

Job Satisfaction of Information Technology Professionals as a Function of Personality Type (A/B)

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Abstract:

Job satisfaction is one of the most heavily studied topics in organizational psychology. In the simplest of terms, it is an employee's attitude toward his or her job. There are various theories and systems which have been developed to understand human personality. Type A/B theory is once such which was used in the purview for the current research. The study examined job satisfaction in Information Technology professionals as a function of Personality Type (A/B). The sample comprised of 120 IT professionals (60 Type A and 60 Type B) randomly selected from a leading IT organization in Hyderabad. Respondents were given Type A/B Behavioural Pattern Scale (ABBPS) (Dhar & Jain, 2002) and Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 1985) to measure the respective facets. The analysis revealed significant difference in favour of Type B IT professionals as was hypothesized.

Keywords Job Satisfaction, Personality Type, Information Technology

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is, without a doubt, one of the most heavily studied topics in organizational psychology, as well as in the broader field of industrial/organizational psychology. In the simplest of terms, job satisfaction is an employee's attitude toward his or her job.

Job Satisfaction

According to Hoppock (1935), "job satisfaction was a combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say, 'I am satisfied with my job'. Thus job satisfaction is a favourableness with which employees view their work".

According to Bullock (1952), job satisfaction is an attitude which results from a balance and summation of many specific likes and dislikes experienced in connection with job. Katzell (1964) remarks that, "the

term job satisfaction has been used in a variety of ways interchangeably with job morale, vocational satisfaction and job attitude by various authors".

Blum & Naylor (1968) consider job satisfaction as, "a generalized attitude of the individual resulting from many attitudes in three areas, namely, specific job factors, individual characteristics and group relationship outside the job". Smith et al. (1969), however, suggest that, "job satisfaction is the employee's judgment of how well his job on the whole satisfying his various needs."

McCormick & Tiffin (1974) recognized that job satisfaction is, "a function of need satisfaction derived from, or experienced in the job". Job satisfaction is typically defined as an employee's level of positive affect toward his or her job or job situation (Locke, 1976). According to Pestonjee (1980), job satisfaction can be taken as a summation of employee's feelings in four important areas viz. Job, Management, Social Relations, and Personal Adjustment.

According to Spector (1997) "job satisfaction is liking one's job and finding fulfilment in what you do". Brief (1998) wrote, "If a person's work is interesting, pay is fair, promotional opportunities are good, supervisor is supportive and co-workers are friendly, then a situational approach leads one to predict that she/he is satisfied with her/his job".

Weiss (2002) has argued that, job satisfaction is an attitude but points out that, "researchers should clearly distinguish the objects of cognitive evaluation which are affect (emotion), beliefs and behaviors". According to Dictionary.com, "job satisfaction is an act of satisfying; fulfilment; gratification. It is the state of being satisfied or contented. It is the cause or means of being satisfied".

According to Davies et al. (2006) job satisfaction is a multidimensional phenomenon, influenced by several internal and external factors, like the individual's values, principles, personality and expectations and the job's nature, the opportunities provided etc.

Personality

The term 'personality' often appears in our day-to-day discussion. According to Ryckman, (2004) it can be defined as, "a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely



influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations”.

There are various theories and systems which have been developed to understand human's mental and behavioural makeup. Among the popular ones are: a) Type theory (given by Greek physician Hippocrates); b) Trait theory (given by Allport (1936) and Cattell (1950)); c) Psychodynamic theory (given by Freud (1904) and later developed predominantly by Jung (1933), Adler (1964), and Erikson (1950)); d) Phenomenological theory (given by Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1943)); and e) Behavioural theory (given by Bandura (1977)).

Type A/B personality theory falls under the category of 'Type theory' and was postulated by two cardiologists viz. Friedman & Rosenman (1982). According to them, "Type A individuals can be described as impatient, time-conscious, controlling, concerned about their status, highly competitive, ambitious, business-like, aggressive, having difficulty relaxing. They are often high-achieving workaholics who multi-task, drive themselves with deadlines, and are unhappy about delays”.

On the other hand, the Type B people are, "patient, less competitive, relaxed, and easy-going, generally lacking an overriding sense of urgency”. These two types of individuals form extreme ends of a continuum. Most of the people fall somewhere in between that continuum. Friedman & Rosenman (1982) estimated that Type A individuals are prone to heart diseases. In particular, "Type A behaviour doubles the risk of coronary heart disease in otherwise healthy individuals”.

Research Studies on Type A/B Personality and Job Satisfaction

Matteson et al. (1984) investigated the relationship between Type A behaviour and sales performance, as well as job satisfaction, among life insurance agents and did not find significant differences between Type A and B agents and measures of sales performance and job satisfaction. Howard et al. (1986) studied a group of managers, classified as Type A or Type B individuals, to examine the effects of job satisfaction as a moderator between a common job stressor (role ambiguity) and a number of coronary risk indicators. For Type A individuals, the results supported the hypotheses that changes in ambiguity were associated with changes in blood pressure and intrinsic job satisfaction appeared to have both a direct and moderating effect on these changes.

Bedeian & Day (1991) investigated whether Type A status interacted with individual perceptions of work climate in predicting the job satisfaction of accountants. Results indicated that Type A significantly interacted with organizational climate factors of in predicting intrinsic job satisfaction. In the study by Hagihara et al.

(1998), the authors analysed data concerning work stressors, private aspects of life, and job satisfaction among male white-collar workers (n=657) in a large steel company, and identified the respective aspects of the work environment related to job satisfaction among groups divided by Type A/B behaviour patterns. They found that the nature of predictors for job satisfaction varied with the behaviour type.

A study (Kirkcaldy et al., 2002) was carried out on German managers with Type A personality and an external locus-of-control. It was found that these managers are associated with greater perceived levels of stress (particularly in terms of inter-personal relationships), lower job satisfaction and a poorer physical and mental health than that of managers with a Type B personality and an internal locus of control.

2. Problem and Hypothesis

The problem of the current research was whether IT professionals with Type A personality and Type B personality would differ in regard to their job satisfaction? It was hypothesized that IT professionals with Type A personality and with Type B personality would differ in regard to their job satisfaction. More specifically, IT professionals with Type B personality would be more satisfied with their jobs than those with Type A personality.

3. Methodology

Sample: The present study was carried out with 120 IT Professionals (60 with Type A personality and 60 with Type B personality) randomly selected from a leading IT company in Hyderabad.

Tools: Following tests were used for the purpose of collecting data in the present research.

i. **Determination of Personality Type:** In order to determine the personality type of IT professionals in the initial sample, "Type A/B Behavioural Pattern Scale (ABBPS)" constructed and standardized by Dhar & Jain (2002) was used.

ii. **Assessment of Job Satisfaction:** In order to measure the job satisfaction level of the IT professionals, "Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)" constructed and standardized by Spector (1985) was used.

Procedure: The study was analytical in nature and was based on the data collected from IT professionals. The initial data were collected from 200 professionals incidentally selected from a leading IT company in Hyderabad. The sample consisted of 100 members from each gender. A questionnaire to determine Type A/B behaviour pattern was administered to them. Sixty Type A and 60 Type B IT professionals were selected from the

initial pool of respondents again maintaining male-female ratio of 1:1. A job satisfaction questionnaire was then administered to them. Thereafter, the data was analysed and results were obtained.

4. Result and Discussion

It is clear from Table 1 that the average job satisfaction score of Type B IT professionals ($M=157.30$) was higher than that of Type A IT professionals ($M=96.67$).

Table # 1: Statistical Details for Job Satisfaction Scores

Comparison Group	n	M	Σx^2	t value	Probability
Type A Professionals	60	96.67	25667.33	16.32	$p < .01$
Type B Professionals	60	157.30	23186.6		

The obtained t-ratio for this difference ($t=16.32$, Table 1) was significant at .01 level of significance for 118 degrees of freedom and provided empirical ground to conclude that Type B IT professionals had truly higher job satisfaction level than Type A IT professionals.

Organizations need to focus on managing Type A personality employees as they are more susceptible to stress and coronary heart disease. Developing stress management programs can help Type A employees overcome stress-related problems. Organizations should also make the employees more aware of their own personality type and the impact it may have on others (e.g., aggressiveness and hostility). Employees can then be trained to reduce such negative emotions. Companies also need to impart training to both Type A and Type B employees to help them cope with the work habit and expectations of colleagues and supervisors who are different from them.

Furthermore, companies need to realize that a good match between individual personality and organization culture is essential. A mismatch between personality and organization may lead to stress, confusion, loss of interest, low morale and poor job satisfaction.

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