

A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF JOB CHARACTERISTICS ON KEY ATTITUDES OF FACULTY MEMBERS IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of job characteristics on key attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational commitment) of faculty members in professional educational institutes in Delhi region. In addition, the study explored the satisfaction level and commitment level of faculty members with different dimensions of their job. A survey of 251 faculty members working in private professional educational institutes was conducted. Several analytical techniques such as Pearson correlation and Hierarchical regression were used to evaluate the relationship among variables. The findings of the study indicated that job characteristics promotional opportunities, task variety, pay satisfaction, and professional development, resulted in a high affective commitment, while participation in decision making was related to normative commitment. Promotional opportunity, pay, and participation were highly related with the job satisfaction of the faculty members.

Keywords: Job characteristics, Organizational commitment, Job satisfaction

Introduction

The biggest challenge which higher education institutes are facing today is that of survival and the issues of high turnover and low productivity. The reason behind these issues is the lack of motivation of which employees are not able to perform their job effectively. This de-motivation is as a result of job dissatisfaction which is not taken seriously. Hence, it ultimately leads to the attrition of employees. The best single predictor of an individual's behaviour is the measure of his/her intention to perform that behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). However, organizational commitment and Job satisfaction have been studied widely in management literatures (Bondla &

Danish, 2008; Bondla & Naeem, 2008a; Bondla & Naeem, 2008b; Parker et al., 2013; Allen & Meyer, 1990) which are the antecedents of an employees' performance. These factors play a vital role in academic institutions, as higher educational institutions are the sources of human resources to create intellects for nations. Academicians are the pillars of the educational system; thus, they hold very important positions. Furthermore, the overall performance of educational institution depends upon teachers and ultimately their level of commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore, this study has made an effort to understand the relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction among faculty members of professional educational institutes. The literature suggests that there are various reasons like affective commitment to the values of the organization, costs involved with leaving the organization, and a sense of obligation to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In enhancing the performance of employees, the factors which contribute to the level of commitment and which leads to satisfaction is very important.

Literature Review

Professional educational institutes not only produce highly skilled and enlightened manpower, but also shoulder the responsibility of lending dynamism, resourcefulness, and intellectuality to it. A number of findings and observations points that professional education cosmos is sitting on a veritable landmine; that is, faculty members shortfall due to which faculty performance accountability and productivity have placed increasing demands on the work of the faculty. Faculty members are expected to perform multiple tasks such as teaching, conducting research, and been involved in the service and administrative functions of the institution (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In addition, increased expectations for faculty members' performance have raised the pressure which affects the job attitudes of faculty members.

Job Characteristics

Earlier studies have shown that when the employees perform challenging and complex jobs characteristics like autonomy, skills variety, and feedback, they exhibits high levels of commitment and job satisfaction (Sims *et al.*, 1976; Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Meyer and Allen, 1997). Therefore, studies have found that participation in decision making is a positive predictor of organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Mayer and Schoorman, 1998; McElroy, 2001). According to McElroy (2001), when employees are involved in decision making processes, there can be an increase in affective and normative commitment. Mottaz (1987, 1988) in his study found that job

characteristics such as job autonomy, skills variety, and job significance, had a strong positive influence on organizational commitment and work satisfaction. Subsequently, Pay denotes organizational support and dependability. Hence, it is an important determinant of organizational commitment and satisfaction (Guthrie, 2001; Levine, 1993; Gaertner and Nollen, 1989; Mottaz, 1988; Mowday *et al.*, 1982). Lambert (2003) found that job variety and job autonomy had positive effects on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment among correctional staff members. Furthermore, studies have shown that jobs which provide little opportunity for growth are boring and repetitive in nature. Hence, they are not enjoyed by the employees (Price and Mueller, 1986; Curry *et al.*, 1986; Lambert, 2004; Lambert *et al.*, 2007). Some studies have found that there is a positive relationship between promotion procedures and promotional opportunities with organizational commitment (Iles *et al.*, 1990; Kalleberg and Mastekaasaz, 1994; Young *et al.*, 1998; Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999). The studies showed that workers are highly committed and satisfied when the organizations take time and effort to stimulate employees through differential job opportunities (Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1990; Lambert, 2003). Similarly, Mowday *et al.* (1982) noted that the employees feelings of responsibility is increased when the supervisors gives them greater autonomy over how they perform. From a social exchange perspective, employees who are provided with meaningful enriched jobs may reciprocate by increasing their commitment to the organization.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is recognized as a key factor in the employment relationship. Therefore, strengthening employment commitment is widely acceptable. Organizational commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Johns (1996) defines organizational commitment as “an attitude that reflects the strength of the linkage between an employee and an organization.” However, work environment characteristics, socialization experiences, management practices, and psychological and personal characteristics affect work behaviour and psychological contracts. Thus, it is a three component model comprising of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Boehman, 2006; Canipe, 2006; Turner and Chelladurai, 2005; Greenberg, 2005; Allen and Meyer, 1996). Affective commitment is related to the employees who are part of the organization willingly; hence they are present on the job and are motivated to do their best (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Thus, this would lead to decreased turnover, absenteeism, and increased productivity (Mowday *et al.*, 1982;

Meyer & Allen, 1997; Klein et al., 2009). Normative commitment refers to the group of employees who feel a sense of obligation and lie to remain with the organization. Continuance commitment describes those employees who believe that the cost of leaving the organization is quite high; and as a result, they become more committed (Mayer & Allen 1997). Consequently, there are multiple commitments that transcend commitment to the overall organization. In improving commitment, it is very important to understand the multiple factors which influence commitment.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most heavily researched employee attitudes over the last 50 years (Rayton, 2006). Luthans defined Job satisfaction as “an attitude developed by an individual towards the job and job conditions”. Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction to constitute an attitudinal variable that measures how a person feels about his or her job, including different facets of the job. It is an affective response to specific aspects of the job. Hence, it plays a role in enhancing employee’s commitment to an organization. The intrinsic aspects of the job comprises of ‘motivators’ or ‘job content’ factors such as feelings of accomplishment, recognition, autonomy, achievement, and advancement among others. The extrinsic aspects of the job factors are job context factors which include pay, security, physical working conditions, company policies and administration, supervision, hours of work, and union relations with management among others. Furthermore, Gazi et al. (2010) in their study showed that teachers were satisfied with work variety, creativity, moral values, compensation, work itself, colleagues, and cooperation. Du et al. (2010) investigated that the overall job satisfaction level was close to average, while salary and benefits scored the lowest level of satisfaction.

Relationship between Job Characteristics, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been examined extensively. However, there are still some controversy issues regarding both constructs (Rayton, 2006; Vilela et al., 2008; Armutlulu and Moyan, 2011). Lambert (2004) in his study of 272 employees, found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment was affected differently by job characteristics (i.e. job variety, autonomy, and supervision). Hence, these characteristics effected job satisfaction more than organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is concerned with an individual’s job, while organizational commitment is related to the bond of an overall organization. Thus, it is expected that job characteristics would have larger effects on job satisfaction than they would on organizational commitment.

Studies have shown that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively correlated. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) found that organizational commitment had a strong positive relationship with overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with promotion, pay, and supervision among others. Meyer *et al.* (1993) in a study found that job satisfaction was positively correlated with affective commitment and normative commitment, but was negatively correlated with continuance commitment.

Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study:

1. To analyze the effect of job characteristics on job satisfaction (Intrinsic and extrinsic)
2. To analyze the effect of job characteristics on organizational commitment (Affective, Normative, and Continuance)

Research Hypothesis

H1: Job characteristics will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction.

H1a: Promotional opportunities will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction.

H1b: Task Variety will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction

H1c: Participation in decision making will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction.

H1d: Pay satisfaction will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction

H1e: Professional development will be positively correlated with extrinsic job satisfaction

H2: Job characteristics will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction.

H2a: Promotional opportunities will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction.

H2b: Task Variety will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction

H2c: Participation in decision making will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction.

H2d: Pay satisfaction will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction

H2e: Professional development will be positively correlated with intrinsic job satisfaction

H3: Job characteristics will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H3a: Promotional opportunities will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H3b: Task Variety will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H3c: Participation in decision making will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H3d: Pay satisfaction will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H3e: Professional development will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

H4: Job characteristics will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H4a: Promotional opportunities will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H4b: Task Variety will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H4c: Participation in decision making will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H4d: Pay satisfaction will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H4e: Professional development will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

H5: Job characteristics will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

H5a: Promotional opportunities will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

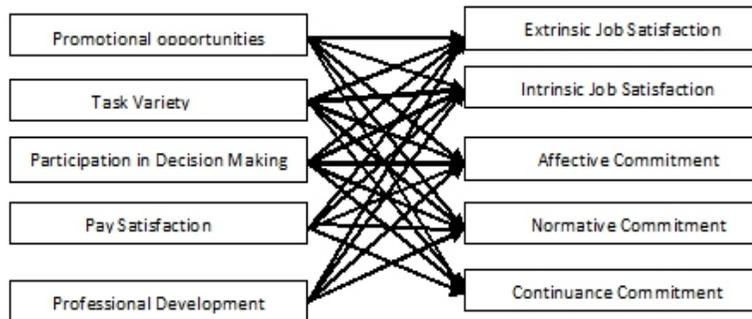
H5b: Task Variety will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

H5c: Participation in decision making will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

H5d: Pay satisfaction will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

H5e: Professional development will be positively correlated with continuance commitment.

Model of the Study



Research Methodology

Sample and Data Collection

Survey data was collected from faculty members of professional educational institutes. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed among faculty members. 265 were returned and used for analysis; out of them, 14 were half-filled and discarded. Therefore, this resulted in 62.75 percent of the response rate. Out of this, 37.45 percent were males and 62.54 per cent were females. Their ages ranged from 25 to less than 50 years old with job experience over 8 years. However, most of them were master and PhD holders.

Measures

A questionnaire survey was used to obtain measures of job characteristics, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used in this study comprised of three scales. For the purpose of this study, the multidimensional conceptualization of organizational commitment by Allen and Meyer (1990), was selected and used for this study. The three dimensions of organizational commitment were affective, normative, and continuance commitment. The job satisfaction was measured using Warr, Cook and Wall (1979) scale. Job characteristics were adapted from different scales. For example, Promotional opportunities were adapted from Price and Mueller (1981), task variety from Sims *et al.* (1976), and Pay satisfaction from Oldham and Hackman (1981). Participation in decision making was adapted from Scott-Ladd and Marshall (2004). Furthermore, Professional development was adapted from Parasuraman and Wormley (1990). All the rating was accomplished on a five point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Analysis and Results

For research purpose, SPSS version 16 package was used. The first statistical analysis was done using coefficient Cronbach’s alpha to measure internal reliability analysis. Reliabilities of the scales were: Job characteristics .847, job satisfaction .789, and .766 for organizational commitment. Consequently, discriminate validity was measured using Chi-square test, which was found to be satisfactory. The Table 1 illustrates the profile of the respondents:

N=251		
Demographic variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age		
Below 30	48	19.1
30-39	98	39.0
40-49	72	28.7
50 and above	33	13.1
Gender		
Male	94	37.45
Female	157	62.54
Job experience		
4 years and less	59	23.6
5 - 10	57	22.7
11 - 15	97	38.6
16 and above	38	15.1
Education		
Bachelor	38	15.1
Masters	57	22.7
PhD (on-going)	67	26.7
PhD	89	35.5

In Table 1, there is consistency between the respondent’s demographic factors.

Table 2 illustrates the correlation between the variable under investigation

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Promotional Opportunities	1.00									
2	Task Variety	0.32*	1.00								
3	Participation in decision making	0.44*	0.39*	1.00							
4	Pay satisfaction	0.32*	0.34*	0.30*	1.00						
5	Professional development	0.34*	0.40*	0.33*	0.36*	1.00					
6	Affective Commitment	0.35*	0.39*	0.37*	0.37*	0.43*	1.00				
7	Continuance commitment	0.25*	0.19*	0.09*	0.22*	0.19*	0.42*	1.00			
8	Normative commitment	0.35*	0.31*	0.33*	0.23*	0.29*	0.65*	0.47*	1.00		
9	Extrinsic job satisfaction	0.52*	0.45*	0.58*	0.56*	0.23*	0.54*	0.26*	0.45*	1.00	
10	Intrinsic job satisfaction	0.51*	0.42*	0.52*	0.58*	0.49*	0.52*	0.24*	0.41*	0.67*	1.00

Notes: * significant at 0.01 level: ns – not significant

Therefore, it is evident that from table (2) above, there is a positive relationship between promotional opportunities and intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, affective commitment, and normative commitment. Also, there was a significant positive relationship between task variety and intrinsic satisfaction, and extrinsic and affective commitment. Participation in decision making is correlated with extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction. Pay satisfaction as expected is related to extrinsic satisfaction. However, professional development is significantly correlated with intrinsic, extrinsic, affective, and normative commitment. So, the hypothesis H1, H2, H3, and H4 are proved through the correlation table.

Table 3: Stepwise regression analysis predicting affective commitment among faculty members

Variables	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (β)	T
(Constant)	7.810	2.883		2.982
Promotional opportunities	0.221	0.086	0.142	2.457**
Task variety	0.473	0.114	0.167	4.136***
Participation in decision making	0.213	0.062	0.161	3.466**
Pay satisfaction	0.184	0.071	0.124	2.528**
Professional development	0.156	0.094	0.063	1.4263†
R = 0.672 R² = 0.451 Adjusted R² = 0.441				

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.10$

The beta coefficients show that task variety ($\beta = 0.167, p < 0.001$), participation in decision making ($\beta = 0.161, p < 0.001$), and promotional opportunities ($\beta = 0.162, p < 0.001$) made the strongest individual contribution in explaining affective commitment, while professional development contributed the least variance ($\beta = 0.063, p < 0.1$). Thus, the variance between continuance commitment and independent factors was not that significant.

Table 4: Stepwise regression analysis predicting normative commitment among faculty members

	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t
(Constant)	2.074	1.481		1.401
Promotional opportunities	0.188	0.074	0.118	2.547*
Participation in decision making	0.233	0.055	0.211	4.204***
R = 0.618 R² = 0.382 Adjusted R² = 0.372				

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.10$

The standardized beta coefficients show that participation in decision making ($\beta = 0.211, p < 0.001$) and promotional opportunities ($\beta = 0.118, p < 0.001$), made the strongest individual contribution.

Table 5: Stepwise regression analysis predicting extrinsic job satisfaction among faculty members

	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	T
(Constant)	5.358	1.515		3.537
Promotional opportunities	0.146	0.056	0.087	2.615**
Pay satisfaction	0.182	0.050	0.151	3.630***
Participation in decision making	0.215	0.045	0.181	4.747***
R = 0.826 R² = 0.682 Adjusted R² = 0.672 F = 71.142 p = 0.000				

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.10$

The results show that the independent variables accounted for 68.2% of the variance in extrinsic job satisfaction among academic staff respondents. However, the beta coefficients show that participation in decision making ($\beta = 0.181, p < 0.001$) and pay satisfaction ($\beta = 0.151, p < 0.001$) contributed the highest individual variance in explaining intrinsic job satisfaction.

Table 6: Stepwise regression analysis predicting intrinsic job satisfaction among faculty members

	B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	T
(Constant)	10.198	1.722		5.924
Promotional opportunities	0.169	0.054	0.101	3.133**
Pay satisfaction	0.252	0.038	0.203	5.640***
Participation in decision making	0.157	0.042	0.132	3.705***
Professional development	0.153	0.065	0.080	2.339*
R = 0.855 R² = 0.731 Adjusted R² = 0.722				

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.10$

The Stepwise regression results show that pay satisfaction ($\beta = 5.640, p < 0.001$) and participation in decision making ($\beta = 0.132, p < 0.001$) contributed the strongest individual variance.

Discussion and conclusion

The main objective of this research is to fill the preceding gap in the literature by introducing an empirical investigation of the relationship among job characteristics and key attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational commitment). This is performed through the survey of professional educational institutes in Delhi. Using Pearson correlation

analysis and hierarchical regression analysis provides unique insight results. Thus, the results have important conclusions and implications for educational institutes.

First, promotional opportunities provided by the institute results in higher level of job satisfaction. The faculty members if provided with higher opportunity to grow in the organization will be more satisfied externally and internally. Thus, this will further result in a higher performance of the faculty members.

Secondly, task variety also results in high level of job satisfaction both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction. Task variety is an important job characteristic, and faculty members are more satisfied if the institute provides them with different tasks. However, this keeps them motivated to perform their job effectively.

Thirdly, participation in decision making is also related to the extrinsic job satisfaction, as decision making is an integral part of the job. Hence, if faculty members are being provided the opportunity of participation, they feel more satisfied with the job.

Fourth, the results show that pay satisfaction is highly related to job satisfaction and affective commitment. In professional educational institutes, pay is a challenge nowadays. However, if faculty members are provided with pay as per their expectations only, then they will be satisfied with their jobs. Also, this will lead to productive commitment for the organization, as they will become high faculty members.

Fifth, professional development leads to high affective commitment and high intrinsic job satisfaction. However, as the faculty members feel they have been provided to grow professionally, their performance also increases. Thus, they derive more satisfaction internally from the job.

Research Limitations and Future Research

This research offers insights into the unique contribution and interesting relationships between the constructs under investigation. It provides a clear understanding of the importance of job characteristics in job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Nevertheless, the findings of this study have some limitations. For instance, the quantitative method used in the research and causal statements about hypothesized relationship between variables have been made. In identifying the reasons for the relationships, this is a weak method as causality could not be determined. Therefore, the longitudinal study might be more useful for this kind of research.

The sample size should have been large as there are lots of professional educational institutes in NCR.

Future research is needed to explore the other important antecedents

of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As in educational institutes, other factors like culture of the organization and demographic factors plays a vital role. In addition, the relationship between cultural factors and key attitude can be studied in the future. Therefore, a longitudinal research approach would make additional contributions to the understanding of this aspect.

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