

# Job Satisfaction : A Comparative Study Between Male and Female Employees Working in the Service Sector in India

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## Abstract:

*Purpose-* Most of the research conducted in the western nations found relationship between gender and job satisfaction. This assumption has been tested empirically in this paper in the manufacturing sector in India .

*Design-* The authors used a cross sectional field study design to collect responses of 384 employees working in 3 service sector firms in India. Judgmental sampling was used for the research. 6-item scale by Berson and Linton (2005) was used to measure Job Satisfaction. The computed internal consistency reliability for this measure was 0.85 using coefficient Alpha.

*Findings-* Male employees experienced higher job satisfaction as compared to female employees. The statistical significance of the difference in the means of job satisfaction among male and female employees was estimated using the T-test.

*Research limitations/implications-* By conducting the research on a large sample, this study was able to evaluate the role of gender on job satisfaction. There are chances of perception errors as the responses were self-reported.

*Practical implications-* The findings suggest that managers should focus on both the genders equally in order to utilize their potential optimally.

*Social implications-* By identifying and then developing employee's job satisfaction, organizations can help employees to reduce stress, burnout and improve their work life quality.

*Originality/Value-* Using a large sample, this study identifies a relationship between gender and job satisfaction in the service sector in India .

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Gender, Service Sector , Work Attitudes, HRM.

## Introduction :

The services sector is considered to be the major contributor in India's GDP. It attracts substantial foreign investment in flows, contributing majorly to employment as well as exports. This sector employees around 28.6% of the total working population in India ( Livemint 2017). Services

sector in India covers a long list of activities like transport, business services trade, , storage, hotel, restaurants, financing, insurance, real estate, and services associated with construction etc.

The challenge of working in the service sector is based on the fact that the production and consumption of the service takes place at the same

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point of time. So, there is no scope of any quality checking in the process of service generation. A single mistake (intentional or unintentional) made by an employee can have severe long term negative affect in the mind of the customer, and with the strength of “word of mouth” marketing, it can eventually lead to a bad image of the organization in the eyes of the customers. Literature shows several studies linking the customer satisfaction to employee satisfaction.

Brooks (2000) found that more than 40 per cent of customer satisfaction and loyalty is attributed to the customer-employee relationship. Heskett et al. (1997) found a relationship between employee and customer variables within a framework and coined it as the employee-customer or the service profit chain. The percentage of the customer satisfaction depends on the market segment and industry that is being taken into consideration. There is a different school of thought where the reverse of this concept has been empirically studied and has found to be significant. Crosby et al. (1990) underlines that employee feels satisfied with their work when they deliver quality work which leads to customer satisfaction.

Society for Human Resources Management (2007) has found that there is less attrition among satisfied employees and it is also found that benefits and compensation were weighed equally as the major components of job satisfaction. In addition to compensation and benefits, the survey also reveals that job satisfaction of service employees is also affected by relationship with immediate supervisor, communication between employees and senior management, and management recognition of employee job. Similar results have been found in researches across the globe.

Empirical labour economics is filled with research on the statistically significant difference between women and men's pay packages. It is generally

seen that estimates of the ratio of the pay of women to that of equivalently qualified men doing the same type of job is between 49 to 94%. Research also shows that women's jobs are more adversely affected by hiring and firing, job content, sexual harassment and promotion opportunities, as compared to male jobs. Research by Clark and Oswald (1994) and Argyle (1989) supported the fact that women consistently reported higher perception of job satisfaction as compared to men in spite of the reported higher stress level among women employees. Though the research reports that the difference between women's and men's jobs is slowly eroding, it should be interesting to research whether the perception of job satisfaction is changing.

The current research attempts to find if there is a difference in the perception of job satisfaction among male and female employees working in the service sector in India.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Job Satisfaction and Gender

Job satisfaction is defined as a positive or pleasurable emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job experience (Locke, 1976). According to Hulin and Judge (2003), job satisfaction is multifaceted and includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to one's job.

Job satisfaction refers to the individual's attitude toward the job and the various factors associated to it. Job satisfaction is seen to be affected by multiple factors. Artz (2010) found a significant relation between fringe benefits job satisfaction. Vybornova & Svetlana's (2014) regression analysis in the relationship between job satisfaction and training opportunities, skill variety, salaries and benefits, and feedback and support revealed

statistically significant relationships. Organizational commitment is also seen to be associated with job satisfaction and internal service quality (Bai,2006).

Research reveals relationship between demographics and job satisfaction in the private sector, managers experience higher levels of job satisfaction in issues regarding their self fulfillment. Further, managers having larger span of control have higher job satisfaction levels for factors in their job environment as compared to managers with smaller span of control (Droussiotis & Austin,2007). Research found statistical evidence of job dissatisfaction amongst immigrants in Australia as compared to the native-born, mainly non-English Speaking immigrants (Shankar, 2016). Chung & Rutherford (2012) study found that in retail, employee's job satisfaction is influenced by role ambiguity, perceived organizational support and emotional exhaustion. There is substantial research which states that Job satisfaction is influenced by personality. For example, lower level of job satisfaction is perceived by employees having higher levels of neuroticism and greater job satisfaction is perceived by employees having high levels of conscientiousness (Wagner & O'Neill 2012).

As far relationship between job satisfaction and gender is concerned, Bowen & Cattell (2008) found a significant relationship with job satisfaction and gender. Koustelios (2001) also suggested certain demographic characteristics (e.g. gender, age, etc.) were found to be predictors of job satisfaction. Iliopoulos et al (2011) found male employees seem to have greater levels of job satisfaction.

Ho: There is no difference in perception of Job satisfaction among male and female employees in India.

## NEED AND RATIONALE

Previous empirical studies have also indicated male- female differences in levels of Job Satisfaction, Gender, work characteristics, services, HRM with contradicting results. This finding may offer suggestive evidence that there may be gender differences in the levels of Job satisfaction.

Most of the empirical research on job satisfaction have been conducted in the western context and limited attention has been paid to the exploration of this construct in other cultural contexts.

Therefore, the present research attempts to understand the contextual applicability of Job satisfaction in Indian organization.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sampling Design

The researchers used a cross sectional field study design to collect responses of 384 employees working in three service sector firms in India. Judgmental sampling was used for the research. Only those respondents were considered who had a minimum of 6 months of work experience. The data was collected in the months of July and August, 2017.

Participation in the study was made voluntary. Employees were informed that the study was for research and their response would be anonymous. Participants responded to a questionnaire of 6 items on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from “*strongly disagree*” to “*strongly agree*”.

The sample size is 384. In terms of age, most samples were less than 35 years (75%). 83% of the respondents were male, 63% of them were having at least graduates and 51% were unmarried. Most

of the respondents fall into the category of Managers (67%) having less than 5 years experience (45%).

### Methods of Data Collection

Berson and Linton's (2005) 6-item scale was used to measure the level of job satisfaction among employees. The computed internal consistency reliability for this measure was 0.85 using coefficient Alpha.

Example items are “In difficult situations, I can pause without immediately reacting”, “I am impatient with myself and with others”, “I experience moments of inner peace and ease, even when things get hectic and stressful”.

A questionnaire using Google form was prepared for the respondents, where the views of employees were collected. The questionnaire was distributed to all the employees and the responses were collected from them. There was a personal interaction held with the HR in order to get more clear view.

### Statistics

Descriptive statistics and T Test were used to test the hypotheses in Microsoft Excel Version 2010 and SPSS Version 17.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance values of Job satisfaction (0.118) are greater than 0.05, indicating that the data is normal and thus ensuring the implementation of parametric tests.

### RESULTS

The perception of Job satisfaction is higher among males(mean=21.87) as compared to females (mean=21.8). But there was no significant difference in the means of the perception of Job

satisfaction among males (M=21.87, SD=2.30) and females (M=21.86,SD=2.14);  $t(375)=7.84E-05$ ,  $p=0.99$ .

### FINDINGS

Male employees experienced higher overall Job satisfaction as compared to female employees. Though, the difference in the mean was not found to be statistically significant.

### DISCUSSION

There are two schools of thought. One believing, that there is no relationship between demography of the employees and the levels of job satisfaction among them. The other school of thought actually believes the opposite. Clark( 1997) in accordance with this paper an identical man and woman with the same jobs and expectations would indeed report identical job satisfaction, but women's expectations are argued to be lower than men's.

Benderet al (2005) infers that the gender ratio of the workplace has no role to play in determining the level of job satisfaction of females. Female employees have reported higher levels of job satisfaction in female dominated workplaces since they value the flexibility in the job.

Bernal et al (2005) analysis reveals that although, men and women takes into consideration different job dimensions, the level to which each dimension has an influence is different for each employee. Research by Kim et al (2009) shows that female employees are more effected by the influence of role stress on job satisfaction as compared to male employees.

On the opposite side of the pole, Okparaet al (2005) found that female employees experienced higher levels of satisfaction with the job and co-workers, whereas, their male counterparts experienced more

satisfaction with their pay, supervision, promotions and overall the job. The result of the current study is from this school of thought and indicates that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female in terms of job satisfaction. Rashed (2006) also found similar results as he explored that the influence of gender on employees level of job satisfaction. The response of 223 male and 213 female employees (total 436) working in five Kuwaiti government ministries, found no significant difference in levels of job satisfaction with regards to gender.

## RECOMMENDATION

Research reveals that a positive working environment can improve the job satisfaction level of the employees. Positive environment is created when the organization takes care of the employee's needs. Training and development should be institutionalized with the help of the top management. Reward and recognition is also seen to enhance the job satisfaction level. The organizations should develop transparent compensation and performance management systems to create a sense of equity among the employees. Organizations should keep a measure of the satisfaction level of the employees by conduction satisfaction surveys at regular frequency. Any deviation found in the analysis of these surveys should be immediately brought to the notice of the decision makers and should be addressed immediately.

## CONCLUSION

The biggest challenge for the organizations nowadays, is to maintain productivity and profitability. Job satisfaction is considered to be critical antecedent to high motivation, productivity, and low employee turnover. Organizations are always in lookout for ways to increasing the levels of job satisfaction among employees.

The current research concludes that there is no difference in the levels of job satisfaction between male and female employees which means, equal amount of attention should be given employees irrespective of their gender. As indicated in a few studies in the western context, it should not be perceived by the managers that the female employees experience higher levels of job satisfaction in the Indian context.

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