, social aspects of job, working condition, communication, working hours, ease of work and benefits are ranked in order of most important to less important. First six factors are ranked as most important and second seven as less important. Security was consistently rated high as a motivating factor in these studies. Job benefits and ease of work were considered as being of least importance for job motivation. The results of his studies showed that the workers had consistently ranked adequate earnings at number one. Job security and opportunity for advancement are other factors which are ranked high by the workers, while such factors: working hours, relations with colleagues, job status and prestige had been ranked low as motivators in the work situation.

From different perspectives, Brayfield and Crockett (1955) examined all researches relation of job satisfaction to job performance up to the date and concluded that there was virtually no evidence of any relationship between these two variables. This, of course, is a rather critical finding for those who support the general "human relations" notions that a satisfied worker is a more productive worker. Job satisfaction and job behavior are not always positively correlated. Similarly, Siegel and Lane (1974) state that, from the Hawthorne studies, Tavistock coal study and the human relations movement, researchers concluded that the most important determinant of the increased production was the change in the supervisors from an authoritarian style to a more permissive democratic style. The importance of the social situation on productivity and employee attitude was also demonstrated in this study. The employees' informal work groups found to exert considerable control over workers' behavior. Shrestha (1989) says that other things being equal, a worker who enjoys high pay, autonomy, prestige, opportunity for advancement, opportunities for skill development and who has high interest in the task itself will have high job satisfaction and productivity. In contrast, Camilli (2004) found the results of the study as consistent with some of the prior researches concerning teacher job satisfaction and burnout. This study did not find any significant effects of the teacher's experience on job satisfaction or burnout. Foley et al., (2004) state that pay was the most important variable contributing to job satisfaction among nurses, followed by professional status, autonomy, interaction, task requirements, and organizational policies. An important finding in the study was that school nurses regard autonomy as the most important and satisfying aspect of their job.

Thobega and Miller (2003) carried out a research intending to measure the job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers in Iowa. The study concluded that a significant number of agriculture teachers in Iowa were neither supervised nor evaluated during a complete academic year. Three extraneous variables - education level, working conditions and collegial environment - were positively and significantly related to job satisfaction. Camilli (2004) conducted a research with the purpose to determine whether the year of teaching experience was a predictive factor of job satisfaction and burnout. He cites the findings of a research conducted by Malcolm, Lowther, Stephen and Coppard (1985) entitled "Age and the Determinants of Teacher Job Satisfaction" that age was found to be significantly related to each of these factors. Job values were found to decrease with age, job rewards were found to increase with age, and job satisfaction was also found to increase with age. These findings agreed with findings of earlier studies in regards to the effects of age on job satisfaction.

In the study of Shrestha (1989), it is stated that job experience or length of service is related to satisfaction in an interesting fashion. As one might expect, new employees tend to be relatively well satisfied with their jobs. This "honeymoon" terminates after a period of time, however, unless the worker feels that he is making rather steady progress towards the satisfaction of his occupational and social needs (Siegel & Lane, 1974).

In the review of past studies ranged from 1960 to 1915, two demographic characteristics: gender and age of employees were mostly examined factors. There is mixed findings about the effect of these two factors. Also, there is not enough evidence that the effect of gender and age do have significant influence on the job satisfaction. However, age is found more consistent that majority of researches shows its significant effect on job satisfaction.

5. Conclusion

Job satisfaction is a construct perceived by the employees in their working organization. There is no uniformity in the researches about the dimensions of job satisfaction, and it is determined by the context or the need of an organization that how a job is characterized. However, the author concludes that job satisfaction consists of physiological and psychological constructs. In physiological constructs, salary, incentives, benefits, facilities and similar others that fulfil the biological needs of employees are included whereas psychological constructs, emotional activities such as symbolic rewards such as verbal rewards, conducive environment and similar constructs are included. Regarding the effect of demographic characteristics on job satisfaction, it is concluded that the findings of the past studies are not generalizable in wider context. They are contextual, for example, effect of gender is significant in one organization and it is not true in another. The review of the past studies shows that the future researchers need to examine that what are the factors that are responsible for maintaining the consistent result on the effect of demographic characteristics on the job satisfaction.

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