

Chapter 21

Moderating Role of Gender between Job Characteristics and Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study of Software Industry Using Structural Equation Modeling

Shruti Traymbak

Birla Institute of Technology, India

Pranab Kumar

Birla Institute of Technology, India

A.N. Jha

Birla Institute of Technology, India

ABSTRACT

This study examines the moderating role of gender between job characteristics and job satisfaction among Indian software employees which has received less attention in the Indian context. Additionally, it also examines difference in the job characteristics that affect male and female employee's job satisfaction. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and chi-square difference in multi group moderation analysis, used to test the hypothesized relationships. Chi-square difference test showed invariant moderation effect of gender on the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction. It has been also found that five job characteristics (skill variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy and feedback) have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction among male employees, whereas in case of female, only two job characteristics task significance and task identity were significant predictors of job satisfaction. Interestingly, task significance and task identity were common significant positive predictors of job satisfaction for both male and female software employees.

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The information technology- information technology enabled services (IT-ITES) industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in India which has contributed into important growth variables (export, revenue, and employment) of GDP of Indian economy. As per NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies) classification, the IT-ITES industry includes IT software, IT services and ITES-BPO. The year 2012 showed landmark year for the IT-ITES sector with aggregate revenues crossing US\$ 100 billion. Being the largest global outsourcing with a market share 55% in the Financial Year (FY) 2013, the IT-ITES industry has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 21% during FY 1998-2014. This sector has increased its contribution to India's GDP from 1.2% in FY1998 to an estimated 8.1% in FY2014 (NASSCOM, 2014). As of FY2014, it is estimated that 3.13 million direct and 10 million indirect employment provided by this sector (NASSCOM, 2014). Researchers found IT employees are different from non-IT employees in terms of motivation and job satisfaction. Beecham et al. (2008) identified certain characteristics that help to build a general image of software Engineers as a creative, self-driven, and who need feedback on their performance in order to believe their job is worthwhile and ensure that they are valuable to the organization. In this context job design plays a distinct role to increase organizational productivity and employee's job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is considered to be "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1975). A primary influence on job satisfaction is the application of job design, which aims to enhance job satisfaction and performance of employees. The general concept of job design (or re-design) is that employees are motivated to perform better when they find satisfaction in their jobs. One of the significant approach to job design is the Hackman & Oldham's job characteristics model (1975, 1976, &1980) which consists of five core job characteristics-skill variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy, and feedback that influence work- related outcomes such as motivation, satisfaction, performance, absenteeism, & turnover through three critical psychological states experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, & knowledge of results. The job characteristics model (JCM) have been used by researchers to determine job satisfaction and various work outcomes among technical employees (e.g. Thatcher et al., 2003; Dore,2004; Hoonakker et al.,2004; McKnight et al., 2009; Leblanc, 2013; Klaus et al., 2014) and job satisfaction had negative impact on turnover intention among technical employees (e.g. Thatcher et al.,2003; Doore,2004; Hoonakker et al., 2004; Samad,2006; McKnight et al.,2009; More, 2011). Dore (2004) studied job satisfaction that determined the turnover intention among software employees. On the other hand, Thatcher et al. (2002-03) conceptualized a model to investigate turnover in IT employees and they supported Steer's and Mowday's model of turnover, Lee and Mowday (1987) and Hackman & Oldham's (1980) job characteristics model. These findings support that satisfied employees can only commit to the organization and only committed work force can increase organization effectiveness and sustainability. On the basis of above discussions, Hackman & Oldham's (1975, 1976, &1980) job characteristics model is widely used to determine job satisfaction among technical professionals. The primary objective of this study is to determine the moderating role of gender between job characteristics and job satisfaction among Indian software employees which has received less attention in Indian context. Gender wise analysis can help employers to identify which job characteristics can impact more to the male and female employee's job satisfaction. Prior studies were inconsistent in their result as to gender, job characteristics, and job satisfaction (Hackman & Old-

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