

## **A STUDY OF VARIOUS CONSTRUCTS OF JOB SATISFACTION: RESEARCH SO FAR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

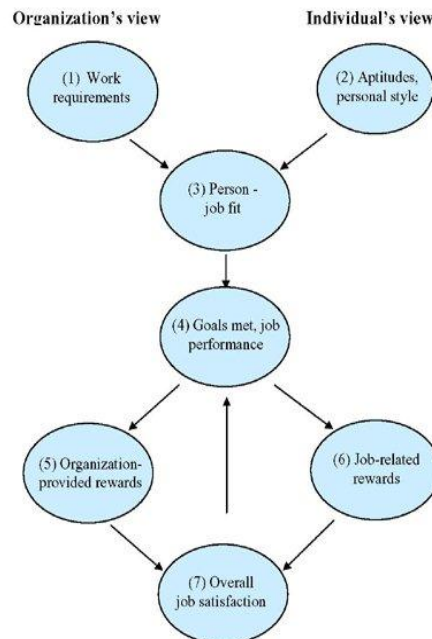
Job satisfaction is one of the most researched topics in management streams. The reasons being that in today's competitive world, the biggest challenge which the organizations are facing is to retain talented employees. It is a means to ensure that employees stay motivated and committed for high quality performance. In the present research paper the authors have tried to include the recent research done in this field which reflects the changing mind set of the work force.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In today's competitive world, the biggest challenge which the organizations are facing is to retain talented employees. Job satisfaction is necessary to promote functional employee behaviours in the organization. For the organization, job satisfaction of its workers means a work force that is motivated and committed to high quality performance. Job Satisfaction is an important indicator of how employees feel about their jobs and a predictor of work behaviours such as organizational citizenship, absenteeism, and turnover. Further, job satisfaction can partially mediate the relationship of personality variables and deviant work behaviours.

## JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is an important indicator of quality of work; it is also one of the most important components of human life and work. Vroom (1964) stated that job satisfaction is positively associated with job performance. In fact human relations might be described as an attempt to increase productivity by satisfying the needs of employees. Job satisfaction is a significant area of conducting research, although the subject has been researched to a great extent.

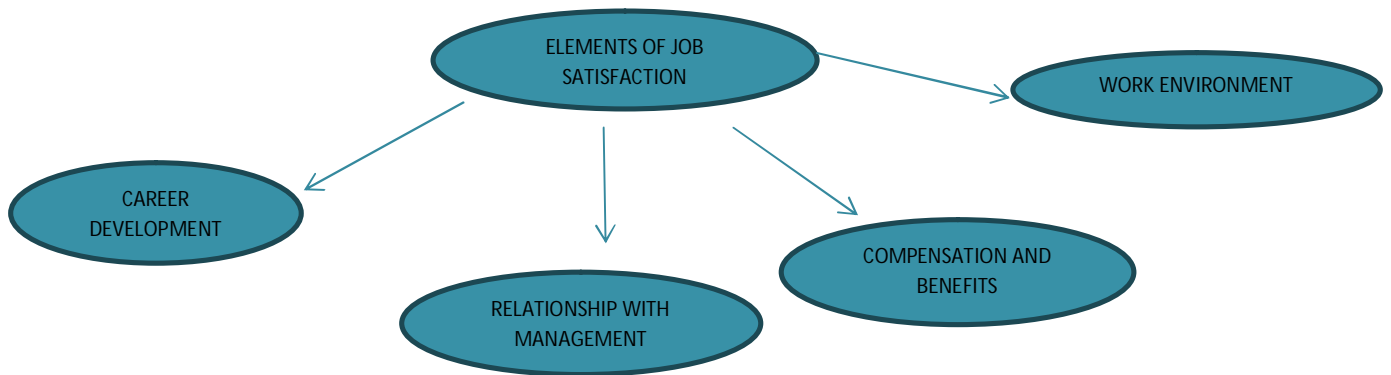


### **Model of Job-Satisfaction-Showing how employer's and employee's requirement result into Job-Satisfaction**

Source: <http://www.careervision.org/JobSatisfaction-Paper.htm>

The term job satisfaction refers to the general attitude of an individual towards his/her job (Robbins, 2003). Job satisfaction has been defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job; an affective reaction towards the job; It's an attitude towards one's job. Weiss (2002) has argued that job satisfaction is an attitude but points out that researchers should clearly distinguish the objects of cognitive evaluation which are affect (emotion), beliefs and behaviours. This definition suggests that we form attitudes towards our

jobs by taking into account our feelings, our beliefs, and our behaviours. Therefore, Job satisfaction can be defined either as the overall job satisfaction of an employee or as the satisfaction with certain facets of the job such as the work itself, co-workers, supervision, pay, working conditions, company policies, procedures and opportunities for promotion(Smith et al.,1969).



Source: 2009 Employee Job Satisfaction- A Survey Report for SHRM

US Recession affected Employee Job satisfaction (2009 Employee Job Satisfaction, A Survey Report of SHRM)

Research indicates that the employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to stay with the employers. At the time of recession 86% of employees indicated overall satisfaction with their current position while 41% of the employees reported that they were very satisfied. Some noteworthy findings were that employees whose organizations were somewhat affected by the current financial crisis were more satisfied overall with their current jobs as compared with the employees whose organizations had been greatly affected by the recession. The most common methods companies have used to measure employee job satisfaction were exit interviews, feedback from employees, performance reviews, speaking with employees on an individual basis, tracking turnover data and employee attitude surveys.

## **CAUSES OF JOB SATISFACTION AND REASONS OF DISSATISFACTION**

The five predominant models of job satisfaction focus on different causes which are:

1. **Need Fulfilment:** These models propose that satisfaction is determined by the extent to which the characteristics of a job allow an individual to fulfill his or her needs. Unmet needs can affect both satisfaction and turnover.
2. **Discrepancies:** These models propose that satisfaction is a result of met expectations. Met expectation represent the difference between what an individual expects to receive from a job and what he or she actually receives. When expectations are greater than what is received a person will be dissatisfied. This model predicts that an individual will be satisfied when he or she attains above and beyond expectations.
3. **Value Attainment:** Satisfaction result from the perception that a job allows fulfilment of an individual's important work values. Managers can thus enhance employee satisfaction by structuring the work environment and its associated rewards and recognition to reinforce employee values. Without value attainment dissatisfaction levels may arise among employees.
4. **Equity:** In this model, satisfaction is a function of how fairly an individual is treated at work. Satisfaction result from ones perception that work outcomes, relative to inputs, compare favourably with a significant others outcomes/inputs. Inequity at workplace may heavily affect job satisfaction.
5. **Dispositional/Genetic components:** This model is based on the belief that job satisfaction is partly a function of both personal traits i.e. personality types and genetic factors. It implies that stable individual differences are important in explaining job satisfaction.

## Employee Responses to Dissatisfaction



**Source: Adapted from Robins & Judge Organizational Behaviour (2009)**

### **EFFECTS OF JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction causes a series of influences on various aspects of organizational life. Some of them such as the influence of job satisfaction on employee productivity, loyalty and absenteeism are analyzed as part of this text.

The preponderance of research evidence indicates that there is no strong linkage between satisfaction and productivity. For example a comprehensive meta-analysis of the research literature finds only 17 best estimate correlation between job satisfaction and productivity. Satisfied workers will not necessarily be the highest producers. There can be many other possible moderating variables, the most important of which seems to be rewards. If people perceive that original justice prevails in their organization in the form of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice as they feel satisfied with the job (Adam's 1965).

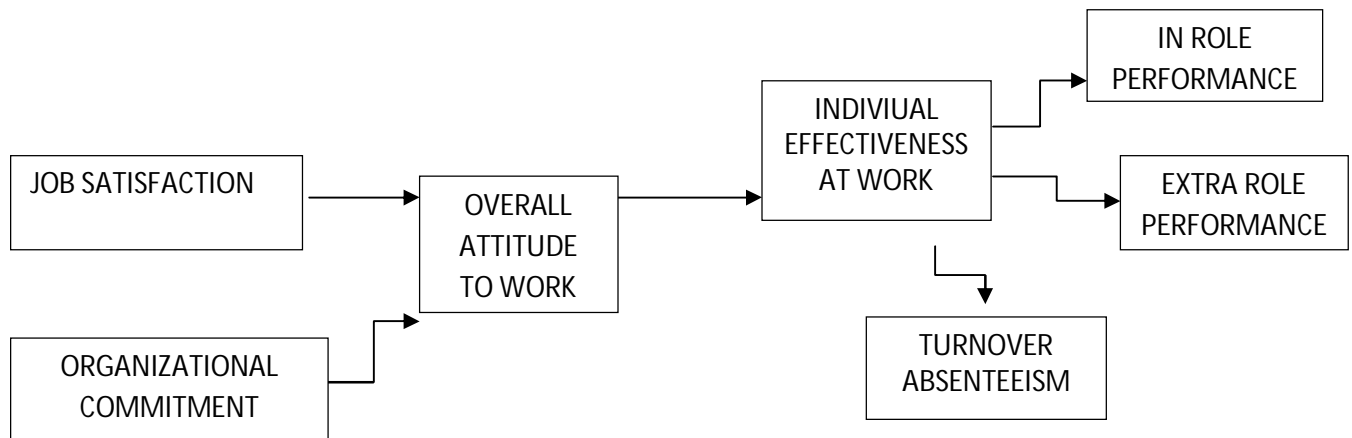
Also, recent research evidence indicates that satisfaction may not necessarily lead to individual performance improvement but does lead to departmental and organizational level improvements. Finally, there is a still considerable debate whether satisfaction lead to performance or performance leads to satisfaction (Luthans, 1998).

The study between Job satisfaction and organizational commitment states whether attitude such as satisfaction and commitment always cause better employee performance, but they are found to be more strongly related to withdrawal behaviour. Further the evidence is not clear about whether employees are satisfied with their jobs and is committed to their organization or employees committed to their organization but tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. There is no single prescript behaviour for both job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Yet, employees are highly satisfied with their jobs are more likely to stay with the organization, are less absent, are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviour and experience higher satisfaction with their life in general. Satisfied supervisors have been found to be more considerable and willing to mentor subordinates. Dissatisfaction on the other hand is related to late comings, absenteeism and turnover.

More recently there is an opinion that the only clear difference between job satisfaction and organizational commitment is their targets. The target of job satisfaction is one's position or work role. The target of affective commitment is the entire organization. Therefore we can take job satisfaction and organizational commitment together as an indicating an overall attitude to work.

### ATTITUDE AT WORK AND ITS OUTCOMES



Source: Adapted from Harrison (2006)

An overall positive attitude towards one job makes a person more effective at work that person's extra role performance also improves. Employee positive attitude is partly during to his /her personality perception and motivation. The organization can provide the context for creating, strengthening and sustaining employee effectiveness.

## **MEASURING JOB SATISFACTION**

How can job satisfaction be measured? The most widely used measure is a very simple one. Overall job satisfaction can be assessed by simple questions such as 'Choose one of the following statements which best tells how well you like your job: I hate it, I dislike it, I do not like it, I am indifferent to it, I like it, I am enthusiastic about it, I love it' (Hoppock, 1935). Later measures have used a series of scales to measure different components of job satisfaction. Many scales have been devised for this purpose: one book reviews no fewer than 249 scales of various kinds (Cook et al., 1981). However, one of the most widely used is the Job Description Index, which contains five scales, seventy-two items in all, which are answered 'yes', 'no' or 'uncertain' (Smith, Kendall and Hulin, 1969). The five scales are designed to measure satisfaction in the following areas: (1) work on present job, e.g. fascinating; (2) present pay, e.g. income inadequate for normal expenses (-); (3) opportunities for promotion, e.g. fairly good chance for promotion; (4) supervision on present job, e.g. lazy (-); (5) people on present job, e.g. talk too much (-). The minus signs show reversed items, i.e. those that show dissatisfaction. According to Robins & Judge (2009) single global rating (one question/one answer) may be convenient but it is advised to use summation score (many questions/one average).

C.R. Kothari (2004) states that Projective techniques has mostly been used for the collection of primary data which has been developed by psychologist to use projections of respondents for inferring about underlying motives, urges or intentions which are such that the respondent either resists revealing them or is unable to figure out himself. It plays an important role in motivational researches or in attitude surveys. Projective technique is also known as indirect interviewing technique.

## **RESEARCH DONE IN THE AREA OF JOB SATISFACTION**

Weiss (2002) defines job satisfaction as an attitude. However, there it is necessary to distinguish the objects of cognitive evaluation which are affect (emotion), beliefs and behaviours. In other words, feeling, beliefs and behaviours do have an effect on job satisfaction among employees.

Thomas A Wright, Russell Cropanzano, Philip J Denney, Gary L Moline(2002) has studied numerous times that, happy employees exhibit higher levels of job-related performance behaviours than do unhappy employees. However, despite decades of study, support for this hypothesis remains equivocal. We propose that these inconsistent findings may be a consequence of the disparate manner in which happiness has been operationalized. The above study provides the first opportunity to simultaneously examine the contributions of psychological well-being, job satisfaction and dispositional affect to job performance. While psychological well-being predicted job performance, the results failed to establish relations between job satisfaction and dispositional affect as predictors of job performance.

John Robbins (2003) has defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state which results from appraisal of job; an affective reaction to job; and an attitude towards job.

Igbaria & Guimaraes, Kuo& Chen, Sumner & Niederman, (2003-2004) researched that the relationship between background variables and job satisfaction, their studies show inconsistent results concerning the relationships between most background variables and job satisfaction.

Colin Green, John S. Heywood (2008), investigated the influence of performance-related pay on several dimensions of job satisfaction. In cross-sectional estimates performance-related pay is associated with increased overall satisfaction, satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with job security and satisfaction with hours.

The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, polling over 1,000 adults every day since January 2008 came out with a survey on topic "Do Happier People Work Harder". The results of the survey showed that Americans felt worse about their jobs and work environments than ever before. It showed that people are unhappy with their supervisors, apathetic about their organizations and detached from what they do.



Chet Robie University of Houston, Michigan State University, Ann Mare Ryan, Robert A. Schmieder, Personnel Decisions International, Luis William M. Mercer, Inc Patricia C. Smith Bowling Green State University 2010 in their study on the Relation between Job Level and Job Satisfaction examined the relationship between job level and job satisfaction. It was found that as job level increased, so did job satisfaction. Further, there was a high degree of convergence among the measures of job level and a consistently positive relationship between the job level and job facet satisfaction measures. These studies suggest that the relation between job level and job satisfaction is positive.

The San Diego State University and Navy Personnel Research and Development Centre (2010) conducted a research to find relationship between age, education, salary, job characteristics, and job satisfaction. The results showed that job satisfaction increased with age. When the effects of salary, job tenure, and education were removed independently as well as simultaneously, the same differences were found.

James K. Harter (2010) found that lower job satisfaction foreshadowed poorer bottom-line performance. When people don't care about their jobs, absenteeism increases, production and work quality reduces. The study revealed the inner work lives of employees—the usually hidden perceptions, emotions and motivations that people experience as they react to and make sense of events in their workdays.

The study by Anna Cristina D'Addio, Tor Eriksson & Paul Fritters (2011) seeks to explain differences in individuals' self-reported satisfaction with their jobs. It was found that the impact of central economic factors is the same as in previous studies. Moreover, the determinants of job satisfaction differ considerably between the genders, in particular once individual fixed effects are allowed for.

Timothy A. Judge' Ronald F. Piccolo' Nathan P. Podsak off John C. Shaw, Bruce L. Rich in the relationship between pay and job satisfaction: A meta-analysis of the literature (2010) estimated the population correlation between pay level and measures of pay and job satisfaction. It was found that pay level was correlated .15 with job satisfaction and .23 with pay satisfaction. Various moderators of the relationship were investigated. Despite the popular theorizing, results

suggest that pay level is only marginally related to satisfaction. Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed.

Arnold and Feldman (1982) In a multivariate analysis of the determinants of job turnover found that age, tenure in the organization, overall job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived job security, and intention to search for an alternative position were the most projecting variables—each of which was negatively related to turnover, with the exception of intention to search for an alternative position which was positively associated with turnover. It was also noted that turnover was more strongly related to intentions to search for alternatives than intentions to change job positions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The studies conducted so far explain numerous factors which affect the job satisfaction level of employees. These factors range from age, designation, gender to working environment, relationship between colleagues to management policies. All the factors have either positive or negative or null correlation with job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has both negative and positive relationship with age. As proved in the studies so far, job satisfaction is high at the initial stage, gets gradually reduced, starts rising up to certain stage, and finally dips to a low degree.

Further, qualification of an individual is although considered to be a factor which determines the degree of job satisfaction. However, according to the studies and research conducted till date, there is a null correlation between the qualification and job satisfaction.

It is also seen that experience of an individual is although considered to be a factor which determines the degree of job satisfaction. The experience and job satisfaction has no correlation as studies have shown so far. Further, most reviewed studies show a consistent finding that the job satisfaction level is high among males than females.

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**EXHIBIT -1**

**SHRM Job Satisfaction Survey2009**

**Employees say recession not reducing overall job satisfaction**

Employees say recession not reducing overall job satisfaction, annual SHRM survey finds – The majority of employees (58 percent) report the current economy has no effect on their overall job satisfaction, according to the 2009 Job Satisfaction Survey, released on June 28 by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) at its 61st Annual Conference and Exposition in New Orleans. Employees at organizations "somewhat affected" by the recession are more likely to be satisfied than employees at organizations that have been "greatly impacted" by the economy. More than 40 percent of those surveyed said they are "very satisfied" with their jobs and 45 percent are "somewhat satisfied."

"Although employees say the weak economy has no negative impact on overall job satisfaction, the recession is the reason why job security is the top-ranked factor to workplace satisfaction among HR professionals and employees in 2009," said SHRM president and CEO Laurence G. O'Neil. "Job security is the number one aspect of job satisfaction this year, topping benefits, compensation and feeling safe at work."

The annual survey also revealed that the Employees with longer tenure at organizations rank benefits, such as defined contribution plans and defined benefit pension plans, as most important to job satisfaction, than do employees with shorter tenure. More females report paid time off, the relationship with the immediate boss and co-workers and flexibility to balance work and life issues as being important to job satisfaction than do men. Employees 35 years old and younger said family-friendly benefits were more important than did employees age 56 and older. Career development and networking opportunities, paid training and reimbursement programs, meaningfulness of job and an organization's commitment to a green workplace were among the job satisfaction aspects that were least in importance to employees between 2008 and 2009.