

Impact of Gender on the Relationship between Job Satisfaction & Psychological Well-being of Indian Employees

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ABSTRACT

A central point adding to the capacity of organizations to adapt to the turbulent environment is the advancement of job satisfaction and employee well-being. The purpose of this study was to understand the effect of gender on the job satisfaction and psychological well-being of the employees working in Indian private sector. Consequently, the relationship between job satisfaction and well-being was explored. A cross-sectional survey-based research design was adopted using data from 160 employees (equal number of males and females) of private sector organizations in North India. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) were administered to gain insight into the levels of job satisfaction and well-being respectively. The results showed that gender did not play a role in determining job satisfaction and psychological well-being in Indian employees. Further, it was seen that job satisfaction and psychological well-being were positively correlated. The study advances the existing work and adds to the limited literature of Indian studies on the relationship between job satisfaction and well-being in the Indian private sector.

Keywords: *Gender, Job Satisfaction, Psychological Well-being, Indian Employees*

Managers cannot influence the inner states of employees directly, because of the complex psychological make up of human beings. However, they can try and understand the needs and requirements of employees and provide them with resources and working conditions that encourage quality performance and reach organizational goals. Most organizations strive for employee satisfaction, yet not all accomplish this objective. In present times, the study of job satisfaction has become even more important, as a report suggests that, twenty-seven percent of millennials are expected to work over the age of 70, and 12 percent report that they will work until the day they die (“Millennial Careers: 2020 Vision,” 2016). To cater to a generation that works more than any of the other generations, a company must have a competent HR workforce that recognizes the factors that can increase employee satisfaction,

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and how it fits into a company's overall success. A review of literature in the non-Indian context suggests that job satisfaction has a direct correlation with well-being. Well-being here is defined as a source of resilience in the face of adversity and should reflect positive functioning, personal strengths and mental health (Ryff, 1989). Organizations gain vast advantages if they can effectively enhance well-being of their employees. As long as the well-being of employees improves, they work harder, smarter and the attrition rate of the organization may reduce (Rodgers J, 2016).

Necessity in Indian context

There is a necessity to understand the relevance of this study from the societal and cultural backdrop of the Indian subcontinent (diversity in terms of people coming from different castes, and seven officially recognized religions), which also defines the unique Indian management style (Varma et al., 2005). A survey conducted by the Economic times, a leading news paper in India revealed that 60% of Indian employees are not satisfied with their job (Economic times, 2016). A high 46% of the workforce in organisations in India suffers from some or the other form of stress (Bhattacharya, Rica Vijayaraghavan, 2016). Studies in the Indian context have shown that organizational stressors have had a negative impact on the physical health and psychological well-being of employees (Jain, Giga, & Cooper, 2013). It was also seen that, for Indian employees, subjective well-being was inversely related to burnout-linked job performance (Singh, Suar, & Leiter, 2012). Healthy life-style and health promotion policies and programmes that are central for health of youth, driven by robust population-based studies are required in India (Sunitha & Gururaj, 2014). Hence, given this backdrop, it will be worthwhile to study how job satisfaction correlates with well-being and the gender difference in these two components.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction of employees as a topic has received considerable attention by researchers and practitioners alike. Locke (1976) had calculated that at least 3,350 articles had been written on the topic by 1972 (Spector, 1985). Locke defines Job Satisfaction as involving cognitive, affective, and evaluative reactions or attitudes and states it is "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (Luthans & Luthans, 2015). Job satisfaction has been found to effect turnover intent (Lambert & Hogan, 2009), an employee's decision to leave the company (Lambert & Hogan, 2009), job performance, organizational commitment (Fu & Deshpande, 2014) among many other variables.

Well-being

It is essential to look at well-being with regard to the work space to understand its relationship to the work environment and consequently empowering organizations to adequately target mediations to improve well-being of their workforce. One of the first few and still widely used models of well-being is Carol Ryff's model of well-being. To build a

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theory that links philosophical questions with scientific pragmatism, Carol Ryff drew her theory from a varied range of well-being theories and research. Ryff gave 6 dimensions of psychological well-being (Ryff, 1995), i.e.: Self-acceptance: This dimension talks about the kind of attitude one holds towards themselves. A person with high self-acceptance is able to acknowledge several aspects of themselves and embrace their past experiences, in contrast with those who have low self-acceptance and so remain generally dissatisfied with their life. Personal growth: This dimension talks about the feeling of personal development v/s personal stagnation. People with high sense of personal growth are open to new experiences, believe and act in ways that enables them to reach their highest potential and seek consistent and conscious self-improvement over time, in contrast to those you don't. Purpose in life: This dimension talks about one's life goals and sense of direction. People who have a strong purpose in life, understand that their past and present life has a meaning and stand by strong beliefs that give life purpose. Positive relations with others: This dimension talks about the kind of relationships one holds with other people, the emphasis one lays on welfare of others, can display feelings of empathy, affection, intimacy and understand the dynamics in human relations. Environmental mastery: This dimensions talks about how well an individual deals with his or her environment. People with high environmental mastery are able to effectively manage their environment to create contexts that fits their preferences, influence external activities, effectively use opportunities provided by the environment. Autonomy: This dimension deals with the ability to make one's own decisions. People with high autonomy are self-directed, resist negative social pressures, exhibit self regulation of behavior, have personal standards for self evaluation. This model has been seen to work cross culturally in diverse countries such as Spain (van Dierendonck, Díaz, Rodríguez-Carvajal, Blanco, & Moreno-Jiménez, 2008), Hongkong (Cheng & Chan, 2005) and Sweden (Lindfors, Berntsson, & Lundberg, 2006).

PRESENT STUDY

Gender Difference in Job Satisfaction

Research shows contradictory results while establishing the gender difference in job satisfaction. A study, through multivariate analysis showed that factors independently associated with levels of job satisfaction were generally similar for women and men (Pu et al., 2017). Another study showed through Regression analysis showed similar results (Mohd Suki & Mohd Suki, 2011) However, some other studies suggest that women have higher job satisfaction than men. One such study showed that job satisfaction was significantly stronger for females than for males in a Chinese firm (Tang, Siu, & Cheung, 2014). Another study found that women, either in full-time or part-time employment, report significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than men (Zou, 2015). There were also a few studies suggesting that males have a higher job satisfaction than women (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2003).

Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H1. There will be a significant difference between male and female employees on job satisfaction in the Indian context.

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Gender difference in well-being

Research indicates that women tend to have lower levels of well-being than men (Srimathi & Kiran Kumar, 2010). Another study found, men to be happier than women (Bălăţescu, 2014). Research also indicates, that, women with managerial careers are significantly less satisfied with their life than their male counterparts (Brockmann, Koch, Diederich, & Edling, 2017). A consistent pattern across countries, is, that women report lower levels of mental well-being, as measured by the GHQ (Madden, 2010). It was also seen that the important correlates of SWB for men and women were somewhat different in the Indian context (Agrawal et al., 2011). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H2. There will be a significant difference between male and female employees on well-being in the Indian context.

Linking Job Satisfaction with Well-being

An extensive review of literature suggests that well-being and job satisfaction have a positive correlation (Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2005; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985). The results of a study that tried to measure the job satisfaction of employees working in three different working conditions showed that job satisfaction scales had a positive correlation with well-being (Sousa, Coleta, Sousa, & Coleta, 2015). Another study through meta-analysis, found positive correlation of well-being and job satisfaction (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010). Studies have exhibited a negative correlation between depression and job satisfaction (Nadinloyi, Sadeghi, & Hajloo, 2013). It was also seen that Positive organisational constructs like hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism leads to development of career commitment and subjective well being in the Indian manufacturing sector (Singhal, H., & Rastogi, R., 2018). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H3: There will be a positive correlation between job satisfaction and psychological well-being, in the Indian context.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

For the present study, that followed an ex post facto research design, responses were collected from male and female employees working in a private organization. (N=160, Males=80, Females=80). The data collection method was quantitative in nature, using purposive sampling.

There were a total of 160 participants, 50% males and 50% females. Participants' working experience ranged from minimum 2 years, to more than 10 years. Mostly Participants were post graduates (52%) or graduates (47%). In addition, the sample included employees with different marital status: Married (46.4%), Unmarried (53%) and divorced (0.6%).

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Measures

1. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire: This is an instrument that measures satisfaction with several different aspects of the work environment. In 1967, Weiss et al., developed the short-form MSQ, a self-report measure, composed of 20 items. The responses are scored through 1 to 5 on a scale from Very Dissatisfied to Very Satisfied. Internal consistency for the general satisfaction scale it varies from 0.87 to 0.92 with a median of 0.90. Test-retest reliability- the test-retest value of MSQ is 0.89 for a one-week interval and 0.70 for a year interval (Martins & Proença, 2012)

2. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) is a 5-point Likert Scale, consists 14 items covering both hedonic and eudemonic aspects of mental health including positive affect, satisfying interpersonal relationships and positive functioning. All items are scored positively. The overall score for the WEMWBS score therefore, indicates a higher level of mental well-being. WEMWBS shows good content validity. Test-retest reliability at one week was high (0.83). Social desirability bias is lower or similar to that of other comparable scales (Tennant et al., 2007).

Procedure

To study job satisfaction and well-being, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale were used, which are tools to measure job satisfaction and well-being among employees of private organizations. This was followed by the formulation of a Personal Demographic Sheet to gather the personal information about the employees. This personal demographic sheet was then combined with the forms of the two scales in a Google Document Form. The process of data collection begun as the Google form was mailed to 250 individuals in the month of August. Out of 250 individuals, 200 responded and 160 responses were taken into consideration. Thus, the response rate was 80%. Participants were informed about the purpose of this research and assured that the information would be kept confidential and anonymity would be maintained. The responses were then filled in by the sample which resulted in a pool of data to be subjected to analysis using the SPSS software and the subsequent results were obtained.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

A significant difference between Job Satisfaction and well-being is calculated using Independent Samples t-test (t) and the Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Well-Being is calculated using Pearson's coefficient correlation (r). Table (1) shows mean and standard deviation for males and females on Job Satisfaction and Well-Being ($N = 160$), Table (2) shows t-test for Job Satisfaction ($N = 80$ males and $N = 80$ females), Table (3) shows t-test for Well-Being ($N = 80$ males and $N = 80$ females), Table (4) shows correlation between Job Satisfaction and Well-Being (total no. of males and females = 160).

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Table 1 Mean and standard deviation of job satisfaction and well-being

Variables	Groups	N	Mean(M)	Standard Deviation(S.D)
Job Satisfaction	Female	80	73.12	10.93
	Male	80	71.17	10.47
Well Being	Female	80	47.78	8.85
	Male	80	48.66	8.38

Table 2 Independent sample t-test result for satisfaction in male and female employees

Levene's test for Equality of Variance		t- test		
F	Significance	t value	df	Significance (Two tailed)
.430	.513	1.153	158	.251

The female employees ($N=80$) were associated with a numerically higher job satisfaction $M=73.125$ ($S.D.=10.93$) in comparison to the male employees ($N=80$) $M=71.1750$ ($S.D.=10.478$) (Table 1). To test Hypothesis $H1$, independent sample t-test was performed. As can be seen from Table 2 assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(158)=.43$, $p=.513$. The independent sample t-test was associated with a non-significant effect, $t(158)=1.152$, $p=.251$. Thus Hypothesis $H1$ was rejected.

Table 3 Independent sample t-test for well-being in male and female employees

Levene's test for Equality of Variance		t- test		
F	Significance	t value	df	Significance (Two tailed)
.218	.614	.642	158	.522

The male employees ($N=80$) were associated with a numerically higher well-being $M=48.66$ ($S.D.=8.38$) in comparison to the female employees ($N=80$) $M=47.78$ ($S.D.=8.85$). To test the hypothesis $H2$, independent sample t-test was performed. As can be seen from Table 3 assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(158)=.21$, $p=.641$. The independent sample t-test was associated with a non-significant effect, $t(158)=.642$, $p=.522$. Thus, hypothesis $H2$ was rejected.

Table 4 Pearson's Correlation Matrix between job satisfaction and well-being of male and female employees

Variable	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale
Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	1	0.52**

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Variable	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale
Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale	0.52**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The job satisfaction and well-being scores of 80 males and 80 females were collated to calculate Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r). To test the hypothesis $H3$, 160 scores of job satisfaction and 160 scores of well-being were taken and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) was performed. As can be seen from Table 4, the Pearson r (160) = .520. Thus hypothesis $H3$ was retained.

DISCUSSION

Evidence suggested that, work related stress has a negative impact on employee job performance, and their physical and psychological well-being (Jain et al., 2013). The present study indicates, that, there is no significant difference (1.153) between males and females on job satisfaction (Table 2), hence rejecting hypothesis $H1$. Previous studies have shown similar result (Mason, 1995; Oshagbemi, 2000). Other studies have shown low impact of gender on job satisfaction (Islam & Saha, 2016). However, the results of the present study also contradict various other studies (Sousa-Poza & Sousa-Poza, 2003; Zou, 2015). This contradictory evidence could have been due to various confounding variables that were constant in the study.

Majority of both males and females were unmarried (50% males and 56% females). Previous research suggests, it is likely that work-to-family conflict will continue to affect employees' satisfaction (Kinnunen, Geurts, & Mauno, 2004). Thus unmarried individuals do not have to balance work and family and their levels of Job Satisfaction would remain the same. Another important point to note would be that majority of both males and females have completed their post-graduation (73% males and 70% females). The more qualified employees are, the better their pay is. A study suggests that pay level is marginally related to job satisfaction (Judge, Piccolo, et al., 2010).

As we can see from Table 3, that there was no significant difference in the well-being of males and females. Thus, Hypothesis $H2$ was rejected as well. Past explorations found no noteworthy gender contrasts on critical factors of well-being. Discoveries from previous researches likewise demonstrate that in OECD countries, the gender gap in well-being isn't statistically significant. (Schnepf, 2010). There were also a few studies however that found males to be happier than females in general and thus scoring high on well-being scales. However, it is important to note that such results contradict with the present study because of certain variables that have remained constant in the present study; such as: age, history of illness and marital status.

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Research suggests that all these variables are closely connected to well-being. A study showed, that, recent adolescents reported greater happiness and life satisfaction than their predecessors, and adults over age 30 were less happy in recent years. Among adults, the previously established positive correlation between age and happiness has diminished and disappeared (Twenge, Sherman, & Lyubomirsky, 2016). Majority of our sample lied between 19 to 31, for both males and females, in which 68% of females were younger than 31 and 56% of males were younger than 31. Another study theorized a crossover effect of gender on happiness by age (Inglehart, 2002; Easterlin, 2003). The age range appears to contain two types of gender imbalance: young ladies appear to report more noteworthy levels of well-being than young men and more seasoned men appear to report more remarkable levels of well-being than older women”(Waters, Kristina; Bambery, Shannon; Clark, 2016). This research justified the result of the present study very well. Majority of our female respondents were younger than male respondents. 25% of female respondents were between the age of 19-25, whereas, 10% of males were of the age of 19-25.

Research suggests that the protective effects of marriage on well-being are widely documented (Carr & Springer, 2010). However, research suggests that such effects depend on the quality of marriage. High-quality marriages provide benefits, whereas, toxic marriages lead to an emotional turmoil, especially for women (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007) and older adults (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006). Another study suggested that, a negative work to family spill over leads to individuals being less satisfied with their life, than when there is positive family to work spillover (Cho & Tay, 2016). These studies suggest that for married individuals, a healthy married life is a requirement for high levels of psychological well-being. From these results, we can conclude that unmarried individuals would have one less precondition for their well-being. Majority of the respondents in the present study were unmarried, thus explaining the similarity in well-being.

One of the most important variables associated with psychological well-being was history of illness. The relation between physical health and well-being is bidirectional (Steptoe, Deaton, & Stone, 2015). A study demonstrated medium, statistically significant and positive (pooled $r = 0.347$, $P < 0.001$) correlation between health status and well-being (Ngamaba, Panagioti, & Armitage, 2017). In the present study, 76% of males and 78% of females reported no signs of illness and this provides an explanation for the result of no significant difference in well-being of males and females. Since majority of the participants of the study reported no history of illness, chances of their level of low levels of psychological well-being reduced.

As you can see from Table 4, Job Satisfaction and well-being had a positive correlation in the present study and thus the hypothesis *H3* was retained. Previous research has supported this claim as well. In a study experts explored the connections between well-being and job satisfaction (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Another study utilized the circumplex model of affect as a theoretical system to recognize particular kinds of occupational related well-being,

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including job satisfaction (Arnold B. Bakker & Wido G.M. Oerlemans, 2012). Both these studies got a positive correlation between job satisfaction and well-being. In addition, an examination of longitudinal studies suggested that the causal relationship from well-being to job satisfaction was stronger than the causal relationship from job satisfaction to SWB (Bowling et al., 2010).

LIMITATIONS

The present study is one of the few studies that has been conducted in the Indian context and hence can be used for further research with respect to Indian culture. Certain variables like level of qualification have seldom been used in previous researches and hence this study has definitely added to the literature. There is developing acknowledgement of the significance of individual well-being inside and outside the working environment. In attempting to get the absolute best out of their association, numerous supervisors are implementing practices to expand the well-being of their staff. For organizations which value the employee's subjective well-being can work around the variables mentioned in the study. Furthermore, this study can also be used for other corporate activities such as training and selection. Through training, organizations can instill job satisfaction in employees by increasing their subjective well-being. Doing so would increase the productivity of the employees and benefit the workplace.

IMPLICATIONS

The present study is one of the few studies that has been conducted in the Indian context and hence can be used for further research with respect to Indian culture. Certain variables like level of qualification have seldom been used in previous researches and hence this study has definitely added to the literature. There is developing acknowledgement of the significance of individual well-being inside and outside the working environment. In attempting to get the absolute best out of their association, numerous supervisors are implementing practices to expand the well-being of their staff. For organizations which value the employee's subjective well-being can work around the variables mentioned in the study. Furthermore, this study can also be used for other corporate activities such as training and selection. Through training, organizations can instill job satisfaction in employees by increasing their subjective well-being. Doing so would increase the productivity of the employees and benefit the workplace.

CONCLUSION

Thus, from the present study it can be concluded that, there was no significant difference between males and females in job satisfaction and well-being. A positive correlation between job satisfaction and well-being was established.

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