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MINE AYDEMIR

ULUDAG UNIVERSITY, Turkey

NURAN BAYRAM ARLI

ULUDAG UNIVERSITY, Turkey

ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION

Abstract:

The aim of this study is to understand and determine the factors situations that may occur in the workplace affecting job satisfaction. In particular, the experiences of the employees at the workplace (quantitative workload and interpersonal conflict) and their emotional abilities are considered as reasons. The study group consisted of 199 employees. The length of employment in the workplace at the time of the study was with a range of 2-26 years. According to the results obtained, these four variables have a statistically significant effect in explaining job satisfaction. 30% of the variance of job satisfaction is explained by these variables. Results show that the workplace experiences and the emotional ability of the people are effective on job satisfaction. Empathy and self-esteem positively affected job satisfaction, however, conflict and workload negatively affected. The most important variable explaining job satisfaction had found empathy.

As a result of this study, empathy, self-esteem, quantitative workload and interpersonal conflict were identified as important variables to increase job satisfaction.

Keywords:

Job Satisfaction, Empathy, Self-Esteem, Quantitative Workload, Interpersonal Conflict

JEL Classification: C10, J28

1 Introduction

Most of people spend their time in workplaces. Some of people are happy and satisfied about their job but the others do their job because they just have to do it. One of the first concepts that come to mind when studying on employees is job satisfaction. According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction refers to employees' feelings about job. Job satisfaction is defined as positive feelings towards job.

Job satisfaction is a variable that we search to understand in this study. Empathy, self-esteem, quantitative workload and interpersonal conflict can effect on job satisfaction. There are studies supporting these relationships in the literature (Kohli, 1985; Spector & Jex, 1998; Jimmieson, 2000; Frone, 2000; Cote&Morgan, 2002; Sand, 2003; Alavi&Askaripur, 2003; Karsh, 2005; Aslan, 2006; Spector et al. 2007; Özdemir et al., 2016).

The first concept that is thought to affect job satisfaction is self-esteem. Self-esteem expresses self-confidence and satisfaction with self (Branden, 1969). In other words, self-esteem is how one thinks and feels about himself/herself. High self-esteem is expected to affect job satisfaction positively. The second concept is the quantitative workload. Workload simply represents the sheer volume of work. Quantitative workload means an employee's amount of work. Quantitative workload negatively effects job satisfaction (Spector et al., 1988; Spector & Jex, 1998; Cote & Morgan, 2002). Third one is the interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships have an important influence on individuals' life. These interpersonal relationships can occur at workplace too. Sometimes interpersonal relationships became interpersonal conflict. Interpersonal conflict is an important job stressor. Interpersonal conflict negatively related to job satisfaction. The last concept is discussed empathy. Empathy is an ability to understand and comprehend the other person. Empathy is ability to understand another's cognitive status or perspective (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Rogers at al., 1994). We expected that empathy would likely relate to job satisfaction.

The aim of this study is to understand and determine the factors situations that may occur in the workplace affecting job satisfaction. In particular, the experiences of the employees at the workplace (quantitative workload and interpersonal conflict) and their emotional abilities are considered as reasons. The empathy, self-esteem, quantitative workload and interpersonal conflict are used to explain job satisfaction in the regression model established for this purpose.

2 Method

Participants

The study group consisted of 199 employees. The convenience sampling method was used. A survey was designed that include some demographic properties and instruments. This study was based on voluntary participation. Participants filled out questionnaires anonymously. The interviews were conducted face to face and survey was applied.

Instruments

Five instruments were used in this study. They were The Job Satisfaction Scale (JS), The Interpersonal Conflict Scale (ICAW), The Quantitative Workload Scale (QWL), The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) and The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE).

The Job Satisfaction Scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). The Turkish version and validation of the job satisfaction was performed by Bilgin (1995). Scale has 5 items and it measure with 5-point likert. High scores represents high job satisfaction.

The Interpersonal Conflict Scale is a four-item scale developed by Spector and Jex (1998). Items on this scale ask about inter-personal relationships in the workplace. High scores represent frequent conflicts with others, with a possible range from 4 to 20. The Quantitative Workload Scale is a five-item scale designed to assess the amount or quantity of work in a job. QWL was developed by Spector and Jex (1998), the scale has five items. High scores represent a heavy workload, with a possible range from 5 to 25 (Bayram et al., 2009).

The Empathy Scale developed by Spreng et al. (2009). Scale has 16 items. It measure 5 point scale. 8 items code reverse. The Turkish version and validation of the Toronto empathy scale was performed by Totan et al. (2012). Scale has 13 items and one dimension in Turkish form. High scores represents high empathy.

The Self-Esteem Scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). Turkish version and validation was performed by Çuhadaroğlu (1985). The scale has ten items with items answered on a four-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. High scores represents high self esteem.

Statistical analyses were performed by SPSS version 21.0. We used reliability analysis, student t-test, and regression analysis for data analysis.

3 Findings

Study participants (N=199) mean age was 37.83 ± 4.83 (mean \pm sd), with a range of 28–53 years. The gender distribution of the participants was 70.9% male and 29.1% female. Approximately 53.8% of the study group was married, 39.2% a high-school education and 43.2% were university graduates. The length of employment in the workplace at the time of the study was with a range of 2-26 years.

Table 1: Means (M), standard deviations (SD) and C. Alpha values

Scales	Item	M	SD	C. Alpha
Job Satisfaction	5	15.50	4.30	0.85
Interpersonal Conflict	4	6.91	2.41	0.86
Quantitative Workload	5	19.38	5.48	0.96
Empathy	13	54.38	7.55	0.85
Self-Esteem	10	35.33	3.48	0.78

Means, standard deviations, and C. Alpha values are reported in Table 1. C. Alpha coefficients of all these scales were between 0.78-0.96. They are above 0.70. Therefore we accepted them reliable and used in statistical analyses.

Table 2: t-Test Results for Gender (M±SD)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Female (N=58)</i>	<i>Male (N=141)</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Job Satisfaction	3.12±.91	3.09±.84	.223	.824
Interpersonal Conflict	1.88±.56	1.67±.61	2.30	.023*
Quantitative Workload	4.13±.92	3.77±1.1	2.12	.035*
Empathy	4.25±.59	4.15±.58	1.05	.295
Self-Esteem	3.55±.37	3.53±.34	.494	.622

* p < 0.05

When Table 2 is examined, there were meaningful differences in interpersonal conflict and qualitative workload. Females mean higher than males in both variables. There were no meaningful differences in empathy and self-esteem.

Regression analyses were applied to examine the effect of empathy, self-esteem, qualitative workload and interpersonal conflict on job satisfaction.

Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis

<i>Dependent variable: Job Satisfaction</i>			
	β	t	Sig.
Empathy	0.58	5.98	0.00**
Self-Esteem	0.16	2.03	0.04*
Quantitative Workload	-0.27	-3.31	0.00**
Interpersonal Conflict	-0.17	-2.20	0.02*
R ² =0.30			
F=20.10			

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; All coefficients are standardized coefficients

The F-statistics indicates the overall significance of the models at the 0.01 level. Empathy ($\beta = 0.58$; $p = .00$) and self-esteem ($\beta = 0.16$; $p = .04$) affected positively job satisfaction but qualitative workload ($\beta = -0.27$; $p = .00$) and interpersonal conflict ($\beta = -0.17$; $p = .02$) affected negatively job satisfaction. The most important variable was found empathy ($\beta = 0.58$; $p = .00$) on job satisfaction. R² was found 0.30. This means that 30% of the variance of job satisfaction is explained by these four variables.

4 Conclusions

Results show that the workplace experiences and the emotional ability of the people are effective on job satisfaction. Empathy and self-esteem positively affected job satisfaction, however, conflict and workload negatively affected. The most important variable explaining job satisfaction had found empathy.

There are some studies in the literature about relationship mentioned between four variables.

Quantitative workload and job satisfaction has a negative relationship (Spector & Jex, 1998; Jimmieson, 2000; Cote & Morgan, 2002; Karsh, 2005; Spector et al. 2007). Interpersonal conflict and job satisfaction has a negative relationship (Spector & Jex, 1998; Frone, 2000). Positive relationship found between self-esteem and job satisfaction (Kohli, 1985; Frone, 2000; Aslan; 2006; Alavi&Askaripur, 2003). Positive relationship found between empathy and job satisfaction (Sand, 2003; Özdemir et al., 2016). All these findings in literature supported our results.

According to the results obtained, these four variables have a statistically significant effect in explaining job satisfaction. These variables are worthy of consideration by the managers and the interested parties when studies are done to increase job satisfaction.

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