

Status Influence and Job Satisfaction of Organizational Members

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ABSTRACT

This paper gives an insight into the overall job satisfaction of employees as well as satisfaction with respect to the facets of job viz. pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. The purpose of the study was to know employees attitudes towards different job facets and to examine whether job satisfaction increases with rank or not?. The data is primary in nature based on a field survey conducted on the permanent employees of three Electric Corporation viz. MeECL, NEEPCO, and PowerGrid located in the North Eastern State of India, Meghalaya, Shillong. A sample of 337 employees was considered and data were collected divided into two strata of 129 executives and 208 non-executives. For the purpose of measurement of job satisfaction, job satisfaction survey instrument by specter (1985) was considered. The finding of the study revealed that job satisfaction increases with rank and the attitudes of the two strata towards different facets were also revealed.

1. Introduction

It has been 84 years since Hoppock (1935) for the very first time specifically brought forward the term 'Job Satisfaction' to the public domain. Ever since the subject has kept the researchers occupied from all areas of discipline for more than half a century and have not lost its focus until today. It is perhaps one of the single most widely studied topics in the arena of organizational psychology. The simple reason for its widespread global interest may be due to its effects on the well-being of most individuals at a physical and mental aspect (Oshagbemi, 1996). People are judge and they judge themselves in the society depending upon the type of job one does because they spend a major part of their lives at work and an individual's identity is established. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence job satisfaction could potentially lead to improve the well-being of a large part of our society (Staples & Higgins, 1998).

Another important reason for the continuing popularity of the subject may be that satisfied employees determine the welfare of an organization. The proper utilization of all the available resources within the organization depends upon the development of peoples' skills working in it and their satisfaction in meaningful jobs in order to meet society's needs (Wiggins & Steade, 1976). The success of any organization in creating a happy and skillful human resource builds an edge for determining its employees' level of job satisfaction, which cannot be compared with another organization in the operating market. However, determining an employee's level of satisfaction and keeping employees motivated proves to be a very difficult and challenging task (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Job satisfaction also has wide range of implications, which are both positive as well as negative. It is positively correlated with motivation, job involvement, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, life satisfaction, mental health, job performance, productivity, and worker associations. On the contrary, job satisfaction is negatively associated with

absenteeism, turnover intentions, and perceived stress (Kim, 2005).

Job satisfaction also constitutes as one of the important organizational variable to determine the effectiveness of an organization. Hence, understanding job satisfaction of its employees has always been one of the top priorities in achieving the organizational goal. Therefore, measuring employee job satisfaction has received considerable attention in recent years and the morale or job attitudinal surveys was employed by large and small industrial concerns alike (Lee & Bruvold, 2003; Saari & Judge, 2004; Gazioglu & Tansel, 2006) for the purpose of identifying the various factors to ascertain employee job satisfaction that would help in creating a motivated workforce.

2. Literature Review:

Job satisfaction, according to Hoppock (1935) is a three dimensional blend of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances) that causes a person to truthfully express his satisfaction on the job. Speroff (1955) on the other hand defined job satisfaction in accordance to the attitudes one holds towards the job, the co-workers, confidence in management, among other factors so as to determine the job satisfaction outlook through the employees' association in the organization. The most widely accepted and cited definition on the subject is..., 'a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). The whole notion in the definition of Locke (1976) was about an individual's value as being the most fundamental aspect and possessing the ability to influence emotional response to one's job. However, Smith, Roberts, & Hulin (1976) had a dissimilar opinion and pointed out a reversal possibility in that experiences encountered on the job have the potential to affect feelings brought to that job. One may simply put job satisfaction as a multidimensional construct with a variety of definitions and related concepts. Although there is

disparity in defining the subject, there also exist general agreements. The general notion is all about coming to one conclusion regarding job satisfaction as an effective reaction to a job that resulted from the comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired (Oshagbemi, 2003).

While addressing the issue of job satisfaction, it is important to highlight the two-factor theory by Herzberg (1965; 1968) as it is the most cited theory relating to the constituents affecting the subject. The theory separates itself from the orthodox opinion on job satisfaction that existed prior to its origin. It does not accept the concept of satisfaction and dissatisfaction relating to job as the opposing ends towards one another. Rather its ideology on the subject defines job satisfaction as the absence of the factors that results in no-job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction as the absence of factors, which results in no-job dissatisfaction. According to this theory, there are distinctly two kinds of factors (job and the related environment). The former was termed as intrinsic factors relating to achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility and growth or advancement and the latter has been termed as extrinsic factors which relates to company policy & administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security (Herzberg, 1965; 1968). The subject has been explored extensively considering diverse aspects and various factors indicated by different researchers over the years worldwide as such income and job satisfaction (Klein, 1973; Futrell, 1978; Sweeney, McFarlin, & Inderrieden, 1990; Pfeffer & Langton, 1993; Clark & Oswald, 1996); working conditions and interpersonal relationships (Burke & Wilcox, 1969; Gemmill, 1969; Aram, Morgan, & Esbeck, 1971; Muchinsky, 1977; Driscoll, 1978; Hatfield & Huseman, 1982); company policy & supervision (Ivancevich, 1970; Sadler, 1970; House, Filley, & Kerr, 1971; Podsakoff, Todor, & Skov, 1982) and status (Pruden & Reese, 1972; Hollon & Chessner, 1976; Oshagbemi, 1997) and security (Gould & Hawkins, 1978; Eberhardt & Shani, 1984; Yousef, 1998).

Although there is a wide range of research and studies carried out on job satisfaction, yet most of the studies have failed to bring to the fore the direct effect of status/ rank on job satisfaction (Oshagbemi, 2003; Eyupoglu, & Saner, 2009). During the period between 1981 to 1997, only few research articles were published (Oshagbemi, 1997). In fact, in Saiyadain's (1977) study, the earliest works on the subject (Hoppock, 1935; Centers, 1948) began addressing the issues of organizational levels and job satisfaction where in a positive association between the variables was found. According to Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson, & Capwell, (1957) an increase in the organizational level has a tendency to increase an employee's morale, thereby leading to achieve job satisfaction. Nevertheless, Saiyadain (1977) in the study conducted on four organizationally adjacent levels of employees found that higher job rank in organization, leads to higher level of job satisfaction.

Most of the studies that have been conducted to establish the relationship between job satisfaction and rank, indicated a positive association between the two facets, where rank acted as a reliable predictor and increases progressively. It may be said in general that employees at a higher status/ rank in the

organization were more satisfied with their jobs compared to those at the lower level/position (Oshagbemi, 2003). A more consistent result was evident in Oshagbemi's (1996; 1997; 2003) study on the UK University teachers. It was observed from the study that there exists a positive relationship between rank and job satisfaction. The studies conducted by other researchers also supported these findings whereby they concluded by indicating a positive relationship between rank & job satisfaction (Ronen, 1978; Robie, Ryan, Schmieder, Parra, & Smith, 1998; Aronson, Laurenceau, Sieveking, & Bellet, 2005). Eyupoglu, & Saner's (2009) carried out a study where only extrinsic satisfaction (advancement, compensation, co-workers, and variety) was seen to be statistically significant with rank indicating no statistical significance in case of intrinsic and overall job satisfaction. On the other hand, Miles, Patrick, & King Jr (1996) found a moderating effect of job-level on the communication and job satisfaction relationship as supervisors reported a higher level of job satisfaction compared to hourly working employees. However, in a more recent study on 188 academic members from four public Universities, Vietnam revealed to have no significant association between organizational rank and job satisfaction (Duong, 2014). Saiyadain's (1977) explained the relationship between rank and job satisfaction based on need fulfillment theory. The relationship directly reflects upon an individuals need to satisfy ones aspirations. One of these, in most cases is to rise to a more highly valued position. Perhaps, it directly draws upon occupation and prestige ranking as an important element that probably dominates social status more than any single factor (Dufty, 1960). With higher rank arise better rewards as such, improved working conditions, higher remuneration, better promotion prospects, supervision, responsibility and complexity of job, etc. (Robie et al., 1998; Aronson, et al., 2005) that pulls a direct relationship between need fulfillment with an increase in rank and job satisfaction. According to Aronson, et al., (2005), presence of dissatisfaction at higher-level employees will certainly transmit towards lower level employees reflecting in economic, financial, and morale problems.

3. Objective of the study:

1. To analyse employees attitude towards different job facets.
2. To investigate the effect of rank on job satisfaction of employees.

4. Methodology:

The study is based on primary data collected from the permanent employees of three Electric Corporation viz. MeECL, NEEPCO, and PowerGrid located in the state of Meghalaya. A stratified random sampling method was applied for the selection of sample units after acquiring the organizational code of employees. The total N sample was 337 employees out of which 129 represent the executive strata and the remaining 208 represents the non-executives strata. For the purpose of assessing employees' attitude towards their job and aspects of the job, Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) questionnaire developed by Spector (1985) was employed. It is a 36 item, 9 facet scale (pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent reward, operating conditions, co-worker, nature of work and communication) assessed with 4 items for each facet and a rating scale with choice per item ranging from

'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' based on Likert Scale. For analysing the data, the Job Satisfaction Survey instructions were followed while considering the cut-off scores for decision making between the level of job satisfactions categories viz.

dissatisfied, ambivalence, and satisfied. Thereafter, a frequency count and percentage method was applied for analysing the data.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion:

Table 1: Distribution of Overall Satisfaction as per strata						
Strata	M	SD	Dissatisfied (%)	Ambivalence (%)	Satisfied (%)	Total (N)
Executive	157.46	16.38	1 (0.78)	21 (16.28)	107 (82.95)	129 (100)
Non-Executive	154.20	13.12	0 (0)	48 (23.08)	160 (76.92)	208 (100)
Overall Job Satisfaction	155.45	14.52	1 (0.30)	69 (20.47)	267 (79.23)	337 (100)
Source: Respondents survey results from the field						

The dissemination of employees' satisfaction as per the two groups and the overall satisfaction of employees can be seen in Table-1. As per the results obtained, out of 337 total numbers of units included in the study, 79.23% of employees were satisfied and 20.47% of employees were unsure about their overall job satisfaction in the organization, while, a very negligible 0.30% of employees formed the dissatisfied category. In this respect, it can be said that the overall job satisfaction of employees working in Electric Corporations are satisfactory. However, mean score of 155.45 indicates a moderate level of satisfaction. This outcome may be due to the reason that the employees in the study belong to a government undertaking. Therefore, job security may be responsible for satisfaction while moderate category may be due to monotonous nature of work and lack of creative expression. However, results indicate higher job satisfaction for executive class (82.95%) of employees when compared to non-executives (76.92%). At the same time it is also much higher than that of overall job satisfaction (79.23%). The non-executive group of employees accounted for more ambivalence percentage of 23.08% against executives' percentage of 16.28% and 20.47% of overall job satisfaction. Accordingly, it may be said that higher the rank of employees the more satisfied they become. This indicates a progressive association between rank and job satisfaction where the satisfaction in the job increases with rank as work becomes more interesting and challenging along with better benefits and increased rewards. At the same time it must be due to an increase in the social status which gives a boost to the morale with an increase in responsibility.

nature of work the most. This explains the importance of good and supportive work environment where appreciation, recognition, and rewards for good work are necessary for motivating employees. Needless to say, the satisfaction with these facets of job for both the strata is satisfactory and increases with higher rank. However, both strata of employees have ranked two facets viz. promotion & operating conditions at the bottom and were ambivalent in response relating to these two facets. The reason may be due to the fact that promotions in government organizations are generally based on tenure & seniority and not on performance basis. The operating conditions in such a set up are normally rigid and lack flexibility which may be responsible either towards low or ambiguous satisfaction.

Table-3 depicts the percentage distribution of satisfied employees into three category viz. highly satisfied, moderately satisfied, and low satisfaction for the two strata. It was observed that the overall level of satisfaction was moderate (see Table-1) and no change in the overall level of satisfaction was observed while considering the two strata. Therefore, it will be meaningful if the moderate percentage of satisfaction will be taken for comparing between the two strata. But, a holistic understanding can be derived through the percentage distribution of high and medium satisfaction of employees. Out of the 9 facets, the non-executive group of employees were higher in moderate satisfaction with respect to 7 facets viz. pay, fringe-benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of work, and communication. While the executive strata was more satisfied in respect of promotion and supervision. This depiction directs towards an understanding that higher rank employees are more oriented towards control, power, and autonomy while the lower rank employees are more oriented towards personal relations and reward based facets of job satisfaction. It is because the importance of need fulfilments for both the strata is completely different. Higher rank employees are able to move beyond just reward oriented facets because there needs towards such facets gets already fulfilled. Therefore the next step towards their need fulfilment will certainly be something that will increase their self-respect and status.

The association between employees' attitude and the 9 job satisfaction facets in the study is presented in Table-2. Out of the 9 job satisfaction facets examined, there are four facets where both strata have ranked them the same viz. co-workers (Rank 1), Nature of work (Rank 3), Pay (Rank 6) and fringe benefits (Rank 7). While a little change in terms of ranking can be witnessed with respect to communication, supervision and contingent rewards. The results give a clear sign towards the importance of human relations in an organization by the way they have been ranked by the employees. As facets like co-workers, nature of work, communication and contingent rewards formed the upper category in ranking, it may be said that employees value interpersonal relations and interesting

Executive						Non-Executive				
Factors	Mean	CV	SD	Percentage	Rank	Mean	CV	SD	Percentage	Rank
Pay	17.22	20.07	3.45	71.74	6	17.29	16.75	2.90	72.06	6
Promotion	16.47	21.46	3.53	68.60	8	14.25	27.50	3.92	59.35	9
Supervision	18.17	18.33	3.33	75.71	4	17.86	14.63	2.61	74.42	5
Fringe Benefits	16.89	17.28	2.92	70.38	7	16.55	15.92	2.64	68.97	7
Contingent Rewards	17.60	17.68	3.11	73.32	5	18.21	14.17	2.58	75.86	2
Operating Conditions	13.94	21.33	2.97	58.07	9	14.59	17.13	2.50	60.78	8
Coworkers	19.32	12.31	2.38	80.49	1	19.28	12.02	2.32	80.33	1
Nature of Work	18.85	13.78	2.60	78.55	3	18.13	12.47	2.26	75.52	3
Communication	19.01	15.23	2.90	79.20	2	18.05	14.09	2.54	75.20	4
Total	157.46	10.40	16.38			154.20	13.12	8.51		

Source: respondents survey results from the field

Strata	Executive			Non-Executive		
	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Pay	20.16	63.37	16.47	18.27	67.79	13.94
Promotion	13.18	74.22	12.60	21.39	57.45	21.15
Supervision	21.32	62.40	16.28	20.07	60.94	18.99
Fringe Benefits	20.74	59.88	19.38	19.83	62.98	17.19
Contingent Rewards	20.35	63.18	16.47	20.91	63.58	15.50
Operating Conditions	22.09	55.04	22.87	17.67	68.27	14.06
Coworkers	28.29	52.13	19.57	26.56	59.01	14.42
Nature of Work	25.19	61.24	13.57	21.15	68.87	9.98
Communication	27.91	60.27	11.82	20.55	62.50	16.95

Source: respondents survey results from the field

6. Conclusion:

Understanding the facets that are responsible for the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of employees is vital for the success of any organization. This study explored the difference in attitude of two groups of employees (executive & non-executive) vis-à-vis to their job satisfaction and the inclination towards different job facets. The study shows that job satisfaction increases with higher rank/ status as executives showed higher overall job satisfaction and also at the same time when looked separately at various job facets, the increase remain consistent. This is in support of the existing studies as such (Hoppock, 1935; Osghabemi, 1997; 2003; Robie et al., 1998; Aronson, et al., 2005). However, difference was

observed when looked into only satisfied employees. The percentage distribution of satisfied employees when segregated into two strata viz. executives and non-executives showed their priorities based on their rank in the organization. Lower rank employees gave more importance to interpersonal relations and reward based facets while higher rank employees were more interested in autonomy, respect and control. In the context of the area of study, it is clear that different strata in an organisation prefer different facets for determining satisfaction. In other words the same yardstick cannot be used to determine satisfaction for heterogeneous group if an effective policy implication is expected.

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