

REVIEW ARTICLE

Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Motivation: A Critical Review of their Relationship

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to investigate the relationship between these three variables namely: Job performance, job satisfaction and motivation with the help of theoretical models and literatures. Although many studies had already been conducted on job satisfaction and job performance, its relationship is still subject to much hated debates to specifically determine the extent of its relationship. With regards to motivation, results showed that, monetary consideration is by far more important than other motivation strategies which emphasized the aspect of addressing the economic needs of the individuals. However motivation like that of Herzberg had proven that pay is not the sole indicator of employee motivation. Furthermore, it was also proven that job satisfaction, job performance and motivation interact with each other and functioned interdependently such that the process is circular rather than linear. When job satisfaction and performance is linked with group performance, the outcome revealed that higher job satisfaction leads to higher performance although it is not always the case. Working together is the key to achieve desirable outcomes which means that employees should not be kept in isolation but should be encouraged to work together to effectively achieve the goals and success whether in group or the organization as a whole.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Motivation, Job Performance, Group Performance.*

Introduction

Several studies had been conducted to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and performance whether individually, in work groups and organizations. According to Locke, there are about 3,000 researches and related studies that focus on job satisfaction since 1976 and it remains to be of significance until today. This indicates that the importance of continuous investigation on this topic is still relevant and interesting in the field of science. The significance of establishing the relationship between job satisfaction, motivation and job performance according to many scholars are evident in addressing the problems and issues in Human Resource Departments thereby making it highly interesting for many organizations, employees-employer relationships and in

work teams. As an example, many researchers investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity while other assumptions focused on the negative correlation between job satisfaction and absenteeism or turnover [1]. Even though this topic was already the forefront of discussion for the past decades, it is still relevant and an urgent concern for companies nowadays and its importance is directed towards highly motivated, productive, and loyal workforce as ingredients of the company's competitive advantage and landscape [2]. Kirchler confirmed in his study that employees who are highly satisfied with their jobs led to healthier and happier lives.

Relative to this, the main thrust of this paper is to give valuable ideas and perspectives on

how job satisfaction influence work performance of both the individual level and the organizational level. The questions that needed to be addressed are the following: meaning and importance of job satisfaction; how job satisfaction influence the job performance of individuals and the organization; and to what extent the job satisfaction and performance relates to motivation. To attain these, this paper starts with defining job satisfaction and discussing its importance to individuals, groups and the organization.

The integrated model was used to determine the extent of interaction of variables including job satisfaction, performance and motivation in relation to work. From the information, related theories will be established to develop justifiable basis on defining individual job satisfaction and address the significance of peers and groups to individual satisfaction. Apart from this, presentation of underlying assumptions were formulated to define an effective group through the use of a model that demonstrates the open system of converting resource inputs to product outputs. Finally, summary of key findings and conclusions were offered to conclude this paper.

Meaning and Importance of Job Satisfaction

Various authors and researchers differ in their definition of job satisfaction. One of the old definitions of job satisfaction described it as an “effective orientations on the part of the individuals towards work roles which they are presently occupying” [3].

It also portrays on how the employees feel about their jobs as influenced by many external factors. Hoppock [4] also defined job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person to truthfully say that he is satisfied with his job. Moreover, there is no universally accepted definition of job satisfaction because it is a complex and multifaceted concept that provides different

definitions and perceptions to different individuals [5]. Aziri [6] opined that, job satisfaction represents a feeling that appears as a result of the perception that the job enables the material and psychological needs [6]. Job satisfaction can be viewed on one side as the person’s state of positive and negative feeling towards his job and to some extent the person’s feeling of whether he likes or dislikes his work [7]. So, it is likely to happen that people can either be satisfied or dissatisfied with their job or work. Job satisfaction can be positively meet when ones expectations are matched with the real outcome.

Job satisfaction is undeniably considered as one of the major considerations in assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of any business organizations. As a matter of fact, businesses nowadays under modern management perspective duly takes into consideration the employees’ personal needs, wants and desires to be a very good indicators for achieving job satisfaction [8]. Ideally, logic commands that when an employee is satisfied with his job, that will make him happy and when he is happy he will likely become a successful employee.

Furthermore, the essentiality of job satisfaction had been noticed thus far because of the negative consequences brought about by job dissatisfaction cause by growing cases of absenteeism, non-loyalty, increasing cases of accidents and others.

According to Spector [9], there are three vital features of job satisfaction. Firstly, to achieve job satisfaction requires that organizations should be guided by human values particularly in the aspect of respect and fair treatment of the employees regardless of positions. By doing this, the evaluation of job satisfaction will serve as good indicator of employees’ effectiveness which would mean that, high level of job satisfaction will eventually lead to good emotional and mental state of employees. Secondly, how the employees behave is a result of the level of satisfaction they have attained which in

general affects the business activities and the functioning of the organization. Therefore, it can be safe to assume that job satisfaction leads to positive behavior while job dissatisfaction will result to negative behaviors of employees. Thirdly, job satisfaction is one of the determinants of successful organizations.

Ideally, job satisfaction starts within the individual employees. When the individual employees are satisfied, it follows that they will perform at their best in individual capacity and extends to group efforts that lead to organizational performance [10].

According to McBride [11], the importance of job satisfaction is likened to a health care industry. It is the primary responsibility of the companies in a sense to ascertain that employees are satisfied with their present jobs and find out the causes if these employees are not satisfied.

Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Various authors have identified the different factors that influenced job satisfaction. This includes but not limited to: Salaries and benefits, organizational climate, autonomy, achievement, recognition, job security, workplace flexibility, degree of professionalism, communication, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, job importance and others. [12-18].

However, it cannot also be denied that leadership style has also great role in the employee's level of job satisfaction and it is also a driver in attaining the organization's goals and objectives.

Accordingly, Schermerhorn, [19] introduced the five facets of job satisfaction as also measured by the Job Descriptive Index, a popular questionnaire: (1) The work itself-responsibility, interest and growth, (2) the quality of supervision - technical help and social support, (3) the relationship with coworkers - social harmony and respect, (4) promotion opportunities - chances for further

advancement and (5) pay - adequacy of pay and perceived fairness compared to peers.

As applied to many studies, pay satisfaction was perceived as the major determinants of job satisfaction [20]. Consequently, employees are more expressive in a sense that, while they appreciate non-monetary considerations, monetary benefits become a necessity rather than an opportunity. In other words, employees are more interested on satisfying their economic needs. The employers in response, allocate majority of the budget on salaries and wages thereby creating a balance between spending and the return of their investment.

Motivation, performance, and job satisfaction

Peeter's, et. al. [21] research outcome concluded that, job satisfaction relates to both performance and absenteeism rate. To demonstrate these behaviors, it is necessary for employees to come up with two decisions regarding their job. One of these is to make decision on their choice of the workplace to work with. This encourages the employees to establish the state of belongingness to the organization, the place of work. Studies showed that employees who are satisfied with the company where they work with are less likely to commit absences than those that are not satisfied [22-23]. Moreover, dissatisfied employees tend to resign from their jobs thus, increases the incidence of absenteeism, a condition that causes the company's increased in overhead costs and poor performance. Therefore, job satisfaction positively influenced the company's absenteeism rate.

The second important decision to consider is the employees work performance. According to Meyer & Peng [10], job performance refers to the output that a person has contributed to the organization concerning his behavior to engage in, and which the organization may perceive it as productive or counterproductive. Good performance can be achieved when the employees meet the expectation of the employer and are attributable to company's success. Furthermore, every organization is

interested on finding out how the workforce perform positively in relation to productivity and accordingly, how job satisfaction impacts performance. However, it is more interesting to know that, there is still an ongoing debate on whether there is significant relationship between job satisfaction and performance as it is very complex phenomenon. Based from this point of view, there can be two points that can be derived and stated in this manner: Satisfaction causes performance; performance causes satisfaction. The first point stressed that, there is no direct link between job satisfaction and performance. This argument further assumes that, when employees are satisfied with their jobs do not mean that they can perform better than those who are not. In other words, it is not reliable to say that job satisfaction is the main predictor of individual job performance.

The second assumption on the hand, suggests that performance is the cause of job satisfaction. Researches positively relates between individual performance and job satisfaction only on the account that, given proper monetary reward mechanisms lead to job satisfaction. This further mean that proper motivation should be in place to ensure good performance. So, motivation should be given co-equal importance with job satisfaction and performance.

According to Latham [2], motivation is "a cognitive resource allocation process in which a person makes choices as to the time and energy are to be allocated to an array of motives or tasks" or "the process that account for an individual intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal" [24]. According to the definition, three important points to consider: the arousal, the direction, and the maintenance of certain activity.

Arousal is the stimuli that allows activity to occur. Direction is the action needed to decide which goal to pursue and maintenance encompasses the forces that continuous to manifest until the goal is achieved. Motivation can be classified into intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic motivation refers to external

rewards given to individuals as a result of the accomplishment of certain goals and can usually be done through monetary considerations such as bonuses, incentives, and promotions. While intrinsic motivation refers to feeling of getting the job well done thus, the activity is the motivation itself. It is worth noted that job satisfaction, performance and motivation can be used interchangeably but they are separate in context and application as they are interrelated. It only shows that job satisfaction is not affected by performance of individuals only but also motivation. Summing up, job satisfaction and performance are two different terms but interrelated which also affected by motivation. [19].

To demonstrate the significance of the relationship of these three terms, a model introduced by Schermerhorn et al. [19] known as the "integrated model of individual motivation to work" provided the details of the interaction and interdependence of the three variables as indicated hereunder.

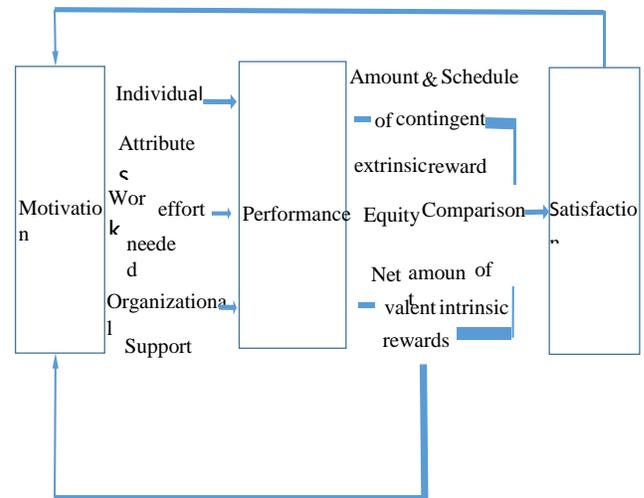


Figure 1: An integrated model of individual motivation to work. [19]

From the diagram, it can be clearly understood that the job satisfaction, performance and motivation is a circular process rather than a linear process because of the interdependence and interaction of the variables. In other words, one variable does not triggers the other variable.

Theories on Motivation and its Applicability

According to many researchers, motivation theories are generally divided into three parts: reinforcement, content and process theories [25-27]. Reinforcement theories dealt with the ways in which individual's behaviors will be shaped through controlling the consequence of such behavior. Content theories on the other hand, focused on satisfying the needs of employees for them to perform. While process theories emphasized on the cognitive processes that takes place with the minds of people and influence their behavior. While there many underlying theories built upon these theories, this paper prefers to consider those theories that direct relates to the objective of this study. One of the important theory belonging to the content theories is the two-factor theory of Herzberg which posits that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are two different dimensions.

The first dimensions consider the high job dissatisfaction and no satisfaction and the other dimension is no dissatisfaction and high job satisfaction. Furthermore, these two dimensions impacts the two group of factors: the hygiene factors and the motivator factors. These two groups are best described in a diagram in figure 2.

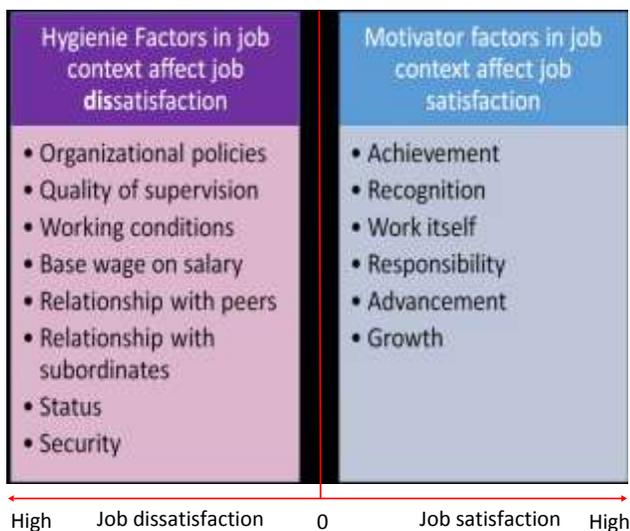


Figure 2: Sources of dissatisfaction and satisfaction of Herzberg's two-factor theory [19]

It is clear from this point that pay is not the only indicator of motivating employees but other factors are also relevant such as policies and supervision that are perceived to be motivators for employees' high level of performance. For instance, good organizational policies related to employee development and enhancements provide opportunity for them to grow, advance and climb the job ladder that likely results to feeling of achievement. Herzberg once quoted that, "If you want someone to do a good job, you need to give them a good job to do" [3]. Very notable factor that provides strong argument on Herzberg theory is the human relations considering specifically the relationship to peers or subordinates that can be causes of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Hence, human relations are vital to achieving job satisfaction.

Another relevant theory is the expectancy theory by Vroom. According to this theory, the performance of the individuals are directly associated with the possible rewards that they will likely received [2]. In other words, the higher the expected rewards, the more likely the employees work harder to achieve the goal or objective whether individual or organizational. This theory illustrates the three key variables: expectancy, instrumentality, and the valence. Expectancy is the probability that any efforts or performance is going to be rewarded; instrumentality is the probability that the performance will lead to various work outcomes and valence is the value attached to the outcome [19]. The important implication of these three variables is evident, that is creating a balance between these three variables on higher level to ensure that higher motivation level will also be achieved. In addition, it also confirms that human relation is important to the extent that management should take into consideration the blend of work expectancies, instrumentalities and valence that support organizational objectives in the workplace.

Lastly, the importance of the equity theory of Adams. This theory is popularized with the importance of social comparison. It further

claimed that, people's actions are influenced by perceived inequality and, evaluating information sources in terms of personal relevance as well as using others for comparison. Perceived inequality is the state or condition when people believed that what they have received as rewards are unfavorable compared to what others received [2].

Further, this theory assumes that people feel uncomfortable because they always feel that others are receiving more over the other and the only way to solve it is to restore the felt equity. However, it is also explained that felt equity can be negative or positive. Positive felt equity occurs when people feel that they received more rewards than their expectations and are perceived to be more than others received. Otte's [28] research concluded in his study that, people who feel they are overpaid, which is a perceived positive inequity, increase the quantity or quality of their work, whereas those who feel they are underpaid, equals perceived negative inequity, are likely to decrease the quantity and quality of their work. This finding provides practical implications to managers by considering that it is more important for managers to institute fair rewards rather than thinking how much to give.

However; critics suggest different views against these theories on the assumption that these lack precision. Moreover, they opined that a number of current theories counteracts such claim where they suggest that it is very difficult for these theories to predict its outcome. On the other side, these theories can be a good source or starting point for more reflective analysis towards sensitive management [2].

Work Team Performance

Central to the success of any organization are the people whom other authors define as the best assets. For organization to operate primarily needs the interaction of people to ascertain organizational success. According to Hatch [29], the basic elements of an organization are people and their relationships with one another. Borrowing

from this perspective, employees should not be kept in isolation but should be encouraged by management to work together.

Collaborative efforts will pave the way towards organizational success, working together for favorable outcomes whether in group capacity or organizational level. Furthermore, taking into consideration the statement that says "two heads are better than one", working together as a group having one goal in mind are likely to achieve higher level of success over a certain period of time.

Schermerhorn, et. al. [19] emphasized that, to be an effective group it should attain higher level of task performance that is, achieving the set of performance goals as a group. To be called an effective group, there should be higher level of member satisfaction where members have to believe that their participation and experience counts and are able to meet both their personal and organizational needs.

Moreover, for groups to effectively perform and achieved the goal, certain inputs have to be considered by the top management. First input to consider is the nature of the task where management should consider the difficulty to achieve group effectiveness when the task is more complex. So, the more exposure the group will experience in highly complex tasks, higher satisfaction level is also met. Second input reflects the importance of goals, rewards and resources.

The combination of having appropriate goals, very good reward system and adequate resources will sustain the long-term needs of the organization as well as ascertain future successes. Unclear goals are detrimental to the performance of the organization so, when tools and resources are insufficient, desired tasks will not be achieved. Finally, the third input considers diversity as a potential source of conflict within the group. This therefore requires that diversity should be managed accordingly to allow group to work together and achieve desirable outcomes. When the group is growing in size, the more tendencies of conflicts that might result to low

performance. However, given the right motivation the problem can be addressed resulting to higher performance levels.

Conclusion

It sounds clear that there is no single definition of job satisfaction hence, it is a multifaceted phenomenon where it is subject to differing definitions and perspectives. Although studies proved that motivation, job satisfaction and job performance are interrelated and interdependent, its relationship is not linear but rather circular. Moreover, it cannot be determined reliably that work performance is directly caused by job satisfaction. Based on the integrated model of individual motivation to work, it is evident that holistically, the three variables namely: motivation, job satisfaction and job performance interacts with each other and interconnected. In addition, motivation theories affirm the assumption that job satisfaction has something to do with the

motivation required for the organization to be successful and the people involved whether in individual capacity or in group. Different theories as mentioned vary in the degree of influence between motivation, performance and job satisfaction. In fact, Herzberg's two-factor theory claimed that human relations as the strongest factor of influence, while Adam's theory considers mainly the social comparison.

On the other hand, when analyzed in terms of the group member's satisfaction and group performance, it is prevalent that work groups served as open systems where member satisfaction is its main output. So, member satisfaction has been the main reasons for achieving sustainable work groups which is vital to gain long-term performance. Many inputs are to be considered to meet the requirement of higher job satisfaction and performance which includes task definition, clear goals, and membership diversity. These help the manager figuring out that these inputs are necessary for the group to attain desirable outcomes.

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