JOB SATISFACTION AMONG INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Sreelal

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Job satisfaction is one of the prior elements in the analysis of Industrial Psychology and Behavioral Management. Job satisfaction is the result of various attitudes possessed by an employee. These attitudes are associated with work and have link with factors like remuneration, acceptance, growth potential, working environment, grievances, attitude of the management etc.

Information technology (IT) profession is an extremely stressful occupation and often requires great deal of traveling, high intellectual demand, long working hours, rapid technical process and tight working schedules continual education and constant up gradation of skills in the competitive business market. As a consequence strain is placed on family life.

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The majority of the work force is in IT profession is young (between the ages of 20 to 45 years) and they have to perform multiple responsibilities of family life (e.g. rearing children). Hence, they are placed consistently at the risk of suffering from work-family conflict.

The following are suggestions by Herzberg (1968) as to how a job can be enriched;

- Removing some controls on the worker while retaining accountability.
- Increasing the accountability of individuals for their own work.
- Giving a worker complete control over a unit of work.
- Granting additional authority to a worker.

- Management reporting directly to a worker rather than reporting to a supervisor and having the information filter down.

- Introducing new and more difficult tasks not previously handled by the worker.

- Assigning the worker specific or specialized tasks, thus enabling the worker to become an expert.

Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) developed the "Two-Factor Theory of job satisfaction". The development of this theory was based on interview of more than two hundred accountants and engineers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to determine the factors responsible for job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). The findings of these interviews led Herzberg and associates to conclude that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are associated with completely separate and distinct clusters of factors. They suggested that job satisfaction was frequently related to outcomes associated with the work itself. These factors include: (1) achievement, (2) chance for personal growth, (3) recognition, (4) responsibility/stimulating work, and (5) promotion opportunities. Authors labeled these factors "motivators" since they were associated with strong levels of job satisfaction. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction was associated primarily with factors surrounding the job. These factors include: (1) the physical working conditions, (2) job security, (3) company policies, (4) quality of supervision, (5) salary, and (6) relations with others. These factors were labeled as the hygiene (maintenance) factors and the authors suggested that they are not motivational.

Review of Literature

Edwin Locke's (1976) defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional

state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job experiences"

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Kuo & Chen (2004) found no relationship between education and the

job satisfaction of IT personnel in Twain.

Lim (2007) found that library IT workers with an MLS degree were more satisfied with their jobs than were those without an MLS degree.

Igbaria & Guimaraes(1993)

The study demonstrated that role ambiguity was negatively related to the job satisfaction of information center employees.

Pawlowski & Robey (2004) found that IT professionals in a manufacturing company perceived their broker's or boundary spanner's role advantageous regarding their promotions, as they could move across organizational boundaries.

McMurtrey, Grover, Teng, & Lightner(2002) examined the relationships among career orientation, CASE (Computer-Aided Software Engineering) technology sophistication and the job satisfaction of IT professionals. Their study showed that IT professionals with technical competence had higher job satisfaction than those with managerial competence in a CASE tool environment.

Robbins and Judge (2009)
They broadly defined job satisfaction as "a positive feeling about a job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics"

George and Jones (2008) stated that job satisfaction is "the collection of feelings and beliefs that people have about their current jobs. People's levels or degrees of job satisfaction can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction" . He pointed out, work situation is one of the strongest determining factors of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction). It relates to how interesting, or boring the job is.

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Kreitner and Kinicki (2007) Job satisfaction is essentially the extent to which someone likes his or her job.

Nelson and Quick (2009) define Job Satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences"

Judge & Hulin(1993)

People with happy lives are more likely to be satisfied at work than people with unhappy lives.

Job Satisfaction and Information Technology Profession.

Today's information technology's job conditions are completely different than the era of the nineties.

Vu, 2006

IT professionals are no longer "job hoppers"; their job mobility is much lower now than it was in the nineties.

IT World Canada Salary Survey (2008)

Job satisfaction among IT professionals in Canada seems to be high.

Network World (2007)

It reported that only 22 % of their IT respondents were dissatisfied with their jobs overall. In the same survey, IT professionals rated family friendliness (i.e. work environment) as the most important factor in their satisfaction, followed by job security, flexible work schedule, proximity to home, and leave (vacation, holidays, etc.). In the same study, Information Technology professionals' least important factors were: (1) annual raises, (2) performance incentives/bonuses, (3) advancement potential, and (4) stock options.

Murphy (2007)

He indicated that job stability and security are not a major concern for IT pros. In Murphy's study, 40% of IT managers and 34% of IT staff indicated that creating innovative IT solutions is a most important factor (2007).

Ghazzawi (2008-a), concluded IT pros are generally satisfied. Their top satisfactions factors were: ability to keep busy all the time; ability to do things that don't go against their conscience; employment security; the chance to work alone on the job; the chance to try their own methods of doing the job; supportive co-workers; working conditions; chances to do things for other people; opportunities to do different things from time to time (71%); and the chance to do something that makes use of abilities. On the contrary, their key sources of job dissatisfaction were: company policies and practices; opportunities for advancement; pay, and amount of work.

Cummings (2007) indicated that working conditions/ work environment,

the corporate culture, IT peers, and the challenge derived from the job itself are the top rated factors in job satisfaction. On the other hand, according to the same study, titled "The best and worst of working in IT"; Cummings (2007) found that the greatest source of frustration for IT pros stemmed from two factors: working long hours to resolve technical issues or to complete an implementation, or being placed on call to take care of any technical issues at anytime; and dealing with politics and red tape when a decision needs to be made quickly.

Conclusion

Job satisfaction is one of the prior elements in the analysis of Industrial Psychology and Behavioral Management. Job satisfaction is the result of various attitudes possessed by an employee. These attitudes are associated with work and have link with factors like remuneration, acceptance, growth potential, working environment, grievances, attitude of the management etc. Role overload among IT professionals may have dramatic effects on several organizational outcomes.This is of particular concern to IT workers because their jobs may require them to plug into the office more regularly than their co-workers. For instance, most IT workers engaging in any type of project-related work or general support are likely to carry pagers,mobile phones, and

laptop computers home on a nightly basis.While these tools allow for greater flexibility, they can also create both time- and strain based conflict. Time-based conflict occurs as the employee is forced to spend additional time working from home instead of attending to other nonwork responsibilities. The psychological burden of disengaging from family or other nonwork activities in order to perform work duties creates additional strain-based conflict. It would appear that job satisfaction is a significant feature of the workplace, especially among IT personnel, but how they cope with the pressures of technological change imposed on their work environment will ultimately influence the overall business performance.

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Robbins and Judge (2009), broadly defined job satisfaction as "a positive feeling about a job resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics" (p. 83).