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## **DETERMINANTS AND IMPACT ON JOB SATISFACTION**

### **Abstract:**

Job satisfaction refers to the level at which employees possess a positive affective orientation towards their employment in an organization. The emotional reaction may result from the current comparison of actual outcomes with those desired by the employee in question. Job satisfaction has been considered as a core element in organizational behavior. This is especially due to its direct co-relationship with job motivation and performance which directly impact an organization's success in goals achievement. Besides, its effect on other organizational aspects, such as group cohesion, has made it critical to organization's operations. Therefore, every effort taken by the management aims at lowering the level of job dissatisfaction in the workplace.

This paper considers the subject of job satisfaction in details as it applies to the employees from Abu Dhabi. The aim is to identify the determinants of job satisfaction from the data collected from these employees in addition to the available scientific literature on the subject. To this effect, the paper will offer recommendations on the best strategies and approaches for reducing or eliminating job dissatisfaction in the workplace. As such, this will raise job satisfaction and help the organization achieve its corporate goals.

### **Keywords:**

Job satisfaction, employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention

## Introduction

A clear relation between job satisfaction and the way individuals tend to think, feel about their jobs has been identified (The Conference Board, 2013). This relationship has been used to solve human resources issues in the organizations. In his work, Osbourne (2016) puts across the argument that both internal and external characteristics form core aspects of work satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as a satisfying emotional state which is a consequence of the job experience (Osbourne, 2016). The phenomenon is widely studied in organizations and is an all-around variable relating to people's feelings about their work and other associated aspects (Abadi & Chegini, 2013).

As researched by Abadi and Chegini (2013), there are numerous assumptions of the causal relations between behavior, motives, and benefits. To this end, some key factors have already been identified as core determinants of job satisfaction. They can be classified under enthusiasm, hygiene, responsibility for management roles, and work environment factors by referring to some theories (Pool, 2013). Such theories include the Maslow hierarchy of needs and the theory of necessity among others.

Per Stack (2013), job opportunities for growth and responsibility influence how employees feel about their jobs. These are the factors that compose the work environment. In addition to opportunities for promotion and career development, other key elements that determine job satisfaction include the location and available incentives among others which could have a good effect on job satisfaction (Shrestha, 2013). When these factors are present, improved job performance resulting from high job satisfaction has been noted. This is mainly because the job deliverables directly link to the work environment. The better and more conducive the work environment is, the higher job satisfaction becomes.

Besides, job satisfaction has been identified as having an indirect impact on job loyalty. The strong desire to remain employed by a certain organization is found to create more effort for the organization as well as acceptance of an organization's goals and values. Consequently, the job satisfaction level of the employee is stirred. As empirical data suggests, job satisfaction is a prerequisite to job loyalty in an organization (Stack, 2013). Low job satisfaction has been known to cause low levels of morale, low motivation, and low loyalty to the organization. Therefore, the loyalty level rises with a rise in job satisfaction. It establishes direct positive relations with satisfaction.

Per the research by Shrestha (2013), empowerment has a direct influence on job satisfaction. Empowerment is referred to as a form of participation in which the employees are encouraged to make decisions without having to consult with the managers so that the organization dynamics is initiated at the bottom (Shrestha, 2013). As it strengthens a framework by providing employees with authority and autonomy over their task, it determines how employees feel about their work. When the employees do

not receive value for their own performance without constant intervention, they lose interest in the work and become dissatisfied (Pool, 2013). As Abadi and Chegini (2013) put it, empowerment gives employees confidence in their ability to deal with the work. From an employee's point of view, being empowered has a positive effect on their job satisfaction (The Conference Board, 2013). The power sourced from individual roles, individual activities, personal freedom, and shared job quality in prevalence creates a conducive atmosphere for employee participation. It also inspires staff to make decisions independently and in the absence of supervisor's advice (Osbourne, 2016).

Another outstanding element related to job satisfaction is performance recognition. It has been agreed that employees tend to take extra effort and demonstrate commitment to maintain a close relationship with their organization (Shrestha, 2013). When an employee's effort is recognized and appreciated, it directly translates to a high feeling of value and satisfaction. Normally, these levels of performance and achievement are measured using business objectives and accountability. This can easily leave out other key achievements the employees may have reached. The failure to recognize these efforts makes the employee lose interest in the job and the mission of the organization (Abadi & Chegini, 2013).

## **Research Methodology**

The accumulated study is descriptive and empirical in nature. The main aim is to verify that the developed hypothesis is true through the empirically received findings. The factors considered to assess job satisfaction were employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention and loyalty toward the job. A questionnaire was designed taking these factors in consideration. The instrument was sent as a link to qualtrics (the software used to design the questionnaire).

## **Research question**

It was of interest to the researchers to ascertain the impact of each of the factors considered on job satisfaction. The factors considered were employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention and loyalty toward the job.

## **Survey Instrument and Sample Size**

The respondents in the research were the employees working in organizations around Abu Dhabi City. The study used convenience sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique. This form of procedure allowed the study to acquire appropriate and relevant data from a sample unit of respondents that were suitably accessible and

available to participate in the questionnaire. The convenience sampling is normally preferred since it enables the gathering of a large number of successful surveys quickly and cost efficiently. The approach also ensured that the respondents possess one condition for participation in the study. This includes the requirement that the participants were employees of an organization and hence have adequate knowledge about their jobs. The core goal was to gather sample data from employees working in the area. This selection was based on the nature of the industries where the majority of organizations in this area are operating.

To gather data for identifying the key determinants of job satisfaction, a sample of 46 respondents was used in the research exercise. The survey instrument utilized for the study was a questionnaire. It was designed to examine the relationship between different variables which served as the determinants of job satisfaction. In addition, it was decided to collect data on the variety of respondent's characteristics necessary for understanding the deviations in different classes. The questionnaire was divided into two parts.

Section I has personal and demographic elements such as gender and age of the respondent. It also includes the industry the employee is in, monthly pay, the tenure with the current employer, and the level of education. Section II contains the latent variables significant in the research. These variables include job pay and rise opportunities, employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention, and job loyalty towards job satisfaction. The scales used for these variables are strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, strongly disagree, and somewhat disagree. This allows for a specific definition of the attitude the employee has towards the variable. The job satisfaction variable and employee empowerment scales are sourced from Hackman and Oldham (1975). The workplace environment variables are sourced from Lee (2006). The job performance items are from Bowra Sharif, Saeed, and Niazi (2011). The turnover intention items are taken from Lee (2006). Lastly, job loyalty variable items are taken from Chen, Farh, and Tsui (2002).

### **Demographics of the Sample**

The study sample represented both males and females respondents. However, females featured significantly higher presence than men, the number of them standing at 63% to 37% respectively. Regarding age, the study comprised respondents of all ages. The most numerous age group is under 26 years old with a representation percentage of 89%. The next one is the age gap 26-35 years old at 9%. The age group 46-55 years old makes 2%. However, the age brackets 36-45, 56-65, 66 and older were not represented in the sample. The respondent group portrays high levels of education. The significant percentage of the participants (42%) graduated with a Bachelor degree This group is closely followed by the respondents with high school level education equaling to 27% of

the sample. A 22% group follows with the Graduate level. Only 4% has a Doctorate degree.

Most of the employees have worked with the current employer for less than a year. This is a group representation of 55%. The next group comprises those who have worked for 1-3 years, which equals to 20% of the sample. 7% of the group has stayed with their current employer for 5- 10 years, while another 14% has been employed by the same company for 3-5 years. Only 5% of the respondents have worked for the current employer for more than 10 years. As for the income bracket, it is below 15000 per month for a significantly high number of the respondents (71%). 7 % earns between 15000 – 25000 a month, while 11% and 2% of the group earn between 25000 - 35000 and between 35000 - 45000 a month respectively. Only 9% receives above 45000 a month.

In general, the sample is represented by a relatively educated group with moderate income levels. A large percentage is under 26 years of age. In addition, these employees reside within the Abu Dhabi area where these organizations are situated.

## **Data Analysis**

The research was done in both private and public sector organizations of the Abu Dhabi area. The sole goal was to establish the factors with the most significant impact on job satisfaction for the employees. As such, it is meant to help identify the key determinants of job satisfaction in an organization. To choose the best variables that have a relevant impact on job satisfaction, an analysis of similar past studies was conducted. This is to discover the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover rate, empowerment, performance, and workplace environment.

As mentioned before, this study was conducted on the sample of 46 respondents from the target population. Again, the questionnaire administered to the participants consisted of two sections. The first section collected data on personal and general information on pay, age, status, employment, and education level. The second section collected data on the selected variables with a correlation to job satisfaction. These are job pay rise opportunities, employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention, and job loyalty. Employment empowerment and workplace environment were considered as the independent variables, while job satisfaction is the dependent variable.

An analysis of the data collected from the sample revealed a number of key issues. The results posit that employee empowerment positively impact job satisfaction. As such, when employees receive autonomy in making key organization decisions, there is a high likelihood that their job satisfaction will increase. However, it was discovered that employee empowerment has a reverse side, i. e. negative relation with turnover intention.

Employee empowerment contributes a little to turnover intention. This means that there exist far more significant and influential variables on turnover intention than employee empowerment.

From the analysis, workplace environment positively affects job satisfaction given its contribution to job satisfaction of employees in these organizations. Whenever an employee receives favorable and conducive work environment, then it is highly likely that job satisfaction level will rise. By analyzing the relations of job satisfaction with employee turnover intention, a direct relationship is revealed. In cases of low levels of job satisfaction in a company, the staff in that company tends to resign. As the study results show, job satisfaction has a significant negative impact on turnover intention.

Similarly, the next variable job loyalty has a noteworthy positive relationship with job satisfaction. From the analysis of the study results, job loyalty contributes greatly to job satisfaction. This is an indication that satisfied employees possess more job and organizational loyalty than those dissatisfied with their jobs. Because of dissatisfaction, most employees are likely to quit their jobs, find new ones or opt to shift careers. Also, it was noted that the level of employee's loyalty is high when employee job satisfaction is raised.

Per the analyzed data from the study, job satisfaction strongly impacts job performance. This indicates that high job satisfaction and motivation level has a strong effect on the workers' productivity. The high level of performance demands attractive packages from the employers. However, job performance has a negative impact on turnover intention. Job participation has a small contribution to turnover intention. On the other hand, the result of regression indicates that job performance has no dominant impact whatsoever on turnover intention.

Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
I get paid equitably for my efforts and contributions	1.00	5.00	2.07	1.03	1.07	46
I have fair chances of being considered for pay raise	1.00	5.00	2.26	1.13	1.27	46
My work gets recognized here	1.00	5.00	2.23	1.14	1.31	46
Promotional opportunities are available for all those that perform consistently	1.00	5.00	2.03	1.05	1.11	46
Opportunities to grow up in the organizational hierarchy are plenty	1.00	5.00	2.33	1.08	1.17	46
I am empowered to initiate corrective actions on my daily tasks	1.00	5.00	2.33	1.08	1.17	46
I have a say in how problems are solved at my workplace	1.00	5.00	2.40	1.16	1.34	46
I am encouraged to deal daily issues by	1.00	5.00	2.31	1.04	1.08	46

myself						
Social relations and whom I contact are determined by me	1.00	5.00	1.90	1.01	1.02	46
I decide ways in which my workplace is arranged	1.00	5.00	2.26	1.03	1.06	46
My office is spacious and well furnished	1.00	5.00	2.33	1.14	1.30	46
I determine the aesthetics of my office	1.00	5.00	2.45	1.12	1.25	46
I feel undisturbed in my office	1.00	5.00	2.31	1.18	1.39	46
I feel distracted at my workplace	1.00	5.00	2.58	1.26	1.58	46
I perform better than my peer group members with similar qualifications	1.00	4.00	2.16	0.99	0.98	46
My performance is good and very satisfying	1.00	5.00	1.95	0.97	0.94	46
My contributions are better than those with similar qualifications in other organizations	1.00	4.00	2.03	0.94	0.89	46
I have often contemplated about quitting	1.00	5.00	2.78	1.47	2.17	46
I intend to be involved in an active search for a new job in the near future	1.00	5.00	2.08	0.97	0.94	46
I feel that I must change jobs	1.00	5.00	2.58	1.21	1.47	46
I often discuss other job opportunities outside my organization	1.00	5.00	2.08	1.11	1.24	46
I will continue with my present employer	1.00	5.00	2.20	1.01	1.02	46
I suggest friends to join this organization	1.00	5.00	1.92	0.92	0.85	46
My organization has my full support on all issues	1.00	5.00	1.97	1.07	1.14	46
It is hard for me to listen to criticism of my organization	1.00	5.00	2.31	1.15	1.32	46
Appreciation of my organization is what makes me happy	1.00	5.00	2.03	0.97	0.94	46
I will continue to work here irrespective of personal benefits that I see for myself.	1.00	5.00	2.18	1.04	1.09	46

Other general findings include the importance placed on job satisfaction in improving job performance of the employees. All five variables were found to be positive in the relationship as key determinants of job satisfaction. The most dominant and significant determinant variables (with the highest mean) were employee empowerment and work environment. Specific factors are as follows: having a say in how problems are solved or

decisions are made, empowerment to initiate projects, opportunities to grow up in the organization, recognition of work done by employees, fair chances for raise in pay, getting paid equitably with effort, and lastly the social relations and contacts as determined by the employee. The factors with the lowest mean in regards to job satisfaction are relations with social relations.

## **Recommendations**

Several forms of group cohesion related to job satisfaction indicated strong relationships with overall job satisfaction. This includes comfort ability while talking to senior management about job satisfaction level as the top variable, supervisory relations, open communication in the workplace, and fair performance evaluation among others. The results of this research support the hypothesis that pay and raise opportunities, employee empowerment, workplace environment, job performance, turnover intention, job loyalty, and other variables are important to the job satisfaction of an organization's employees (Shrestha, 2013). It is hence advisable that the study results be considered while developing strategies for improving employee satisfaction. A number of approaches can be used such as a creating positive work environment, providing competitive benefits, ensuring workforce engagement, empowerment and opportunities among others.

The organizations need to focus on the best approaches to establishing a positive attitude towards work in the work environments. This includes avoiding micromanagement, offering positive feedback, and ensuring that criticism is constructive. Besides, offering competitive benefits will make employees feel that the rewards match their effort. The employee will be satisfied if the compensation equitably meets the effort they put into the job (Stack, 2013). Moreover, the employees need fair chances of pay rise consideration that is tied to performance and is not biased. Recognizing employees for exemplary work is also beneficial, while negative criticism should be avoided. Ensuring the development of employee skills and offering the promotional opportunities in the organization is effective. Lastly, empowering and allowing employee participation in decision making plays a key role in job satisfaction (Pool, 2013).

Although following every recommendation is not possible given the time and budget limitations, being aware of the current employee satisfaction level is important so as to effectively solve their problems. This helps create an efficient transition and forward moving strategies to effectively serve the purpose of an organization.

## **Conclusion**

The previous study on the determinants of job satisfaction suggests that job satisfaction has an ability to impact the employee motivation, turnover, absenteeism, and social

behavior. All these are factors crucial to organization's achievement of its corporate goals. This case is not only applicable to traditional businesses, but also to all industries. The job satisfaction of all employees in organizations is critical for the success of these organizations to sustain effective operations. The organizations that participated in the study have a lot learn from the results and should make their organizations a conducive and effective workplace. The supervisory relationships, cooperation while completing tasks, organization's mission and motivation elements are all important to employee job satisfaction.

This study was met with a number of limitations. The research only focused on a number of variables of job satisfaction, i.e. performance, empowerment, loyalty, turnover intention, and workplace. In future studies, the focus should extend to variables such as rewards, incentives and career development for deeper understanding of job satisfaction. Secondly, the used sample size is relatively small and ought to be higher so as to comprehend the key determinants in a more general way. Besides, information is sourced from a certain group of respondents. In future, this can be extended to a larger population to infuse more diverse and quality data into the study. This research was successful in identifying and measuring the key determinants of job satisfaction, but a large study would allow more participation and take all the other limiting factors into consideration.

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