Job Satisfaction
CHAPTER - III

JOB SATISFACTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Job Satisfaction is a set of favourable or unfavourable feelings with which the employees view their work. Job satisfaction is a feeling of relative pleasure or pain. It typically refers to the attitudes of a single employee.

Job satisfaction can be viewed as the overall attitude, which can apply to the parts of an individual's job.

Job satisfaction, like an attitude, is generally acquired over a period of time as an employee gains more and more information about the workplace. Nevertheless, job satisfaction is dynamic, for it can decline even more quickly than it developed. Managers can not establish the conditions leading to high satisfaction now and then because the employees' needs may change suddenly. Managers need to pay attention to employees' attitudes week after week, month after month, year after year.
Job satisfaction is part of a satisfactory life of an individual. The nature of one’s environment of the job influences one’s feelings on the job. Similarly, since a job is an important part of life, job satisfaction influences one’s general life satisfaction in the job as well. Managers may need to monitor not only the job and immediate work environment but also their employees’ attitudes towards other parts of their lives.

RELATED ELEMENTS OF LIFE SATISFACTION RELIGION
3.2 IMPORTANCE OF JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is very essential for every executive. Job satisfaction study is unavoidable as it gives answer to the following questions.

1. Is there room for improvement?
2. Who is relatively more dissatisfied?
3. What contributes to the employee satisfaction?
4. What are the effects of negative employee attitudes?

3.3 BENEFITS OF JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction surveys can produce positive, neutral or negative results. If planned properly and administered, they will usually produce a number of important benefits.

1. It gives management an indication of general levels of satisfaction in a company. Surveys also indicate specific area of satisfaction or dissatisfaction as compared to employee services and particular group of employees.
2. It leads to valuable communication brought by a job satisfaction survey. Communication flows into various directions as people plan, implement and discuss the results of the survey. Upward
communication is especially fruitful when employees are encouraged to comment about what is on their minds instead of merely answering questions about topics important to management.

3. Survey is an emotional release which is having safety value added a chance of getting things off. The survey is a tangible expression of management’s interest in employee welfare, which gives employees a reason to feel better towards management.

4. Job satisfaction surveys are useful ways to determine certain training needs.

5. Job satisfaction surveys are useful for identifying problems that may arise, comparing the response to several alternatives and encouraging managers to modify their original plans. Follow up surveys allow management to evaluate the actual response to a change and to study its success or failure.

3.4 MEASUREMENT OF THE LEVEL OF JOB SATISFACTION

Long term nation wide studies indicate that general job satisfaction has been relatively high and stable in the United States although workers’ expectations have both increased and changed in their focus over time. The
quality of management practices also has improved. As a result more than 80 percent of those in the work force usually reports that they are reasonably satisfied with their jobs. Managers should not be complacent, however, for this also suggests that millions of workers are unhappy, and many other millions are probably dissatisfied with the same specific aspects of their job. In addition many of the “satisfied” workers may have simply resigned themselves to their work situations, with the result that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The level of job satisfaction across groups is not constant, but it is related to a number of variables. This allows managers to predict which groups are more likely to exhibit the problem behaviour associated with dissatisfaction. The key variables revolve around age, occupational level, and organisational size.

As workers grow older, they tend to be slightly more satisfied with their jobs, apparently they lower their expectational levels to more realistic levels and adjust themselves better to their work situations. Predictably, people with high level occupations tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. As we might expect, they are usually better paid, have better working conditions and hold jobs that make fuller use of their abilities. Finally, there
is some evidence to suggest that levels of job satisfaction are higher in smaller organisational units (such as a branch plant). This is because larger organisations tend to overwhelm with people, disrupt supportive processes, and limit the amounts of personal closeness, or friendship, and the small group team’s work is important to the satisfaction of many people.

3.5 FACTORS AFFECTING JOB SATISFACTION

The most important factors relating to job satisfaction are:

(i) Personal factors

(ii) Factors inherent in the job

(iii) Factors under the control of the management

3.5.1 Personal factors

These factors include the individual employee’s personality, age, sex, number of dependents, education, intelligence, time on the job etc. Certain personality traits have been viewed as an important cause of job satisfaction. The existence of neurotic behaviour or personality maladjustment has been found to be the cause of job dissatisfaction but some studies indicate the neurotic tendency leads to job dissatisfaction only when the job itself is one of the greatest strain.
As regard to relationship between education of an individual and his job satisfaction, there is no clear research evidence about it.

With regard to the relationship between the intelligence of an individual and job satisfaction, it usually depends upon the level and the range of intelligence and the challenge of the job.

A study by, Nancy. C. Morse on the Satisfaction of the White Collar Job, Institute of Social Research, and University of Michigan 1953 has noted the following findings:

(a) Older white collar employees have higher intrinsic job satisfaction but lower financial and status satisfaction.

(b) Women are more satisfied with their job than men probably because of their lesser ambitions and financial needs.

(c) The more dependent one has to support, the lesser satisfied one with his job probably because of his larger financial needs.

Regarding the relations of age to job satisfaction, a number of studies find little relationship of age to job satisfaction for all employees, though some job situations, it had been found to be important.
As regarding the relation of time spent by an individual on the job assigned and job satisfaction, it may be said that generally job satisfaction is relatively high in the beginning and then drops slowly after a couple of years but rises again with further more time on the job.

3.5.2 Factors inherent in the Job

These factors include the type of work to be performed, skills required for work performance, occupational status involved in the job, difference in work situations etc.

According to Rober Hoppock's study – the job satisfaction varies from almost zero to 100% depending upon the job. The type of work inherent in the job is very important as a number of researches in this regard have shown that varied work generally brings about more job satisfaction than routine work does.

Job satisfaction is also related to the place of work or work situation. It is believed that employees at the work place in large cities are generally less satisfied with their jobs than those who work in small towns or cities.
3.5.3 Factors Under the control of the Management:

These factors include security (economic as well as social), wages & salaries or pay, fringe benefits, opportunities for advancement, working conditions, type and quality of supervision etc. It is believed that industrial employee mostly want steady work and security for age. The importance of economic as well as security as a factor in job satisfaction varies with the marital status and the number of dependents. It is also suggested that security is of less importance for job satisfaction probably because there is no fear of lay-off in the kind of jobs that the highly educated occupy. Such persons are perhaps more confident of being able to find other jobs, if necessary.

As regard to relation of wages and salaries or pay to job satisfaction, its importance is generally overemphasized by management who tend to believe that a pay rise can make anyone in the organisation happy. Although the pay is undoubtedly an important factor, there is research evidence to indicate that pay often rank below such factors as security, type of work and opportunity for advancement. It is suggested that importance of pay to job satisfaction will probably change with the labour market, economic conditions and the employees' belief about job satisfaction. Fringe benefits
are generally considered important to job satisfaction both by the management as well as by the unions but research evidence indicates that it is often ranked below factors like security, pay, ability to advance etc.

As regard to the relations of opportunity for advancement to job satisfaction it has been found that this factor is most important to sales personnel clerical cadres and skilled personnel and it is of least importance to the unskilled. Further, the older employees are relatively less interested in advancement than the younger ones since an individual usually does most of his advancing in the earlier stages.

Desirable conditions of work are also important to job satisfaction. Probably white collar occupations are considered more desirable.

Good supervision is on the whole is an important factor in job satisfaction.

An effective downward flow of communication in an organisation is also important to job satisfaction because employees today are keen to know more about the company-its plans, policies etc. and they also seek information from management as to know how they are doing and how they can improve if necessary.
3.6 EFFECTS OF LOW JOB SATISFACTION

When employees are dissatisfied with their jobs and feelings are both strong and persistent, there is a need to understand what impact this may have on their subsequent behaviour. A large number of studies have indicated the following outcomes of the effect of low job satisfaction:

1. High turnover of employees
2. High absenteeism
3. Tardiness
4. Low employee performance

3.6.1 High turnover of employees

Low job satisfaction is associated with high employee turnover which means high proportion of employees leaving an organization. Most satisfied employees are less likely to think about quitting as they have to search for a new job or announce their intention to quit and thus are more likely to stay with their employer longer.

Employee turnover has several negative consequences, especially if the turnover rate is high.
(a) Difficulty to replace deserted employees
(b) Direct and indirect costs to the organisation of replacing workers are high.
(c) The feeling of demoralization because of the loss of valued co-workers.
(d) Both work and social patterns may be disrupted until replacements are found.
(e) The organisation’s reputation in the community may suffer.

However, some positive functional aspects of high turnover are:

(f) High turnover will increase the opportunities for internal promotion.
(g) Infusion of expertise from newly hired employees.

### 3.6.2 High absenteeism

The figure shows that those employees who have less job satisfaction tend to be absent more often. Though there may be some genuine reasons of the absenteeism as medical reasons, urgent work etc. on the whole low job satisfaction leads to higher absenteeism.
3.6.3 Tardiness

The impact of low job satisfaction results in tardiness. A tardy employee is one who arrives at work late. Tardiness is a type of short period absenteeism ranging from a few minutes to several hours for each event and it is another way in which the employees withdraw from active involvement in the organisation. It may impede the timely completion of work and disrupt productive relationships with coworkers. A pattern of tardiness is often a symptom of negative attitudes requiring managerial attention.
3.6.4 Low Employee performance

Though there is no direct relationship between an employee’s performance and job satisfaction, a more accurate portrait of the relationship is that higher performance contributes to higher job satisfaction.

THE PERFORMANCE SATISFACTION – EFFORT LOOP

The sequence of relationship is that better performance typically leads to higher economic, sociological and psychological rewards. If these rewards are seen as fair and equitable then improved satisfaction develops because employees feel that they are receiving rewards in proportion to higher performance. On the other hand, if rewards are seen as inadequate for one’s
level of performance, dissatisfaction tends to arise. In either case, one’s level of satisfaction leads to either greater or lesser commitment, which then affects efforts and eventually performance. The result is the continuously operating performance satisfaction effort loop. The implications is to devote its efforts to aid the employee to perform, which will likely to produce satisfaction as a by product.

3.7 MEASURES TO IMPROVE JOB SATISFACTION

To mitigate dissatisfaction or to improve job satisfaction a number of interventions can be undertaken. Some of the most important of them are:

1. Improving the working conditions.
2. Transferring discontented employees.
3. Changing the perceptions of dissatisfied employees.
4. Initiating morale building programmes.

3.7.1 Improving Working Condition

One simple and usually prescribed solution to increase job satisfaction is to improve those conditions, which are organizational sore parts. In one company, job enrichment raised the morale of electronic technicians. Thus
by identifying the root cause of job dissatisfaction, the management can evolve a strategy for remedial action.

3.7.2 Transferring Discontented Employees

In some cases it is also possible to mitigate dissatisfaction by transferring the disgruntled employees to another job matching his tastes and preferences. This transfer achieves a better fit between the individual and job characteristics and promotes job satisfaction. This kind of transfer may not be without certain constraints. The dissatisfied person may be unwilling to move from the existing position or he may be incompetent to hold other challenging job.

3.7.3 Changing Perceptions

Employees sometimes have misconceptions about many aspects of the job in which he is placed. Dissatisfaction stems from the misperceptions about the organisation. Employees may be misinformed about certain issues, i.e., the misperceptions might be based on inadequate or incorrect information. In these cases, management can change the perceptions of dissatisfied employees and restore job satisfaction. By furnishing the correct information, discontentment gets subsided over time.
3.7.4 Initiating Morale Building Programmes

Organisation conducts programmes of development wherein morale building becomes a major part. Even the successful organizations conduct new programmes to keep the morale and job satisfaction at higher level. For instance, USAA (United Service Automobile Association), the effective organisation from the viewpoint of profitability and having a record of good service to public and with high morale among employees, recently introduced a programme called “vanpooling” which increased the job satisfaction of a large number of employees.

3.8 SUMMARY

Job satisfaction significantly contributes to employees’ productivity and morale. An industrial organisation can be substantially benefited if it cares to develop general individual attitudes in its personnel that can effectively contribute to job satisfaction. If an organisation appropriately discovers attitudes on factors related to job, it can take necessary steps to prevent bad situations and thereby improve the job satisfaction of its employees.
With respect to measures for increasing job satisfaction, although a management can not change the personal factors in job satisfaction, it should appreciate the role of such factors and must take care to place the employees where the personal factors of the individual will help him in achieving job satisfaction. Similarly management can use the factors inherent in the job to plan and administer the job more advantageously for its personnel. Factors controllable by the management such as security, opportunity for advancement including appropriate policies for promotions and transfers, working conditions etc. are quite significantly related to job satisfaction and management should carefully watch them and take necessary steps to develop a well satisfied group of employees by adopting appropriate policies and practices. It is highly important that the supervisors should be adequately trained to be capable-democratic leaders. Above all, while keeping in view the factors related to job satisfaction, the management must recognize the importance of the stability of employees’ attitudes that may lead to high morale and production.