

Effect of Employees' Communication and Participation on Employees' Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study on Airline Companies in Iran

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Abstract. The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of employees' participation and communication on employees' job satisfaction. To serve this purpose, questionnaire designed to determine level of employees' job satisfaction and effect of employees' communication and participation on job satisfaction. The data collected from employees of three private airlines in Iran and were analyzed through descriptive statistics and simple regression analysis. The findings suggest that both employees' participation and communication have significant and positive effect on employees' job satisfaction. Finally the article gives some suggestions on how to improve employees' job satisfaction through participation and communication.

Keywords: Employees' Job Satisfaction, Participation, Communication, Airlines, Iran

1. Introduction

One of the biggest challenges in management has been implementing effective human development strategies to improve organizational performance. In service companies such as airlines, organizational performance appears in term of high quality service delivery and customer satisfaction. Because of the stress on performance, researchers in human resource management place emphasis on effective human resource strategies such as job satisfaction, employees' communication and participation.

This study tries to investigate the effect of employees' participation and communication on employees' job satisfaction in airline companies in Iran. Since very insufficient work is done on this area in Iran, this research can provide an empirical evidence to show effect of these two important organizational factors on employees' job satisfaction in airline industry.

2. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which employees have positive or favorable feelings towards work and the work environment (Muchinsky, 2000; Locke, 1976; Hoy and Miskel, 2007). Although a wide range of theories has been building to explain origin and dimensions of employees' job satisfactions (Vroom, 1964; Herzberg, 1968; Schneider and Alderfer, 1973; Locke, 1976; Hackman and Oldham, 1976), it seems there is no single theory to explain this phenomenon completely. Several researchers offer different measurements tools for measuring job satisfaction. In this research, job satisfaction measured by instrument which designed by Smith et al. (1969). They define five facets for measuring job satisfaction. Based on their instrument, job satisfaction consists of several facets, including satisfaction with the supervisor, relationship with coworkers, present pay, nature of work, and opportunities for promotion.

3. Communication

Dwyer (2005) defined communication as "the process whereby people within an organization give and receive messages". Many researchers assert that communication in organization has significant effect on

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employees' job satisfaction. (Yammarino and Naughton, 1988; Myers and Myers, 1993; Mc Cormike, 2008; Leiter, 1988; Miles et al., 1996; Goris et al., 2000). In organization people communicate with each other in different ways. Messages may move downward and upward between hierarchical levels or horizontally among employees at equivalent level (Odden and Sias, 1997; Dwyer, 2005; Goldhaber, 1993). Communication can occur through informal channels such as grapevines or formal channels such as procedures and official meetings (Johnson et al., 1994; Goldhaber, 1993; Vroom, 1964; Rauschenberg, 1988).

Effective communications is seen as an essential element of the organization environment that ought to inform employees of industry challenges, what is happening in the workplace and the company's strategic intent. Beyerlein et al. (2003) states it is management responsibility to align support systems in the strategic design so that employees can communicate their needs and frustrations, as this will keep an organization functioning effectively and make the most of people who are an organizations greatest resource. Furthermore, other studies have investigated openness of communication have direct relationship with job satisfaction (Klauss and Bass, 1982; Trombetta and Rogers, 1988). In addition, supportive communication from fellows has received some attention as a source of job satisfaction (Ducharme and Martin, 2000; Leiter, 1988). All of these evidences will sight us to hypothesize the important role of communication on employees' job satisfaction. So the hypothesis is as below:

Hypothesis1: communication has positive and significant effect on employees' job satisfaction.

4. Participation

Although many researchers offer conceptual and operational definition for employees' participation in many different ways (Dachler and Wilpert, 1978; Schregle, 1970; Cotton et al., 1988), this concept is generally defined as "a process in which influence is shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchically unequal" (Wagner, 1994; Locke and Schweiger, 1979). It is widely believed that the employees' participation may affect their job satisfaction, which creates comparative advantage for the organizational and individual performance (Spector, 1997; Harris, 1993). Several researches indicated that employee participation, increase flexibility and autonomy, and causally increase employee satisfaction. (Locke and Schweiger 1979; Cordery et al., 1991; Cohen et al., 1996; Harris, 1992; Scott et al., 2003). By giving chance to employees to participate in decision making employees' job satisfaction will increase (Likret, 1961). Managers by giving autonomy to employees to make a decision allowing them to develop their skills and acquire new skills that cause employees' job satisfaction. In addition, a Purser and Pasmore (1992) consider "opportunity to work on challenging problems" as the number one source of job satisfaction based on opinion of research and development (R&D) professionals. All of these evidences will sight us to hypothesize the important role of participation on employees' job satisfaction. So the hypothesis is as below:

Hypothesis2: participation has positive and significant effect on employees' job satisfaction.

5. Methodology

The original questionnaire designed to determine level of employees' job satisfaction and effect of employees' communication and participation on job satisfaction. The questionnaire used in this study comprises three parts. The questions adopted from standard questionnaires for job satisfaction and comprehensive literature review. The first part of survey questionnaire gathered information about demographic information of respondents. The second part contains a set of five point scale questions on "employees job satisfaction" and the third part consist of series of questions on employees' participation and communication, by using a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. To ensure reliability and validity of questionnaire pilot study was performed. The Cronbach alpha of the entire instrument came as 0.87 which shows the questionnaire is quiet consistent and reliable. The questionnaire was distributed among employees of 3 airlines in Iran. All airlines were private listed companies. A sample size of 175 employees was chosen for this study. And cluster sampling method was used to gather data from respondents. Descriptive analysis such as mean and standard deviation was performed to determine level of job satisfaction. In addition, simple regression analysis was performed to test research hypotheses.

6. Data analysis

6.1. Level Of Employees' Job Satisfaction

Descriptive analysis was performed to determine level of employees' job satisfaction among three private airline companies in Iran. According to Table 1, employees are moderately satisfied with their job, since mean value for overall employees satisfaction is 3.23. Moreover, level of job satisfaction for each sub factor calculated separately and the results show employees are most satisfied with their supervisor, followed by the relationship with co-worker and the nature of work. They are however, less satisfied with opportunities for promotion and present pay. It means respondents of study are most satisfied with supervision, while they are least satisfied with their present pay. In addition, results show only 2.9 percent of respondents are in low level of satisfaction; 76.5 percent in medium level of satisfaction, and the rest which encompass 20.6 percent of respondents are highly satisfied with their work.

Table 1: Level of Employees Job Satisfaction among Three Airlines

	Airline 1		Airline 2		Airline 3		All companies	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Nature of Work	3.16	0.894	3.62	0.817	3.27	0.924	3.33	0.901
Present Pay	2.16	0.795	3.08	1.048	2.94	1.042	2.73	1.046
Supervision	3.60	0.829	4.06	0.686	3.53	0.801	3.71	0.810
Opportunities for promotion	2.49	0.588	3.57	0.783	2.82	0.659	2.93	0.801
Relationship with Co-Worker	3.72	0.628	3.17	0.528	3.39	0.555	3.43	.610
Overall	3.02		3.5		3.19		3.23	

6.2. Effect of employees' participation on job satisfaction

Simple regression analysis was performed to investigate effect of employee participation on job satisfaction. According to table 2, communication made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). Based on the result, it can be concluded that participation has significant and positive effect on job satisfaction. Thus, H1 is accepted. This result is consistent with the findings of researches by Smith (2006), Bahatti and Qureshi (2007), and Altmann (2000).

Table2: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Regarding the Effect of Participation on Job Satisfaction

Independent Variables	β_j	Std Error	t	p	R ²	Significance
Constant	2.277	0.178	29.020	0.000	0.349	F=167.769
Participation	0.341	0.026	12.953	0.000		P=0.000

Another simple regression test was performed to investigate effect of communication on employee satisfaction. Result of this test which shows in table 3, indicate communication has significant role on employees' satisfaction at airline companies ($p < 0.05$). Thus, H2 is accepted. This result verified findings of several studies (Yammarino and Naughton, 1988; Myers and Myers, 1993; Mc Cormick, 2008) where the communication is found to be positively and significantly related to employees' satisfaction.

Table3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Regarding the Effect of Communication on Job Satisfaction

Independent Variables	β_j	Std Error	t	p	R ²	Significance
Constant	1.791	0.104	17.166	0.000	0.395	F=204.429
Communication	0.475	0.033	14.298	0.000		P=0.000

7. Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest, if airline companies want to enhance their employees' job satisfaction, they may choose to deliberate on two important strategies. First, airlines can benefit from the positive effect of increased employees' participation by involving them in decision making process. In addition, participation can improve understanding of employees from organizational processes and provide opportunities to develop problem solving skills. In airline industry speed and accuracy of decision making are vital elements. In such situation, allowing and encouraging employees to participate in organization decision making, will significantly improve efficiency and performance. Second result of study revealed positive and significant effect of communication on employees' job satisfaction. Airline managers should encourage open communication in the workplace to create a working environment that encourages employees to raise concerns and disseminate information with other employees on industry challenges or new offerings, promoting an interconnected workforce and employee development to inspire job satisfaction amongst employees. In addition, it's helpful for organization to establish a cohesive environment, communicating with all employees so that they have a common understanding of activities taking place in the company. Regard to insufficient number of research relate to employees' job satisfaction in airline industry in Iran, future research recommended with considering other organizational factors. In addition future research may include both private and public airlines companies to generalizes and increase accuracy of research.

8. References

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