

Job Satisfaction Among Nurses: Theoretical Models



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Introduction

Job satisfaction, a worker's sense of achievement and success, is generally perceived to be directly linked to productivity as well as to personal wellbeing. Job satisfaction implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well and being suitably rewarded for one's work. The Harvard Professional Group (1988) sees job satisfaction as the keying radiant that leads to recognition, income, promotion, and the achievement of other goals that lead to general feeling of fulfillment. If job satisfaction is a worker benefit, surely the worker must be able to contribute to his or her won satisfaction and well-being on the job.

Key Words:- Satisfaction, Profession, Management & Jobs

History of Job Satisfaction

One of the biggest preludes to the study of job satisfaction was the Hawthorne studies. These studies (1924-1933), primarily credited to Elton Mayo of the Harvard Business School, sought to find the effects of various conditions (most notably illumination) on workers' productivity. These studies ultimately showed that novel changes in work conditions temporarily increase productivity (called the Hawthorne Effect). It was later found that this increase resulted, not from the new conditions, but from the knowledge of being observed. This finding provided strong evidence that people work for purposes other than pay, which paved the way for researchers to investigate other factors in job satisfaction.

Scientific management (aka Taylorism) also had a significant impact on the study of job satisfaction. Frederick Winslow Taylor's book, *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), argued that there was a single best way to perform

any given work task. This book contributed to a change in industrial production philosophies, causing a shift from skilled labor and piecework towards the more modern of assembly lines and hourly wages. The initial use of scientific management by industries greatly increased productivity because workers were forced to work at a faster pace. However, workers became exhausted and dissatisfied, thus leaving researchers with new questions to answer regarding job satisfaction. It should also be noted that the work of W.L. Bryan, Walter Dill Scott, and Hugo Munsterberg set the tone for Taylor's work.

Some argue that Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, a motivation theory, laid the foundation for job satisfaction theory. This theory explains that people seek to satisfy five specific needs in life - physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization. This model served as a good basis from which early researchers could develop job satisfaction theories. Job satisfaction can also be seen within the broader context of the range of issues which affect an individual's experience of work, or their quality of working life. Job satisfaction can be understood in terms of its relationships with other key factors, such as general well-being, stress at work, control at work, home-work interface, and working conditions.

Importance of Job Satisfaction

The organization need to take note that a happy employee is a happy customer. The importance of human resources management in an organization, still pay less attention to the importance of job satisfaction. The way employees are rewarded or remunerated for the job they have performed: If the wages are according to their

expectation, then it means that there is a sense of the job satisfaction: if wages is less then what the employees expect for the work they have performed, it result in job dissatisfaction.

Measures of Job Satisfaction

The following are measures of job satisfaction as outlined by Fields (2002):

- Overall Job Satisfaction - Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1983) developed this measure as part of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (OAQ). In this measure three items are used to describe an employee's subjective response to working in the specific job and organization. (Fields, 2002, p. 20)

- Job Descriptive Index (JDI) - This was originally developed by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969). There are 72 items on this index which assess five facets of job satisfaction which includes: the work, pay, promotions, supervision, and coworkers. Through the combination of ratings of satisfaction with the faces, a composite measure of job satisfaction is determined. Roznowski (1989) updated the JDI to include work atmosphere, job content and work technology. A shorter, 30-item version, was developed by Gregson (1990) based on 6 items which included work, pay, promotions, supervision and co-workers. (Fields, 2002, p. 23)

- Global Job Satisfaction - Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979) developed this measure which includes 15 items to determine overall job satisfaction. Two subscales are used for extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of the job. The extrinsic section has eight items and the intrinsic has seven items. (Fields, 2002, p. 27)

- Job Satisfaction Relative to Expectations - Bacharach, Bamberger, and Conley (1991) developed this measure. It assesses the degree "of agreement between the perceived quality of broad aspects of a job and employee expectations". It is most effective to determine how job stresses, role conflicts, or role ambiguities can hinder an employee from meeting job

expectations. (Fields, 2002, p. 6)

- Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire - The long form of this survey is made up of 100 questions based on 20 sub scales which measure satisfaction with "ability, utilization, achievement, activity, advancement, authority, company policies and practices, compensation, co-workers, creativity, independence, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervision-human relations, supervision-technical variety, and working conditions". There is a short version of the MSQ which consists of 20 items. This can also be separated into two subscales for intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. (Fields, 2002, p. 7)

- Job in General Scale - This measure was developed by Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson, and Paul (1989). It consists of 18 items which describe global job satisfaction and can be used in conjunction with the JDI, which assesses satisfaction with five job facets. This was developed to "assess global satisfaction independent from satisfaction with facets". (Fields, 2002, p. 9)

- Job Satisfaction Survey - This was developed by Spector (1985) and contains 36 items based on nine job facets. The job facets include pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, nature of work and communication. When it was initially developed, it was specific to job satisfaction in human service, nonprofit and public organizations. (Fields, 2002, p. 14)

- Job Satisfaction Index - Schriesheim and Tsue (1980) developed this measure. It consists of six items that form an index which determines overall job satisfaction. The items are the work, supervision, co-workers, pay, promotion opportunities, and the job in general. (Fields, 2002, p. 16)

- Job Diagnostic Survey - Hackman and Oldham (1976) developed this survey which measures both overall and specific facets of job satisfaction. There are three dimensions of overall job satisfaction which includes general satisfaction, internal work motivation, and growth satis-

faction, which are combined into a single measure. The facets which are measured on the survey include security, compensation, co-workers, and supervision. (Fields, 2002, p. 20)

Career Satisfaction -

Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) developed this measure. This is a measure of career success, as opposed to job satisfaction. It assesses general satisfaction with career outcome, but also satisfaction with career progress. (Fields, 2002, p. 29) Fields outlines specific types of employee satisfaction measures which describe an employee's satisfaction with one or more aspects of their job. These include the following (Fields, 2002):

Employee Satisfaction with Influence and Ownership developed by Rosen, Klein, and Young (1986).

Satisfaction with Work Schedule Flexibility developed by Rothausen (1994).

Satisfaction with My Supervisor developed by Scarpello and Vandenberg (1987).¹ Affect theory Edwin A. Locke's Range of Affect Theory (1976) 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.²

Dispositional theory

Another well-known job satisfaction theory is the Dispositional Theory. 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, Edwin A. Locke, and Cathy C. Durham in 1997. Judge et al. 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. Having 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 lead to higher job satisfaction.³

Opponent process theory

According to opponent process theory, emotional events, such as criticisms or rewards, elicits two sets of processes. Primary processes give way to emotions that are steady with the event in question. Events that seem negative in manner will give rise to the feelings of stress or anxiety. Events that are positive give rise to the feeling of content or relaxation. The other process is the opponent process, which induces feelings that contradict the feelings in the primary processes. Events that are negative give rise to

feelings of relaxation while events that are positive give rise to feelings of anxiety. A variety of explanations have been suggested to explain the uniformity of mood or satisfaction. This theory shows that if you try to enhance the mood of individual it will more likely fail in doing so. The opponent process theory was formulated to explain these patterns of observations.⁴

Equity theory

Equity Theory shows how a person views fairness in regard to social relationships. During a social exchange, a person identifies the amount of input gained from a relationship compared to the output, as well as how much effort another person's puts forth.⁵

Equity Theory suggests that if an individual thinks there is an inequality between two social groups or individuals, the person is likely to be distressed because the ratio between the input and the output are not equal.⁶

For example, consider two employees who work the same job and receive the same benefits. If one individual gets a pay raise for doing the same or less work than the other, then the less benefited individual will become distressed in his workplace. If, on the other hand, one individual gets a pay raise and new responsibilities, then the feeling of inequality is reduced.

Discrepancy theory

The concept of self-discrepancy theory explains the ultimate source of anxiety and dejection. An individual, who has not fulfilled his responsibility feels the sense of anxiety and regret for not performing well, they will also feel dejection due to not being able to achieve their hopes and aspirations. According to this theory, all individuals will learn what their obligations and responsibilities for a particular function, over a time period, and if they fail to fulfill those obligations then they are punished.

Over time, these duties and obligations consolidate to form an abstracted set of principles, designated as a self-guide.⁷

Agitation and anxiety are the main responses when an individual fails to achieve the obligation or

responsibility. This theory also explains that if achievement of the obligations is obtained then the reward can be praise, approval, or love. These achievements and aspirations also form an abstracted set of principles, referred to as the ideal self guide. When the individual fails to obtain these rewards, they begin to have feelings of dejection, disappointment, or even depression.⁸

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.

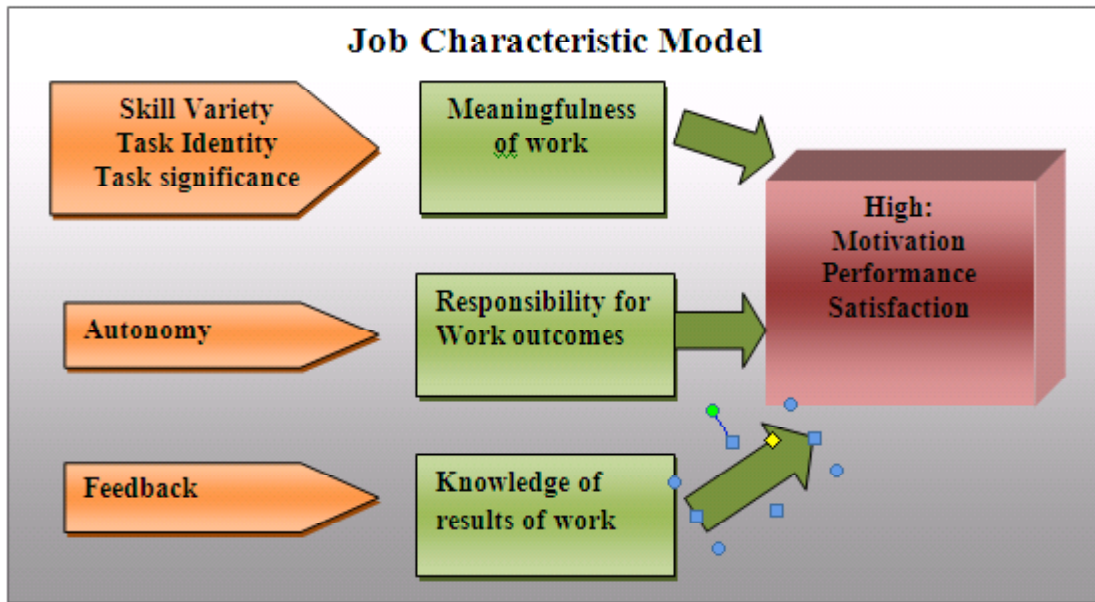
Motivating factors are those aspects of the job that make people want to perform, and provide people with satisfaction, for example achievement in work, recognition, promotion opportunities. These motivating factors are considered to be intrinsic to the job, or the work carried out. Hygiene factors include 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 in that it does not specify how motivating/hygiene factors are to be measured.⁹

Job characteristics model

Hackman & Oldham 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.).¹⁰ 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.¹¹

Motivating Potential Score
The motivating potential score (MPS) can be calculated, using the core dimensions discussed above, as follows;

$$MPS = \frac{\text{Skill Variety} + \text{Task identity} + \text{Task significant}}{3} \times \text{Autonomy} \times \text{Feedback}$$

Jobs that are high in motivating potential must be high on at least one of the three factors that lead

predicts that motivation, performance and job satisfaction will be positively affected and the likelihood of negative outcomes, such as absenteeism and turnover, will be reduced.¹²

Measuring job satisfaction

There are many methods for measuring job satisfaction. By far, the most common method for collecting data regarding job satisfaction is the Likert scale (named after Rensis Likert). Other less common methods of for gauging job satisfaction include: Yes/No questions, True/False questions, point systems, checklists, and forced choice answers. This data is sometimes collected using an Enterprise Feedback Management (EFM) system.

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) is a specific questionnaire of job satisfaction that has been widely used. It measures one's satisfaction in five facets: pay, promotions and promotion opportunities, coworkers, supervision, and the work itself. The scale is simple, participants answer either yes, no, or can't decide (indicated by '?') in response to whether given statements accurately describe one's job.¹³

A related scale is the Job in general index, which asks employees how satisfying their job is in a broad overall sense. In certain situations, it

can be more useful than the JDI because rather than focusing on individual facets, it asks about work satisfaction in general.

Other job satisfaction questionnaires include: the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), and the Faces Scale. The MSQ measures job satisfaction in 20 facets and has a long form with 100

questions (five items from each facet) and a short form with 20 questions (one item from each facet). The JSS is a 36 item questionnaire that measures nine facets of job satisfaction. Finally, the Faces Scale of job satisfaction, one of the first scales used widely, measured overall job satisfaction with just one item which participants respond to by choosing a face.

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