

Original Article

Understanding Job Satisfaction from the Perspective of Employee Perceptions of Organizational & Supervisory Support

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Abstract: This research aims to investigate job satisfaction from the lens of employees' perceptions of supervisory and organizational support among a sample of 144 individuals working in the private sector. The study utilized the Supervisory Support Scale, Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POS-8) and the Job Satisfaction Index for assessment purposes. Demographic details of the participants, like their age, gender and job sector were also collected, along with their informed consent. The study revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between all three variables, which highlights the importance of Perceived Organizational Support and Supervisory Support in increasing Job Satisfaction. It was also found that age and job sector have a statistically significant effect on all three variables, whereas no such effect of the variables was observed with Job Satisfaction. Further research on this topic can help identify other factors that contribute to increasing job satisfaction and plan strategies that organizations can implement to foster a positive work culture and enhance employee well-being.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Perceived Organizational Support, Supervisory Support.

I. INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of organizations are directing their focus to ensure higher job satisfaction among their employees to reap the benefits this can have for the organization. This is achieved through the implementation of supportive policies and helping employees foster positive relationships with their supervisors. Job satisfaction can increase employee engagement, commitment, and innovation. Robbins (2005) defined job satisfaction as the positive feeling that one has about their job, stemming from an evaluation of the job's characteristics. Job satisfaction can be impacted by two crucial factors: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Supervisory Support.

Social Exchange Theory by George C. Homans (1958) is crucial in the context of this research. The theory states that all social behaviors result from cost-benefit analysis and that most people seek to maximize the benefits they might get from a relationship. Supervisory Support and Perceived Organizational Support are part of an exchange relationship. Here, support from the organization and supervisor makes employees feel valued, and they, in turn, reciprocate by demonstrating loyalty, commitment and increased work performance, which can lead to increased job satisfaction.

A) Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experience." Satisfied employees are more likely to demonstrate positive attitudes, including loyalty and organizational citizenship behaviours, contributing to a harmonious work environment [12].

The factors affecting job satisfaction are multifaceted and can be influenced by individual preferences, organizational culture, and job-specific characteristics. Several key factors have been identified through research that impact an employee's job satisfaction. Some important factors to be considered are work environment [2], recognition [1], and job security.

B) Supervisor Support

Supervisor support includes the communication, guidance, assistance and encouragement that supervisors provide to their subordinates in the workplace. This can include emotional support, professional development, feedback and resources designed to promote a positive and productive working relationship between supervisors and their employees.

The importance of supervisor support and relationships has been emphasized for a variety of positive work outcomes, and it has been identified as a mediating factor between stress and employee satisfaction.



Moreover, employees tend to feel more control over their environment if they have a family-supportive supervisor, which can lead to decreased stress and increased job satisfaction. This perceived control can enhance employee retention by fostering an accommodating work culture that values the employee's personal needs.

It can be a predictor for career outcomes, such as career satisfaction and career promotion if supervisor support for career development is present along with task competence.

C) Perceived Organizational Support

Employees' subjective assessment of how much their employer appreciates their efforts, is concerned about their welfare and fosters their development as professionals are known as perceived company support or POS. This perception of organizational support plays an important role in shaping employee attitudes, behaviors and overall job satisfaction.

Various factors have been identified as having a role in influencing the Perceived Organizational Support of an employee, like reward justice or an equitable allocation of rewards and assets among employees such that rewards are proportionate to personal inputs, like time, effort and competence. Task-oriented leadership is one which is focused almost exclusively on goals and completing the objectives within the given timeframe. Such leaders provide clear instructions and maintain fairness in their interactions while also providing opportunities for growth, leading to a positive work environment, which can foster an organizational culture centered on support. Supervisor Support is another factor that can influence Perceived Organizational Support. The two factors are intricately linked together and show a positive correlation. When supervisors provide guidance and mentorship to employees, they feel valued and supported, leading to an overall positive work environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Larsson and Alvinius (2019) performed a qualitative research study by conducting 12 in-depth interviews with Swedish University professors. The study identified five aspects that contribute to job satisfaction: distal environment, proximal social environment, personal factors, daily life benefits and formal conditions. A model was developed through an inductive process that highlighted the interplay between contextual and individual factors as determinants of professors' job satisfaction.

Liu et al. (2021) sought to evaluate, using a sizable representative sample, the disparities between genders in work-life balance (WLB) and job fulfillment among Chinese physicians. A nationwide poll was carried out as part of the study between March 18 and March 31, 2019, with 22,128 physicians from 144 tertiary public hospitals participating through an online questionnaire. While various demographic and work-related factors such as age, education, monthly income, and working hours showed associations with job satisfaction and WLB, the study found no significant gender disparities after accounting for these factors. This finding diverges from many previous studies that have reported notable differences based on gender.

Ekowati and Kasman (2023) conducted a study that aimed to explore how perceived organizational support impacts different dimensions of employee commitment, such as affective, continuance and normative commitment, and identify which dimension is most influenced by perceived organizational support. Using convenient random sampling, 50 respondents were surveyed. The results indicated that POS significantly influences employee commitment, particularly affective commitment, suggesting that management should provide appropriate support aligned with employees' needs to enhance organizational commitment.

Eisenberger & Rhoades (2001) reviewed, across more than 70 studies, the concept of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and how it centres on employees' overarching perception of how their contributions are valued and how their well-being is regarded within their work environment. A meta-analysis revealed that POS is influenced by three primary categories of favourable treatment: fairness, positive organizational rewards and job conditions, and supportive supervision. In turn, POS is linked to positive outcomes for both employees (e.g., job satisfaction, positive mood) and the organization (e.g., commitment, performance, reduced withdrawal behaviours). These connections are explained through the mechanisms proposed by Organizational Support Theory: the perception of discretionary actions by the organization, a sense of obligation felt by employees to support the organization, fulfilment of socioemotional needs, and the expectation of performance-related rewards.

Maan, Abid & Butt (2020) conducted a study guided by social exchange theory, which aimed at exploring how psychological empowerment and proactive personality moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and job satisfaction. 936 workers in the industrial and service sectors participated in the survey, which was conducted using a time-lagged cross-sectional study design and self-report questionnaires. The findings suggest that POS has a beneficial impact on job fulfillment and psychological autonomy. Additionally, the impact of POS on job satisfaction is less pronounced among employees with higher proactive personalities compared to those with lower proactive tendencies. These findings offer insights for organizations in service and manufacturing industries to enhance individual psychological empowerment and job satisfaction by providing targeted support to less proactive individuals.

A) Methodology

a. Aims of the study

The study aimed to examine the relationship between supervisory support, organizational support and job satisfaction. It also intended to see the effect of gender, age and job sector on the above-mentioned variables.

b. Sample

A sample of N=144 individuals between the ages of 20-45 years were included in the study. Individuals working in the private sector and working under a supervisor were considered for the study. The number of females was 94, and males were 50 in this study. The mean age for the sample was 36 years, with an SD of 7 years. Of the 144 individuals, 54 worked in the Healthcare sector, 38 worked in the IT sector, 20 worked in Marketing, 17 worked in Finance, and only 15 worked in the Education sector.

c. Tools & Procedure

In order to gauge how much support employees feel from their supervisor, Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) created the Supervisory Support Scale. It is a 9-item self-report measure utilizing a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert Scale for responses, where higher scores indicate higher levels of Supervisory Support.

The scale showed excellent internal reliability, with Cronbach's alpha being 0.93, indicating that the items in the scale measure the same underlying construct. Construct validity of the scale has been demonstrated through correlations with related constraints. The scale also exhibits convergent and discriminant validity, along with evidence of good content validity.

The Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POS-8), developed by Eisenberger (2002), was used to measure POS. The scale is used to gauge how much an employee believes their employer values their work and is concerned about their well-being and how much they are ready to reward them for making more effort. The measure comprises eight items, and responses are collected on a 7-point Likert Scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 7= Strongly Agree). A high score on this scale indicates a positive perception of organizational support.

The scale has high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha score being 0.91. POS correlates positively with overall job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job discretion and employee performance, providing evidence for high construct validity for the scale.

Job Satisfaction Index was used to measure job satisfaction. The measurement was created in 1980 by Schriesheim and Tsui. It creates an indicator that characterizes total job satisfaction using six items. The scale measures the degree of satisfaction of employees with pay, job opportunities, co-workers, supervision, job in general and the work itself. Scoring is done on a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1=very dissatisfied and 5=very satisfied.

The reliability coefficient alpha ranged from 0.73 to 0.78, which demonstrates suitable internal consistency. The construct validity of the scale can be seen through its positive correlation with age, tenure, psychological commitment, and organizational support, and negative correlation with conflict between work and non-work roles.

The tools were administered to the study's voluntary participants. They were assured of anonymity of their responses and were ensured that their responses would be utilized for constructive research purposes solely.

d. Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics of the study's three core variables, Supervisory Support, Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction, were computed. Pearson Product moment correlations were computed to examine the relationship between the three core variables, while an independent sample t-test along with ANOVA was performed to see the effect of gender, age and job sector on the core variables of the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the results of descriptive statistics of POS, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction for the total sample, males and females.

<i>Descriptive statistics for the overall sample (N=144)</i>				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisory Support	22	45	37.20	4.77
POS*	15	56	42.73	9.73
Job Satisfaction	6	30	22.45	4.57
<i>Descriptive Statistics for males (N=94)</i>				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisory Support	22	45	37.37	4.97

POS*	15	56	42.54	10.05
Job Satisfaction	6	30	22.65	4.69
<i>Descriptive Statistics for females (N=50)</i>				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisory Support	26	45	36.90	4.41
POS*	23	56	43.10	9.19
Job Satisfaction	9	30	22.08	4.35

*POS = Perceived Organizational Support

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for POS, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction for the overall sample, males and females. It can be seen that females have a higher mean than males in terms of POS and Supervisory Support but a smaller mean in Job Satisfaction. On the other hand, males have lower standard deviation in all three scales.

Table 2 presents Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between POS, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction scores for the total sample, males and females

<i>Pearson's correlation for the total sample (N=144)</i>			
	Supervisory Support	POS	Job Satisfaction
Supervisory Support	1		
POS	.621**	1	
Job Satisfaction	.543**	.689**	1
<i>Pearson's correlation for males (N=94)</i>			
	Supervisory Support	POS	Job Satisfaction
Supervisory Support	1		
POS	.601**	1	
Job Satisfaction	.566**	.691**	1
<i>Pearson's correlation for females (N=50)</i>			
	Supervisory Support	POS	Job Satisfaction
Supervisory Support	1		
POS	.676**	1	
Job Satisfaction	.487**	.697**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level of significance

The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction ($r=.689$, significant at 0.01 level). This suggests that individuals who feel that their organization supports them and cares about them tend to feel satisfied in their jobs and are more likely to be work-motivated. These findings are supported by previous research done in this field by Eisenberg & Rhoades (2001). Similarly, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction had a statistically significant positive correlation ($r=.543$ significant at 0.01 level), which means that support and encouragement from supervisors can help employees feel more secure in their working environment and it makes them more likely to perform well, which can lead to increased job satisfaction levels. These findings support the results of the research conducted by Newsome & Pillari (2008). Supervisory Support and Perceived Organizational Support were also positively correlated ($r=.621$ significant at 0.01 level), which implies that support from the organization and support from the supervisor often accompany one another.

Table 3 presents the results of an independent sample t-test done to examine gender differences in Supervisory Support, POS and Job Satisfaction total scores.

Dependent Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Supervisory Support	Female	50	36.90	4.41	.563	.574
	Male	94	37.37	4.97		
POS	Female	50	43.10	9.19	-.326	.745
	Male	94	42.54	10.05		
Job Satisfaction	Female	50	22.08	4.35	.723	.471
	Male	94	22.65	4.69		

An independent sample t-test was also performed to look for gender differences in Perceived Organizational Support, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction. Results revealed no statistically significant difference in the scores of male and female participants for Perceived Organizational Support ($t=.563$, $p=.574$), Supervisory Support ($t=-.326$, $p=.745$) and Job Satisfaction ($t=.723$, $p=.471$). This means that male and female participants felt equally supported by their supervisors and their organizations and that their contentment or satisfaction with their jobs was not statistically different from the other gender. This implies that there is equality in the workplace, at least to some level. Research conducted on Chinese physicians by Liu et al. (2021) also showed no significant gender differences in job satisfaction.

Table 4 presents the results of one-way ANOVA to examine the effect of age on Supervisory Support, POS and Job Satisfaction.

Variables	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig. (2 – tailed)
Supervisory Support	20-24	18	34.27	4.41	3.361*	.012
	25-29	17	37.17	4.01		
	30-34	23	36.08	5.70		
	35-39	39	37.79	4.37		
	40-45	47	37.57	4.53		
POS	20-24	18	34.11	10.12	6.077**	<.001
	25-29	17	41.52	8.75		
	30-34	23	40.78	10.74		
	35-39	39	45.33	9.06		
	40-45	47	45.27	7.95		
Variables	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig. (2 – tailed)
Job Satisfaction	20-24	18	19.38	5.28	4.607*	.002
	25-29	17	21.64	3.70		
	30-34	23	21.08	5.84		
	35-39	39	23.97	4.03		
	40-45	47	23.34	3.54		

*F value is significant at the 0.05 level of significance

**F value is significant at the 0.01 level of significance

To examine the differences in Supervisory Support, Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction, with respect to the age of participants, a one-way ANOVA test was used. The results revealed the statistically significant effect of age on all three variables, as indicated by the F value. For Supervisory Support (F= 3.361), the value was significant at 0.05 level, which indicates that based on the age group of participants, there was a significant difference in the level of support they felt they received from their supervisor. Individuals in the age group 35-39 years had the highest mean. Hence, they likely perceive the highest level of support from their supervisor. In the case of Perceived Organizational Support (F= 6.077) and Job Satisfaction (F= 4.607), this value was significant at 0.01 level, with the highest Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support mean in the 35-39-year-old age group.

Table 5 presents the results of one-way ANOVA to examine the effect of the job sector on Supervisory Support, POS and Job Satisfaction.

Variables	Job Sector	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig. (2 – tailed)
Supervisory Support	Healthcare	54	38.00	4.84	.808	.522
	IT	38	37.13	5.33		
	Finance	17	36.82	4.79		
	Marketing	20	35.90	4.27		
	Education	15	36.73	3.55		
POS	Healthcare	54	45.57	8.54	2.889	.025*
	IT	38	42.31	9.95		
	Finance	17	41.70	7.77		
	Marketing	20	37.40	11.96		
	Education	15	41.86	9.62		
Job Satisfaction	Healthcare	54	23.68	3.87	2.221	.070
	IT	38	22.34	5.16		
	Finance	17	20.70	3.68		
	Marketing	20	20.95	4.23		
	Education	15	22.33	5.77		

*F value is significant at the 0.05 level of significance

To measure the effect of the job sector on Supervisory Support, Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction, one-way ANOVA analysis was used. Findings revealed that in the case of Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction, there was no significant difference in the scores of participants based on their job sector. However, the job sector was seen to have a statistically significant effect on Perceived Organizational Support (F=2.889, p= 0.025). This means an individual's job sector can influence their perception of the support they receive from the organization.

IV. CONCLUSION

It has been assessed and understood that all three variables in the study, Perceived Organizational Support, Supervisory Support and Job Satisfaction, are significantly and positively correlated with each other. This study also strongly indicates that

Perceived Organizational Support and Supervisory Support have a strong potential to positively affect Job Satisfaction. Thus, employees who feel supported by their organizations and supervisors tend to feel an increased sense of belonging and identify more strongly with the organizational goals. This encouragement and support also enhance an employee's self-efficacy and confidence, thereby improving their perception of job satisfaction.

Further, age also plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction, whereas other factors like gender and job sector showed no statistically significant effect on job satisfaction.

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