

ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND HAPPINESS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

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Abstract: India is now one of the biggest IT capitals of the world. Demographic profile of employees from information technology organizations in India is different and constituting millennials. They are defined as a generation of people who based on age share chronological location in history and the experiences that accompany it with shared beliefs and behaviors based on the experiences. However, the Indian millennials are different in respects from that of global millennials. While global millennials are preceded by baby boomers, Indian millennials previous generation is improvised economy. This lead to the study of Indian millennials and their expectations regarding organizations based on request of six software majors in the country. Happiness should be human resources efforts, but it is difficult to measure. Thus multivariate analysis with multidimensional scaling techniques are used the find the latent factor structure. The non availability of data with respect to happiness of millennials leads to present study measure happiness and relates to job characteristics and employee engagement. Autonomy, mastery and purpose anchored to material gains encompass job characteristics. Happiness is found to relate to employee engagement and job characteristics

Keywords: Job characteristics, Peer acknowledgement, Peer appreciation, Employee Happiness, Information Technology Sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information technology (IT) industry in India has played a key role in putting India on the global economic map. The industry has helped India transform from a rural and agriculture-based economy to a knowledge based economy. At present India is a global player in providing world class technology solutions and business services. The growth of Information Technology Industry in India was generally attributed to liberalization and globalization policies during 1990s. IT Industry's technological intensity, work intensity in the context of demographic changes at the intersection of globalization and liberalization provide challenging opportunities for research. Russel (2008) contended that information technology organizations have gathered awareness associated with their novel means of organizing particular type of work and as the venue to understand different managerial practices.

The IT organizations face challenges of acquiring, retaining and growing the right kind of talent for long term financial success. However, the interventions to retain talent by organizations are far from satisfactory as the attrition rates remain high. The issue of employee attrition and role of factors such as happiness, job characteristics and fatigue is addressed according to six IT majors in Chennai.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Characteristics:

The Job characteristics theory is a dominant approach, though there are a number of criticisms regarding its factor components (Roberts & Glick 1981; Loher et al. (1985) found this approach to establish majority of the relationships in the work environment. Fried & Ferris(1986) and Brief & Weiss (2002) showed that, the model focuses on interactions among three classes of variables: (a) the psychological status of employees to motivate to perform; (b) the characteristics of job that create these psychological states and (c) the attributes of individual that determine how an employee will respond to the job. Said & Munap (2010) suggested that the model has five core job dimensions affect certain personal and work related outcomes. Most research has borne out the validity of the Job Characteristics (Muller et al. 1992) as the degree to which a task involves a mixture of different activities in extending out the work that took the employment of a number of skills and talents of the employee.

The interviews indicated that while employee engagement and work design are given utmost importance; happiness is assumed to be the natural outcome of these interventions. It is believed that engaged employees with well designed job characteristics is likely to make them happy. However, voluntary attrition rates for these organizations range from 10.9% to 18.1% as reported in press indicating some other factors need to be considered. Further probing indicated that employees may not be happy and lack of happiness may be reason for attrition and it is not measured. The focus groups further pointed out that there is a general lack of engagement and meaningfulness of work among employees. However, they observed that most of the employees are millennials and educated in engineering, computer science and other related subjects and their expectation from jobs may be different from that of other generations.

The employees are millennials whose job expectations are different from that of the other generation's addition complexity to the phenomena. Organizations realized the futility of such bureaucratic designs for success and created structures based on employee expectation of job and organizational requirements in the process improving employee engagement.

Employee Happiness:

Happiness is generally considered an ultimate goal of life; virtually everybody wants to be happy. Everybody has their own ideas about happiness and the good life. The United States Declaration of Independence of 1776 takes it as a self-evident truth that the "pursuit of happiness" is an "unalienable right," Happiness research help us understand the formation of subjective well-being. Many Happiness research findings that, higher income is positively associated with people's happiness, yet over the life cycle, happiness stays more or less unchanged. It is posited that employee engagement will lead to happiness for employees and need to be further analyzed. The meaning and measurement of employee happiness is ambiguous among both academic researchers and practitioners who use it in conversations with employees. Employee Engagement is a leading pointer of intent to stay within a given organization. Engaged employees may be a key to competitive advantage. As with all good things, the challenge of establishing the conditions for state and behavioral employee engagement will be great. When employees are not engaged pay may enter as a more critical factor.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. Establish the theoretical basis for relating Job characteristics and employee happiness and variables that are likely impact both the concepts.
2. Examine different instruments for Happiness and select appropriate scale for IT Professionals.
3. Find relationship between Job characteristics and Employee Happiness index.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Researcher personally visited and approach employees with questionnaires schedule, totally 2800 questionnaires were distributed and 1040 are collected. 850 are found to be correct in all aspects. The total non response rate is 69%

Sampling Procedure and Questionnaire Administration:

The purpose of research, employees with a minimum of two years of experience in any of the IT majors in India are considered. However, on that point there is no empirical evidence for this assumption.

Sample Size Determination:

The sample size estimate is suitable for approximate population of 10,000 employees, employed in IT with more than two years of experience. Since multivariate analysis is used for study and eighty five items are measured, eight hundred and fifty samples are corrected.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Table 1: Identification of constructs of job characteristics of respondents using factor analysis**

Factor Loading	Factors	Factor Name	Cronbach's Alpha	Eigen Value	Percentage of Variance
	Factor 1				
.843	How much variety is there in your job? That is, to what extent does the job require you to do many different things at work, using a variety of your skills and talents?	Autonomy	.879	8.003	50.020
.771	Respect from the people you work with		.876	2.018	12.613
.769	In general, how significant or important in your job? That is, are the results of your work likely to significantly affected the lives or well-being of other people?		.875	1.630	10.189
.701	Job Security		.872	1.094	6.839
.692	Training and Development		.868	.891	5.572
.664	Opportunities		.873	.666	4.163
.648	More freedom and opportunities		.870	.484	3.026
.647	Praise from your supervisor				
	There is someone at work who encourages my development. To what extent does doing the job itself provide you with information about your work performance? That is, does the actual work itself provide clues about how well you are doing aside from any "feedback" co-workers or supervisors may provide?		.873	.354	2.214
	Factor 2				
.845	Some form of public recognition (e.g. employee of the month).	Mastery	.879	.237	1.484
.819	To what extent does your job involve doing a "whole" and identifiable piece of work? That is, is the job a complete piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end? or is it only a small part of the overall piece of work, which is completed by other people or by automatic machines?		.875	.150	.937
.782	To what extent do managers or co-workers let you know how well you are doing on your job?		.871	.138	.862
.781	A reward or token of appreciation (e.g. lunch).		.872	.129	.808
.622	More challenging work assignments		.871	.100	.624
	Factor 3				
.921	A Promotion	Purpose	.882	.053	.333
.881	A Pay raise		.879	.017	.210

Source: Based on Hackman & Oldham (1980) instrument with revised items from Idaszak & Drasgow (1987)

Autonomy, mastery and purpose by way of material gain are the most important factors that are preferred by the millennials. The following definitions are derived from the observation of the research. Autonomy refers to "experience of responsibility for outcomes of work with authority to do variety of tasks and being respected by peers and immediate supervisor". This definition stretches the general definition by including need for acknowledgement by peers and immediate supervisor. Mastery is referred as ability to perform whole task with challenging assignments work assignments to prove one. Purpose is referred in the sense of material gain to obtain pay rise and promotion.

This is a fundamental contribution of present research. While literature indicated regarding developed economies millennials, they are highly independent. However Indian Millennials look for peer acknowledgement, mutual support and active encouragement from immediate superior.

Hackman & Oldham Model (1976) posited core job dimensions consisting of 5 constructs; Skill variety; task identity; task significant; autonomy and feedback. These core job dimensions indicated three critical psychological states. Skill variety, task Identity and task significance giving raise to experience meaningfulness of the work, between giving risk to experience responsibility of the outcomes of the work and feedback leading to knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. However, the results about millennials have only three constructs in the job. This indicates that millennials have different job design requirements.

Table 2: Number of respondents at different levels of job characteristics

Job Characteristics groups	Number of employees	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Low on Job Characteristics	414	48.70%	44.47%
Moderate on Job Characteristics with lower Scores on purpose	436	51.3%	100%
Total	850	100	

(Source: Compiled by the researcher)

Inference:

The job characteristics responses are further subjected K-Means Clustering. There are two distinct groups with low scores with 3 for all items and 4 for all items are identified and the majority (51.3%) is moderate on job characteristics with (48.70%) having lower scores.

Table 3: Employee Happiness Index

Scores	Dimension of Happiness	Number of Respondents
1 to 2	Not Happy	3
2 to 3	Somewhat Unhappy	19
3 to 4	Not Particularly Happy or Unhappy	290
4 to 5	Rather happy ; Pretty happy	425
5 to 6	Very Happy	88
6	Too Happy	25

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills, P., & Argyle, M. 2002)

The given table indicates 63.3% of the respondents are pretty happy and stating that, majority of the employees working in Information sector are happy. However, the classification given by Hills, P., & Argyle, M. is arbitrary according to the author's him selves. Using the binning option in the SPSS 17th Version the data is distributed according to normal distribution and following distribution is obtained.

5. CONCLUSION

Kashdan (2004) found that seventy-seven percent of Indian leaders identified improving and leveraging talent as the most important priority compared to growth. Every employer knows that a happy and fulfilled employee is a more productive one, but to attract and retain the best talent for a business involves engaging employees in the long term. Engagement is about respect going both up, down and across a business, transparency throughout and alignment of HR and management policies to business culture and objectives. When all interventions coalesce, employees will be doing the right job for all the right reasons and the business benefits will be tangible Gupta & Kumar (2013). Engagement has to do with how individuals employ themselves in the performance of their job. Moreover, engagement involves the active use of emotions and behaviors in addition to cognitions.

The researchers accept this observation and no apriority assumptions are made about the factor structure and the factor structure need to be established based on empirical evidence. Job characteristics model of Hackman & Oldham (1975, 1976) with revised items from Idaszak&Drasgow(1987) is adopted for the study. If employees are highly engaged and jobs are designed to make them perform effectively with satisfaction, then working in such jobs may lead them to be happyDiener et al. (2013). Thus happiness is assumed to be a natural outcome of the engagement.

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