

A Study of Theoretical Concepts of Job Satisfaction

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Abstract:- Job satisfaction seems to be an important area which has drawn attention of managers in the organization as well as academicians. In present scenario where competition is rising day by day due to globalisation, managers have to keep a close watch on the construct of job satisfaction. Various studies have been conducted to find out the factors which determine job satisfaction and the way it influences the efficiency and effectiveness of an employee. Many a times job satisfaction has been proved as a significant determinant of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction of an employee show a positive relationship with the effectiveness and efficiency of the organizations. Job satisfaction lead to better performance of the employees and has increased their commitment towards their organization. Hence, this study is focussed to extract the essence of all the theoretical concept about job satisfaction.

Keywords:- Employees, Job Satisfaction, Theory.

I. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched variables in the area of workplace psychology, and has been associated with numerous psychosocial issues ranging from leadership to job design. This paper presents and will help the reader to understand the essence of the key definitions relating to job satisfaction, the main theories associated with job satisfaction, as well as the factors and types of issues surrounding the measurement of job satisfaction.

At first Robert Hoppock (1935), described Job Satisfaction “as being any number of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances which leads a person to express satisfaction with their job.”

Locke (1976), defined Job Satisfaction as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences”.

According to Vroom (1982) its the construct “as workers’ emotional orientation toward their current job roles”. All the above mentioned definitions, described Job Satisfaction as a subjective aspect of a person’s appraisal of his/her satisfaction with their job. The definitions enlightened the concept as a construct that includes attitudes which individuals hold towards overall as well as specific aspects of their jobs.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study is

- To study about the various theories of job satisfaction.

III. THEORIES OF JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction refers to the combination of complex variables which show a great impact on the efficiency of an employee at their workplace. Every researcher has experienced a different perspective about Job satisfaction and thus have formed a different opinion about the concept and the impact that it exerts on the productivity of an employee. With effect of the given theories it is very difficult to consider motivation different from job satisfaction, although both the concepts are different from each other theoretically as well as practically. Nevertheless, both of them are closely related to each other and motivation has remarkable similarities with the concept used in the studies of job satisfaction.

There are many theories explaining the different causes of satisfaction among the workers at their jobs.

A. Frederick Herzberg Two Factor Theory:

At first, Herzberg et al., (1959) had a question in his mind of what people expects from their jobs. For this he conducted a survey with 200 accountants and engineers from Pittsburgh and applied critical incident technique to them, where they were asked to describe the events which made them feel good or bad about their jobs. All the responses were recorded. This approach is termed as Two Factor Theory.

Herzberg found, some factors that were responsible for satisfaction and the others that were responsible for dissatisfaction of an employee at his/her job and were categorised as; ‘Motivators’ and ‘Hygiene factors’. He noticed that the motivating factors were responsible for the satisfaction among the employees and the factors responsible for the dissatisfaction were recognition, reward, responsibility, promotion, and growth.

While the other factors were termed as ‘hygiene factors’, their presence in the organization was critical to avoid dissatisfaction among the employee from their jobs. Factors like power cut, poor relations with superiors and colleagues, poor pay, restrictive policies, absence of job security and so on were found responsible to disturb the employees. On contrary, these factors do not generate motivation among the employees, hence are separated from motivating factors.

To understand the effect of Herzberg's theory in the real-world practice, let's have a look of hygiene issues. Although hygiene issues are not the source of satisfaction, still these issues must be dealt with extra care to create an environment in which employee satisfaction and motivation are equally responsible.

➤ *Hygiene factors*

i. Company and Administrative Policies:

Policies in an organization can generate a great sense of dissatisfaction among the employees if the employee is unclear about the policies or do not understand them well or are not followed by anyone. Although it is not necessary that an employee always remain motivated or satisfied with the company's policies, but yes if the employee has some issue about the fairness and equality of the organization's policy to all then this dissatisfaction may grow more, if not taken care of in time. A company should always have multiple copies of its policies-and-procedures manual that are easily accessible by all the members of company's staff. If you do not have a written manual, create one, soliciting staff input along the way. If you already have a manual, consider updating it (again, with staff input). An organization should always compare its policies with that of organization's following similar practices and should review whether particular policies are unreasonably strict or whether some penalties are too harsh and if some kind of revision is required than it should be done within time..

ii. Supervision:

An employee may feel dissatisfied with his immediate supervisors supervision and the condition may become worse, as and when an organization start making wise decisions to appoint someone for the role of supervisor. It is not a compulsion for good employees to be a good supervisor. The supervisor must possess the leadership skills and should treat his subordinates with equity, as his role in the organisation seems to be very important.

The supervisors should always praise the good and extraordinary work and should maintain a sound repo with its employees, so that no one feels neglected or disheartened.

iii. Salary:

There is an old proverb "you get what you pay for". It tends to be true when we talk about the staff members. Salary is considered to be a motivator for employees, but being fairly paid is their right. If individuals feel that they are not being compensated according to their calibre, then they becomes unhappy working with you. So making fair payments is important for the organisation and with this they must be provided with other benefits according to the requirements of the employees. With this, organisation's should make sure to have clear policies related to salaries, increments and bonuses.

iv. Job Security

Individuals enjoy working with such organizations where they get job security. Employees are more attracted with highly productive and most reputed private firms as compare to government sector companies as they offer good compensation, job security and excellent working conditions and development opportunities to their employees.

v. Interpersonal Relations:

It wouldn't be worthless saying that human being is a social animal. He cannot live in isolation whether at work or somewhere else. At workplace employees feel more satisfied when they have good relationships with their peers, subordinates and superiors and feel zeal towards their work.. So employees should be provided with reasonable amount of time and breaks for socialization (e.g., over lunch, during breaks). This will improve their compatibility with the co-workers and should form a good team.

At the same time, rudeness, inappropriate behaviour and offensive comments should be an offense at workplace and be punishable. If any individual creates any such nuisance or distortion at workplace, then the situation should be overtaken by the management, perhaps by dismissing him or her from the job.

vi. Working Conditions:

The environment plays key role in motivating an employee for his work. For this the equipment's and facilities at workplace should be up to date. Even a nice chair can make a great deal to an individual's psyche.

Workplace should not be overcrowded and each employee should have an ample amount of space for his or her work, whether it be a desk, a locker, or even a drawer. If the employee is placed in a close quarter with little or no personal space, then he will be frustrated enough to be dissatisfied.

vii. Work Itself:

It is important for an employee to be motivated during his work, there should be a feeling of enthusiasm among the employees while working. The tasks assigned to them should be meaningful, then only their contribution would result in positive outcomes and will be beneficial for the organization as well as for themselves.

Input given by employee's can create real differences in the outcomes. Sometimes employees may not find their tasks interesting or rewarding. To create a zeal among them to work at such point of time they should be provided with good atmosphere by job rotation or enrichment or by job enlargement so that they becomes more committed towards their work. There might be some tasks that are truly worthless and there absence doesn't create any difference, such tasks can be eliminated or streamlined, resulting in greater efficiency and satisfaction, so these kind of task should be paid prior concern.

Before moving on to the motivators, an organization should always remember that it cannot neglect the hygiene factors. If the factors are not dealt with care then first of all, the employees would be unhappy and ultimately would make you unsatisfied. Secondly, those hardworking employees, would switch their job elsewhere. So it is important to deal with hygiene issues first, and then move on to the motivators.

➤ *Motivating factors*

i. Achievement:

According to Herzberg's theory an employee is always keen to have a good job. To ensure this, it is important from the point of view of the organization that an employee is placed at right position according to his skills and are not set up for failure. Goals of the organization should be loud and clear and these goals and standards are well understood by the employees in the organization.

Timely feedback of their daily activities is important for improvement and they should be adequately challenged by giving them more responsibilities at their jobs. Challenges are not meant to overload an individual or to create hurdles in the way of achieving their goals, as that can be paralyzing but it reduces the boredom with the same repetitive kind of job .

ii. Recognition:

Everyone has the hunger of recognition which they expect for their achievements on the job. Their successes are not supposed to be monumental but they deserve recognition, and this praise should be genuine and sincere.

If an employer notices an extraordinary work which is really remarkable, then employer should not waste the time to acknowledge the good work immediately. Publicly thanking them for handling a situation particularly well, this way good work should be recognised. A kind note of praise may be given to the employee. Or a bonus, if appropriate. One may even organise a formal recognition program, such as "employee of the month."

iii. Responsibility:

Employees work with full motivation and enthusiasm when they have complete control over their work. This can only happen when employees get enough freedom and power to carry out their tasks and take decisions so that they "own" the result. Employees should be mature enough to do their jobs, and should be provided with opportunities to grow and should be added with responsibilities to prove their abilities.

Employers should be careful enough as they do not simply add more work to the employees job rather, should find new ways to add challenging and meaningful work, it may be by giving the employee some more freedom and authority as well.

iv. Advancement:

Employer can earn the loyalty of his employee by appreciating him and enhancing his performance by providing him the opportunities for advancement. If an open position doesn't exist to promote an existing and valuable employee, then be assure of giving him or her a new title that reflects the appraisal of his or her work that he has achieved. When feel appropriate, support your employees by allowing them to develop themselves with higher education, which will make them more confident and valuable to your organization and in turn will enhance their efficiency and commitment towards the organization.

v. Interesting and Challenging Work:

Different tasks must be assigned to employees at different times to reduce monotony of work. Managers should assign interesting and challenging tasks to their employee that motivates them to do something different from their routine job (going out of the box) and have a sense of achievement and recognition.

vi. Personal and Professional Growth:

Growth and development motivates employees to work harder and give their best to move one step ahead. If they see their personal and professional growth with the organization, they would develop a feeling of belongingness towards the organization and will work harder than before.

B. Locke's Value Theory:

The stated theory was proposed by E.A. Locke. This theory states that job satisfaction occurs, where job outcomes, an employee receives, matches with those desired by him. Accordingly, the more the employee receives the value as outcomes, the more they will feel satisfied; on contrary, the less they receive the value as outcome, the less they feel satisfied.

In other words, the difference between present and the expected aspect of the job by the employee generates job dissatisfaction. The greater the variance, the more is the job dissatisfaction and vice versa. This theory has fetched the attention of management to those aspects of job which may become the reason of dissatisfaction among the employees and may push them to switch over.

C. Adam's Equity Theory:

This theory was proposed by J.S. Adam. The essence of this theory lies in the fact, where an employee compare the ratio of his output to input with that of others. According to Adam inequity occurs where a person feels that the ratio of his outcomes to inputs and the ratios of the other employees outcome to input are unequal.

$$\text{Inequity} = \frac{\text{Person's outcome}}{\text{Persons inputs}} < \frac{\text{Others outcome}}{\text{Other inputs}}$$

$$\frac{\text{Person's outcome}}{\text{Persons inputs}} > \frac{\text{Others outcome}}{\text{Other inputs}}$$

$$\text{Equity} = \frac{\text{Person's outcome}}{\text{Persons inputs}} = \frac{\text{Others outcome}}{\text{Other inputs}}$$

Inputs may be age, gender, education, social status, organizational position, qualification, hard work, etc., whereas output refers to the reward, pay, status, promotion, etc. Therefore, this perception of equity generates job satisfaction and perception of inequity causes dissatisfaction.

According to Adam, workers believe in equitable payment. Under payment or over payment may give rise to dissatisfaction among the employees. They need to be fairly paid. When workers have a feeling of inequity, they put their efforts to alter the inputs or outcomes to restore equity; cognitively distort the inputs or outcome or leave the field or act on the other aspect.

In later years, this theory faced huge criticism as advocated by Adam to deal with inequity, despite of the fact that this theory enlightened the need of workers to be fairly treated by management.

D. Opponent Process Theory:

The founder of this theory was F.J. Landy. He emphasised on the fact that constant input does not produce constant output. Consistency of anything for a prolonged period creates boredom and monotony of the work so some changes should be made in the job time to time to sustain employee's interest in work and enhance worker's satisfaction in general. Landy applied this concept in goal setting theory. At the initial stage the changes are aggressively resisted by the employees. Consequently job satisfaction declines. But slowly and steadily employee gains interest in goal setting exercises and enjoy working with the set changes.

In other words, changes made with the intention to increase satisfaction among the employees may not be accepted at introductory stage but with the passage of time they are accepted and ensures satisfaction by regular practice. A minor change may generate job satisfaction for a certain period. Thus introducing change should be a continuous phenomenon. It should be progressively done.

E. Need Fulfilment Theory

This theory measure satisfaction in terms of rewards received by a person or the extent to which his needs are satisfied. Further, it is being observed that there exists a

direct/positive relationship between job satisfaction and the actual satisfaction that a person expects from his job.

This approach lags behind due to the fact that job satisfaction is not only a result of what a person receives against the efforts made by him but it is also influenced by what he expects to receive and as his expectations and reality don't match with each other, hence results in dissatisfaction.

Thus, job satisfaction cannot be regarded as merely a function of how much a person receives from his job. Rather it is an important factor/variable that should be taken care of accurately to predict the satisfaction desired from his level of aspiration in a particular area. This criticism led to the development of the discrepancy theory of job satisfaction.

F. Discrepancy Theory

This theory stated that "Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are functions of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it is offering." This approach does not make it clear whether or not over-satisfaction is a part of dissatisfaction and if so, how does it differ from dissatisfaction.

G. Dispositional Theory:

Another well-known job satisfaction theory is the Dispositional Theory. This theory suggests that people have innate dispositions that cause them to have tendencies toward a certain level of satisfaction, regardless of one's job.

This approach became a notable explanation of job satisfaction in light of evidence that job satisfaction tends to be stable overtime and across careers and jobs. Research also indicates that identical twins have similar levels of job satisfaction.

A significant model that narrowed the scope of the Dispositional Theory was the Core Self-evaluations Model, proposed by Timothy A. Judge in 1998. Judge argued that there are four Core Self-evaluations that determine one's disposition towards job satisfaction-

- self-esteem,
- general self-efficacy,
- locus of control and
- neuroticism.

This model states that

- higher levels of self-esteem (the value one places on his/her self)
- general self-efficacy (the belief in one's own competence) lead to higher work satisfaction.
- Having an internal locus of control (believing one has control over her/his own life, as opposed to outside forces having control) leads to higher job satisfaction.
- Finally, lower levels of neuroticism lead to higher job satisfaction.

H. Job Characteristics Model:

Hackman & Oldham gave the theory named Job Characteristics Model, which is considered to be a framework to study the impact of particular job characteristics on job outcomes, including job satisfaction.

The model identified five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) which have direct effect on three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes and knowledge of the actual results), in turn influencing work outcomes (job satisfaction, absenteeism, work motivation, etc.).

The five core job characteristics can be combined to form a motivating potential score (MPS) for a job, which can be used as an index of how likely a job is to affect an employee's attitudes and behaviour. A meta-analysis of studies explained that the framework of the model provides some support for the validity of the JCM.

Job Satisfaction is thus regarded as one's feelings or state-of-mind towards the nature of their work. Job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, e.g., the quality of one's relationship with their supervisor, the quality of the physical environment in which they work, degree of fulfilment in their work, etc.

IV. CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction is regarded as a significant factor, especially concerning the employees within the working environment. Employees who possess higher levels of job satisfaction are more committed and loyal towards their work and the organization, employees become more productive, resourceful and diligent and they are more likely to be satisfied with their lives. This would in turn reduce absenteeism and turnover.

There are many different issues regarding job satisfaction that are to be dealt with care. Job satisfaction, job attitude and morale are the related terms that should be discussed in detail to make a clear differentiation among them. Job satisfaction affects productivity, employee turnover, absenteeism, safety, stress, unionisation and other issues. Many researchers have worked upon one or the other issue regarding job satisfaction up till now. There are many theories explaining job satisfaction in one or the other ways, still job satisfaction is a complex topic to be studied.

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