

UNDERSTANDING JOB SATISFACTION - A NEED OF OUR TIME

Pradeep C.A.

Veterinary Surgeon, Veterinary Dispensary, Vallachira, Thrissur

Organizational behaviour studies behaviour of individuals within an organization. There are differences between individuals working in the same organization or department. When individuals come to the workplace, they come not only with technical skills and knowledge but also with their personal feelings, perception, desires, motives, attitudes and values. Various factors like personal, environmental, psychological and organizational factors influence behaviour of each individual and these in turn affect his/her performance. The interplay of above factors creates a specific attitude in each individual. Attitudes are acquired and can vary from very favourable to very unfavourable. Work related attitudes are job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment.

Job Satisfaction

It refers to one's feelings towards his job. Positive attitudes towards the job are conceptually equivalent to job satisfaction and negative attitude towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction (Vroom, 1978). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional status resulting from the appraisal of one's job or experience. Camp in 1994 defined job satisfaction as the extent that the working environment meets the needs and values of employees and the individual's response to that environment.

Relevance of satisfied employees in an organization

Human resource is most important to any organization. Effectively handling human resource can be a dynamic motive while running an organization. For this reason all job related attitudes should be attended with adequate care because positive attitudes help to improve organizational productivity. A low level of job satisfaction may lead to decreased productivity and high absenteeism. Low level of job satisfaction have been shown to produce various undesirable behaviours such as using the organization's time to pursue personal

tasks, psychological and active withdrawal from job, and behavioural changes that alter the workplace environment, early retirements, and lack of active participation in job tasks (Camp, 1994). Job satisfaction helps management to reduce absenteeism, labour turnover and stress. Satisfied employees are happy and better citizens. According to Prof. Sharon (2002) organizations with innovative human resource and management practices perform more effectively.

Factors that affect job satisfaction

Various factors that determine job satisfaction or dissatisfaction are working conditions, wage structure, workgroup, nature of work and quality of supervision. Wages play a significant role in ensuring job satisfaction since money is required to meet various needs of each person. Compatible working condition is other important factor. Workgroup is social group and employees satisfy their need for social interaction by mingling with people having similar attitudes. Promotions also play a major role in job satisfaction. It is necessary that perception of dissatisfied employees should be given adequate care and measure should be taken to change it. Management can think of building programmes, good management practices, ample recognition, providing, good environment, open line of communication and participative management in ensuring job satisfaction.

Work motivation and Occupational Stress

Work motivation and occupational stress significantly affect the job related attitude of an employee. Work motivation can be defined as a complex force inspiring a person at work in an organization to intensify his/her desire and willingness to use his/her potentialities for the achievement of organizational objectives (Luthans, 1995). Material incentives like pay, promotion, fringe benefits etc., non-financial incentives like appreciation, awards etc., healthy competition

among employees, opportunity for employee growth, employee participation in decision making and working conditions affect work motivation. Various researches have revealed a positive effect of these motivators on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Occupational stress can be defined as a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning (Beehr and Newman, 1970). Though stress is known for its deteriorating affect on performance, up to a certain point of intensity, stress is useful by making people alert and prepared. Job related stress fall into 3 categories (1) role interaction, (ii) decision making and (iii) over and under stimulation. Job content factor can lead to stress among employees. Research has established a negative relationship between stress and performance (Beehr, 1992). In addition stress leads to various behavioral and emotional disorders, physical ailments, psychosomatic disorders etc. The cause of stress related problems to an economy are substantial. Absence illness, accidents and staff traumas can be the direct or indirect result of stress. Schears et al., (1996) estimated that about 30-50 % of absenteeism could be attributed to stress. Stress should be handled at organizational level by understanding the nature of stress and the factors that cause stress.

Handling stress at individual level

Even though it is imperative that organizations can handle only job related attitudes and related issues effectively, in today's context it will be better for each individual to look into various avenues that keep him mentally healthy by creating a positive attitude towards his job. There are some tips for achieving satisfaction in one's own job.

(1) Control mental attitude and develop a positive attitude by the use of self motivators. These self – motivators may be a positive thought, experience or a motto that positively influence the morale of an employee.

(2) Set a goal. Higher will be the achievement if the goal to be achieved is high. One of the secrets of job satisfaction in being able to

"see beyond the routine" In other words it is focusing that your work is leading some where.

(3) Develop a plan for every activity after analyzing the rules of a system and understand the application of these rules. Knowing the work well and being proficient in it, helps one to perform his job easily and this gives more satisfaction to him.

(4) Adjust and change to the situation. One is called a square peg in a round hole when he performs his job in an unhappy situation and then it is better to change the job to a suitable situation. Since it is not feasible always, it is advisable to make adjustment in ones own characteristics. Then he has "squared the hole", this in turn change the attitude from negative to positive.

Related studies is Animal Husbandry and allied sectors in Kerala

There are some studies on job satisfaction, job performance and associated areas in animal husbandry and allied sectors in Kerala. These studies give some direction on our human resource utilization & organizational behaviour.

Jayachandran (1992) in his MVSc. thesis on job performance and job satisfaction of veterinary personnel in Kerala found a positive and significant correlation between job performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was of the medium level for majority of the respondents. Regarding job performance, majority of veterinary doctors were in the medium & high performance category. Various factors like self esteem, level of aspiration, achievement, motivation and scientific orientation positively influenced job performance.

A study by Manjunatha (1998) on working environment of lady veterinary surgeons of Animal Husbandry Department of Kerala state revealed that working environment was significantly correlated with job satisfaction and also with organizational commitment. Two-third of the lady veterinary surgeons was either some what satisfied or satisfied with the job while the rest one-third was not satisfied.

A study on job satisfaction of agricultural graduates engaged in selected avenues of employment in Allepey District by Kalavathi (1989)

found that the most important factor that contributed to satisfaction both directly and indirectly is job motivation. Agricultural graduates working in banks felt higher satisfaction on their job followed by those working in the University and department of agriculture respectively.

Anju in 1992 in her MSc. thesis on 'Burnout syndrome among agricultural officers in Kerala state' found that job satisfaction was the most important factor affecting burnout syndrome of agricultural officers. It is proposed that one symptom of work related stress is job dissatisfaction. The study emphasized that the management and authorities of organizations like department of agriculture must try to keep employees free from various role stresses to get greater satisfaction and to outfit them to act as proficient extension administrators.

The level of satisfaction among employees is an important factor for achieving organizational goals. Low job satisfaction negatively affects the organization. Hence it is necessary that various organizations should give adequate attention in this area for improving their human resources power. Studying various psychological variables related to organization attitude helps us to widen our knowledge regarding the impact of job characteristics on these variables.

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