

The Effects of Supervisory Behavior on IT employees' Job Satisfaction: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to influence positive motivational behaviors and expected satisfaction from the employees working at the organizations under close supervision. It has been monitored two supervisory behaviors on IT employees' job satisfaction: authoritarian and positive achievement motivation behavior. Data were collected through pre-structured questionnaire from the employees working in the IT department of Real Estate and Housing Development Industry in Bangladesh (N=80). The data indicated that IT Supervisors were engaged in positive motivational behaviors and expected greater satisfaction from the employees under their supervision; IT employee's job satisfactions were increased.

Key words: Supervisory behavior, Job satisfaction, Organization Behavior.

1. Introduction

The IT profession is stressful by nature. Job satisfaction of the IT employees is important goal for them to strive for. Both physical and mental health is directly related to job satisfaction. Once the job satisfaction is measured and the determinants of job satisfaction have been identified, the IT employees made adjustments to enhance their job satisfaction or to reduce the job dissatisfaction.

Technical person like IT employees prefer to do their job on their own way. On the other hand, most of the supervisors are not related with the technical field and they think that IT employees are to do the job like other related field. Thus the Gap between the employees and their leadership exists. The need for efficient manpower in this sector has increased recently because of the liberalization of the industrial policy and establishment of new manufacturing units by private domestic owners and foreign investors under joint venture in free trade zone and outside. To attract the promising youth of the country in this profession, the attractiveness of this profession requires to be revealed to them. An analysis of the job satisfaction of the existing professional IT employees will serve the purpose. So this study will serve a guideline for the IT graduates of the country to adjust their career selection. Moreover it will help us to identify the barriers to the development of the same. All these arguments justify the necessity of the measurement of job satisfaction of the IT employees in Bangladesh.

The Job Descriptive Index measured Job satisfaction. The JDI was developed to ask employees to describe their work rather than how they feel about their work and therefore the form is based on characteristics of the job and not on the employee's emotions about the job (Bazler and Smith, 1990). The JDI measures were found by Smith et al (1969) to possess a high level of discriminate and convergent validity. Kerr (1985) reported content validity, notable construct validity and reliability. Internal consistencies were reported for each of these scales: work (.84), pay (.80), promotion (.86), supervision (.86); and co-workers (.88). Smith, Kendell and Hulin (1985) reported that JDI was highly correlated with leadership consideration and positive reward behaviors.

2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To find out of the job related factors on their job satisfaction, to cope with Supervisory behavior in particular.
2. To measure the supervisory behavior on IT employees to job satisfaction.

3. Methodology of the Study

Data were obtained through questionnaire from the IT employees working in Real Estate and Housing Development Industry in Bangladesh (N=80). A total of useable responses were obtained from an overall response rate of 90%. Questionnaire was mailed to the 50% of the IT professionals. Only 40% of the IT professionals responded to the mailed questionnaire. A considerable amount of data and empirical results from the academic resources including academic books, academic journals from both printed and electronic databases have been used in the study. Simple statistical tools were used. The result of the analysis is obtained in this segment by using SPSS-16 version. On the basis of the preceding discussions, the following hypotheses are proposed in null forms. Each of the two independent variables was measured against each of the six dependent

variables.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between employees overall job satisfaction of the IT employees and their perceptions of their (a) supervisors' Authoritarian (herein referred to as AB) and (b) Positive Achievement Motivation behavior (herein referred to as PAMB)

H₂: There is no significant relationship between IT employees' satisfaction with work on the job and their perceptions of their (a) supervisors' Authoritarian and (b) PAMB

H₃: There is no significant relationship with IT employees' satisfaction with pay and their perceptions of their (a) supervisors' Authoritarian and (b) PAMB

H₄: There is no significant relationship between IT employees' satisfaction with promotional opportunities and their perceptions of their supervisors' (a) Authoritarian and (b) PAMB

H₅: There is no significant relationship between IT employees' satisfaction with their supervisors and their perceptions of their supervisors' (a) Authoritarian and (b) PAMB

H₆: There is no significant relationship between IT employees' satisfaction with their co-workers and their perceptions of their supervisors' (a) Authoritarian and (b) PAMB.

Chowdhury (2004) scaled supervisor behavior into two variables derived from items constructed by Kohli (1985) and House (House & Mitchell, 1974) with eight items each. One scale was termed 'Authoritarianism', since it dealt with supervisor's authoritative behaviors, such as, "My supervisor rules with iron hand". The other was named 'Positive Achievement Orientation Behavior (PAMB),' since it dealt with the supervisor's Positive Achievement Motivation behavior such as, "My supervisor gives me recognition for improvement in my performance." Responses were measured with 5-point Likert scales from "very false" (1) to "very true" (5). Two scales IT for 66.7% of the total variance. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy coefficient was .90, indicating 'excellent' sampling adequacy (Norusus, 1994). Both scales had alpha reliability coefficients higher than .90, indicating internal consistency.

Limitations of the study:

Although the results of this study are as expected, these findings may have some possible limitations. First limitation is that it used a specific type of IT professions of Housing industry. Since this population may not be representative of IT populations in other industries, it will be desirable to examine the current results in the context of other IT professions. Further, because of the lack of experimental control, variables outside the model unknown to the researcher may have influenced IT employees' job satisfaction.

4. Literature Review:

Job satisfaction is a pleasure or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). It has been treated both as a general attitude and as satisfaction with five specific dimensions of job: pay, the work itself, promotion, opportunities, supervision, and co.-workers (Smith, Kendall, and Hulin, 1969; Bazler and Smith et al, 1990). The combined effect of these factors produces for the individual some measure of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Kohli (1985) identified four types of supervisory behaviors--- (1) contingent approving behavior, (2) upward influencing behavior, (3) achievement oriented behavior, and (4) arbitrary and punitive behavior. These are defined as follows:

Contingent Approving Behavior: This is contingent upon effective efforts and/or performance (Fulk and Wendler, 1982). Research by Greene (1976), and Sims and Szilagyi (1978) suggest that leaders who administer rewards contingent upon performance cause an increase in subordinates' satisfaction.

Upward Influencing Behavior: It is directed at maintaining a good rapport between the supervisor and his or her subordinates and influencing them to act favorably on behalf of the work unit (Fulk and Wendler 1982). This type of supervisory behavior is likely to be able to obtain resources and rewards for IT employees from the higher management.

Achievement Oriented behavior: This consists of setting challenging goals, expecting high levels of performance, and expressing confidence that employees will meet these goals and expectations. Supervisors who set challenging goals for employees, encourage continual improvement in their performance, and show confidence in their abilities to attain these goals may expect their subordinates to be more sure of what is expected of them and more satisfied with their jobs (Kohli, 1985).

Arbitrary and Punitive Behavior: Arbitrary and punitive supervisors are more autocratic who attempt to ensure conformity to work methods they prescribe, and increase performance through punishment (Schriesheim, House and Kerr, 1976). They criticize as "needle", and ride the employees. This behavior is expected to lead to dissatisfaction among the subordinates (Fulk and Wendler, 1982), Podsakoff et al (1984), and Schriesheim, House, and Kerr (1976). Kohli (1985), however, found a significant relationship between supervisor's arbitrary behavior and job satisfaction.

Chowdhury (2004) grouped all these four leadership styles into two as (1) authoritarian and (2) positive

achievement motivation behavior. Supervisors' arbitrary and punitive behavior falls under "authoritarian" since the supervisors exercise autocratic control to ensure conformity to work methods they prescribe. Supervisor's contingent approving behavior, upward influencing behavior and achievement oriented behavior fall under "positive achievement motivation behavior" since in this case the supervisors attempt to create a positive work environment through encouragement and positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of these two supervisory behaviors on IT employees' job satisfaction.

5. Findings of the study

The purpose of correlation design is to investigate the extent to which variations in one factor correspond with variations in one or more factors based on correlation coefficients (Isaac and Michael, 1990. p. 421).

The perceived leader behaviors were examined as degree of relationship to the subject's job satisfaction by using the following regression models.

1. Overall job satisfaction = $a_1 + \beta_1 AB + \beta_2 PAMB + e_1$
2. Work satisfaction = $a_2 + \beta_3 AB + \beta_4 PAMB + e_2$
3. Pay satisfaction = $a_3 + \beta_5 AB + \beta_6 PAMB + e_3$
4. Promotion satisfaction = $a_4 + \beta_7 AB + \beta_8 PAMB + e_4$
5. Supervision satisfaction = $a_5 + \beta_9 AB + \beta_{10} PAMB + e_5$
6. Co-workers satisfaction = $a_6 + \beta_{11} AB + \beta_{12} PAMB + e_6$

Where the β 's represent unknown parameters to be estimated, a's represent constants, e's represents disturbance term, AB stands for supervisors' authoritarian behavior, and PAMB for supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior

Multicollinearity

The following is a correlation matrix, which shows that multicollinearity is not a problem for the independent variables under study since none of the independent variables in the regression analysis is highly correlated with each other (correlation co-efficient between AB and PAMB is only -.024: table 2) and therefore, does not interfere with each other by explaining the same variance in the dependent variable.

Summary of the Results:

The following table (#1 of the Appendix) gives a summary of the standardized coefficients, sig., and R^2 for all six models used for this study:

Findings on H₁: The model 1 in table 2 uses "overall job satisfaction" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. The statistical results show an inverse relationship between IT employees overall job satisfaction and the supervisor's authoritarian behavior ($\beta = -.01$; beta = $-.08$). However, this relationship is not found statistically significant ($p = 0.413$). The supervisor's positive achievement motivation behavior is related positively to the employees, overall job satisfaction (because β is positive i.e. $.06$) and the relationship is statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Findings on H₂: The model 2 in table 2 uses "work satisfaction" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. The supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior is related positively to IT employees' work satisfaction (because β is positive) and the relationship is significant ($p = .000$). However, no significant relationship is found between IT employees' work satisfaction and their supervisors' authoritarian behavior ($p = .154$).

Findings on H₃: The model 3 in table 2 uses "pay satisfaction" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. A significant positive relationship is found between IT employees' pay satisfaction and their supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior (β is positive, and $p = .004$). There is an inverse relationship between IT employees' pay satisfaction and their supervisors' authoritarian behavior (β is negative i.e. $-.02$). However, this relationship is not statistically significant ($p = .564$).

Results on H₄: The model 4 in table 2 uses "promotion satisfaction" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. No significant relationship is found between the employees' satisfaction with promotional opportunities and their supervisors' authoritarian behavior ($p = .679$). However, supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior is related positively to their IT employees' satisfaction with promotional opportunities (β is positive i.e. 0.10). This relationship is statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Results on H₅: The model 5 in table 2 shows "satisfaction with supervisors" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. The supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior has a positive significant influence on their employees' satisfaction with their supervisors ($\beta = .19$ and $p = .000$). Supervisors' authoritarian behavior is negatively related to their employees' satisfaction with their supervisors ($\beta = -.05$). However, this relationship is not found statistically significant

($p = .227$).

Results on H_6 : The model 6 in table 2 contains "coworker satisfaction" as dependent variable, and AB and PAMB as independent variables. No significant relationship is found between employees' satisfaction with their coworkers, and their supervisors' authoritarian behavior. The influence of supervisors' positive achievement motivation behavior on their employees' satisfaction with their co-workers is positive (β is positive ie.05) and significant ($p = .004$)

The data from this study suggests that supervisor' behavior influence job satisfaction. Supervisors' autocratic behavior lead to IT employees' job dissatisfaction and indicate that to the extent that supervisors engaged in positive motivational behaviors and expected greater performance from their employees, employee job satisfaction was increased. The findings of the study are in consonant with the vast number of studies demonstrating that autocratic behavior leads to dissatisfaction among employees (Fulk and Wendler, 1982; Podsakoff et al. (1984), and Schriesheim, House & Kerr (1976) and demonstrating positive motivational behavior effects on employee job satisfaction (Greene, 1976), Sims and Szilagyi (1978), Yuki & Van Fleet (1982), House and Mitchell (1974).

6. Conclusions:

The present study suggests that the supervisors' behavior strongly influence IT employees' job satisfaction. However, the degree of influence of different job facets may vary with the occupational level of the employees. It is to be noted that it is employees' perceptions of supervisory behaviors that have considerable impact on their job satisfaction. Of the two variables investigated, the more important one is supervisors' using positive methods of motivation for their employees. Finally, the implication is that creating a positive environment through encouragement and positive reinforcement of IT employees' behavior will improve job satisfaction.

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Table 1 Correlation Matrix

	Pay	work	Supervision	coworker	promotion	Overall Satisfaction	AB	PAMB
Pay	1							
Work	0.464	1						
Supervision	0.397	0.596	1					
Coworker	0.173	0.41	0.336	1				
Promotion	0.327	0.587	0.631	0.456	1			
Overall Satisfaction	0.529	0.64	0.675	0.523	0.592	1		
AB	-0.066	-0.148	-0.123	-0.086	-0.5	-0.088	1	
PAMB	0.299	0.411	0.511	0.213	0.398	0.481	-0.024	1

Table 2 Summary of Standardized Regression Coefficients for all six Models

Model	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables				R2
		AB	SIG.	PAMB	SIG.	
1	OverallJob	-.08	.413	.48	.000	.28
2	Work	-.14	.154	.41	.000	.19
3	Pay	-.06	.564	.30	.000	.10
4	Promot ion	-.04	.679	.40	.000	.16
5	Supervision	-.11	.227	.51	.000	.27
6	Coworker	-.08	.435	.21	.004	.06

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