Chapter 3

JOB SATISFACTION—WHAT IT MEANS?

3.1 Introduction

Job satisfaction is an important attribute which organisations desire of their employees. Much of the research in this area has been based on the explicit assumptions that job satisfaction is a potential determinant of absenteeism, turnover, in-role job performance and extra-role behaviours.

How do we define job satisfaction? Job satisfaction is a nebulous concept. Managers talk about it a great deal, but if pressed to explain exactly what they mean, they are hard pushed to provide a precise definition. Vroom\(^1\) has described it as: "the positive orientation of an individual towards the work role which he is presently occupying". This rather cumbersome phrase can be freely translated as: "an individual liking more aspects of his work than he dislikes". Some define it as a “general attitude of the workers constituted by their approach towards the wages, working conditions, control, promotion related with the job, social relations in the work, recognition of talent and some similar variables, personal characteristics, and group relations apart from the work life” (Blum and Naylor, 1986)\(^2\). Job satisfaction is the total of the sentiments related with the job that is performed. If the person believes that their values are realized within the job, they possess a positive attitude towards the job and acquire job satisfaction (McCormick and Tiffin, 1974)\(^3\). This has been primarily motivated by utilitarian reasons, such as reduced absenteeism and turnover, and increased productivity in the workplace (Judge et al., 2001\(^4\); Sousa-Pouza and Sousa-Pouza, 2000\(^5\);), and humanitarian reasons, such as improved health and wellbeing of the workers (Karasek, 1979\(^6\); Totterdell et al., 2006\(^7\); Tsutsumi, 2005\(^8\)).
Job satisfaction may be linked to performance, organizational productivity and other issues, including labour turnover. However, dissatisfied employees are prone to absenteeism and excessive turnover (Chen et al., 2006; Lee et al., 1999; Melamed et al., 1995; Sekoran and Jauch, 1978; Dickter et al., 1996). Indirect costs associated with job dissatisfaction may include training, recruiting, and learning curve inefficiencies, as well as reduction in the client base (Brown and Mitchell, 1993). On the contrary, employee satisfaction can improve productivity, reduce staff turnover and enhance creativity and commitment. Consequently, job satisfaction should not be ignored, but very few organizations seriously consider job satisfaction. Küskü, F. (2003)

Leadership skills play an important role to lead, motivate and satisfy employees. Given the changing organizational realities, it is time that we relook the responsibility of managers in ensuring the happiness of his/her subordinates. Instead of trying to improve employee satisfaction, it may be time to consider new leadership approaches and management programs that reduce employee dissatisfaction. Many employee-relations programs are still based on the assumption that the extent and happiness and satisfaction are a result of one’s heredity and past experiences, while management clearly has a very limited role in effecting change. This needs change and it has to be clearly understood that management has the opportunity for some, albeit small impact on job satisfaction and thus improve productivity.

Although most of the researches in employee satisfaction field have been related to profit making industrial and service organizations, there has been a growing interest in understanding the level of satisfaction of employees in co-operative dairy sector. The reason for this increasing interest is the reality that Dairy industries are labour intensive with a significant percentage of their budgets predominantly devoted to personnel and their
effectiveness is largely dependent on their staff. Consequently, satisfaction of the employees in Dairy industry is a very important issue

3.2 Factors affecting job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is really a big factor for a professional because it brings enjoyment while working which in turns brings happiness to life. Job satisfaction basically depends upon two most important factors: First salary, followed by the working environment, which includes work culture, nature of work, colleagues etc. People working with a middle class background are generally influenced by the first factor. Pre-modernization, people worked without knowing about job satisfaction. In this case a question arises: is job satisfaction a reality? For someone it is just a source of income but for someone it is more than that. The second factor seems to be the most important of all. Working in a good environment is also important for a healthy mind. A man with a very healthy pay may not be satisfied with his job if he could not find a suitable working environment.

In fact there are people who spent their life time working with the same organization without thinking about satisfaction. On the other hand, some people switch over to other organizations in search of satisfaction. Some other factors such as family responsibility, health and growth also play an important part

According to the Two-Factor Theory of Satisfaction, each of the job satisfaction facets, except overall satisfaction, can be further combined into intrinsic and extrinsic measures of satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Extrinsic satisfaction measures, referred to as hygiene factors, are related to lower order needs (e.g., security and safety) and are more tangible in nature than intrinsic measures. According to the theory, the absence of these extrinsic facets tends to lead to dissatisfaction. Intrinsic
satisfaction measures, referred to as motivators, are associated with higher order needs (e.g., sense of achievement and accomplishment). The presence of these intrinsic elements tends to impact job satisfaction, which in turn, influences motivation (Herzberg, 1969)\textsuperscript{17}. Pay, people, and supervision are all extrinsic satisfaction facets and are more concerned with aspects of the job environment. The work facet is an intrinsic satisfaction measurement because of its focus on the contents of the job, such as growth, variety, and responsibility. The promotion facet combines both extrinsic and intrinsic elements. When promotion is administered in a way that results in recognition, it is intrinsic in nature. Conversely, promotion becomes an extrinsic construct when it denotes status and rank. Both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction can be combined to form overall satisfaction.

Maslow connects the creation of the existence of people’s sense of satisfaction with the maintenance of the classified needs. These are physiological needs (eating, drinking, resting, etc.), security needs (pension, health insurance, etc.), the need to love (good relations with the environment, friendship, fellowship, to love and be loved), need to self-esteem (self-confidence, recognition, adoration, to be given importance, status, etc.), and need of self-actualization (development of abilities, etc.). The difference between the results that the individual desires and those they maintained will affect their job satisfaction (Nash and Carroll, 1975)\textsuperscript{18}. There is a constant relationship between the professional status and the job satisfaction.

One of the most recognized models for this job redesign and enhancement approach is the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1975)\textsuperscript{19}. According to the Job Characteristics Model, individuals who have a desire for growth, possess the knowledge and skills to perform a job well, and are relatively happy with the work context are predicted to prosper in a job environment that is high in motivating potential (Kulik,
Oldham, & Hackman, 1987)\textsuperscript{20}. In the job characteristics approach to work design, it is generally accepted that the way a job is designed has a substantial impact upon the attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of the employee (Lawler & Hall, 1969)\textsuperscript{21}.

Demographic factors are attributes of the individual such as age, race, gender, education level, and years of work experience. Environmental factors are characteristics of the immediate job environment such as the skill variety required to carry out the job, task significance, autonomy, and interaction with co-workers. Results reveal that environmental factors are better predictors of job satisfaction than are demographic factors.

3.3 Models of job satisfaction

Affect Theory

Edwin A. Locke’s Range of Affect Theory (1976)\textsuperscript{22} is arguably the most famous job satisfaction model. The main premise of this theory is that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. Further, the theory states that how much one values a given facet of work (e.g. the degree of autonomy in a position) moderates how satisfied/dissatisfied one becomes when expectations are/aren’t met. When a person values a particular facet of a job, his satisfaction is more greatly impacted both positively (when expectations are met) and negatively (when expectations are not met), compared to one who doesn’t value that
facet. To illustrate, if Employee A values autonomy in the workplace and Employee B is indifferent about autonomy, then Employee A would be more satisfied in a position that offers a high degree of autonomy and less satisfied in a position with little or no autonomy compared to Employee B. This theory also states that too much of a particular facet will produce stronger feelings of dissatisfaction, the more a worker values that facet.

**Dispositional Theory**

Another well-known job satisfaction theory is the Dispositional Theory Template: Jackson April 2007. It is a very general theory that 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 over time 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 (2001). 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) and general self-efficacy (the belief in one’s own competence) lead to higher work satisfaction. 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 leads to higher job satisfaction.

**Two-Factor Theory (Motivator-Hygiene Theory)**

Frederick Herzberg’s Two factor theory (also known as Motivator Hygiene Theory) attempts to explain satisfaction and motivation in the
workplace. This theory states that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors – motivation and hygiene factors, respectively. An employee’s motivation to work is continually related to job satisfaction of a subordinate. Motivation can be seen as an inner force that drives individuals to attain personal and organizational goals. Motivating factors are those aspects of the job that make people want to perform, and provide people with satisfaction, for example achievement in work, recognition, promotion opportunities. These motivating factors are considered to be intrinsic to the job, or the work carried out. Hygiene factors include aspects of the working environment such as pay, company policies, supervisory practices, and other working conditions.

While Hertzberg’s model has stimulated much research, researchers have been unable to reliably empirically prove the model, with Hackman & Oldham suggesting that Hertzberg's original formulation of the model may have been a methodological artifact. Furthermore, the theory does not consider individual differences, conversely predicting all employees will react in an identical manner to changes in motivating/hygiene factors. Finally, the model has been criticized as it does not specify how motivating/hygiene factors are to be measured.

**Job Characteristics Model**

Hackman & Oldham (1976) proposed the Job Characteristics Model, which is widely used as a framework to study how particular job characteristics impact on job outcomes, including job satisfaction. The model states that there are five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) which impact 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 behaviors. A meta-analysis of studies that assess the framework of the model provides some support for the validity of the JCM.

**Importance-satisfaction model (I-S model)**

Low-quality attributes should not be the only consideration when designing improvement plans. Usually, the customer (employee) measures the quality of goods or services based on several important attributes or elements (Berry et al., 1990; Deming, 1986). The customer (employee) evaluates product or service quality by considering several important quality attributes; therefore firms must take actions to improve the attributes that are important to the customer but which have low satisfaction levels. Figure 1 shows the analytical results of an I-S model survey conducted by Yang (2003). The results for each quality attribute are placed in the model and then improvement strategies are considered based on the position of each item.

**Source:** Yang (2003a)
Despite the fact the dairy co-operative societies in Kerala have been operating over the last 40 years with a substantial number of employees, no scientific job satisfaction study has been undertaken till date. So the researcher felt that a detailed enquiry about the level of job satisfaction among dairy co-operative employees in Kerala will be of much use to the dairy co-operative movement in Kerala. The subsequent chapter deals with co-operative dairying just to give background information for the study on job satisfaction.
REFERENCES


