Perceptual Assessment of Employees with Reference to Job Attributes – A Comparative Study of Public and Private Sector Banks, Bangalore

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Abstract

No organization can function efficiently as long as the fundamental fact i.e., human beings remain unrecognized. Banking industry is the back bone and plays a vital role in the growth of Indian economy. This sector, especially after globalization and liberalization has witnessed a sea change. It may be remembered that, the core competencies that generate competitive advantage are human resources' knowledge, experience and contribution to organizational development. The organizations must endeavor to nurture human assets, knowledge pool to have a competitive advantage. Therefore, study of human behaviour is essential in every industrial activity. This can be achieved by scientific job attitude studies. The study of job satisfaction is one of the most fundamental areas of research as it represents the core of organizational harmony.

Keywords: Job Attributes, Economic Factors, Non Economic Factors, Task Factors, Social Factors, Public Sector Banks and Private Sector Banks.

INTRODUCTION

No organization can function efficiently as long as the fundamental fact i.e., human beings remain unrecognized. The term job satisfaction refers to a collection of feelings that an individual holds towards his or her job. Job satisfaction describes how content an individual is with his or her job. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive feelings about his job while a person who is dissatisfied with his job holds negative feelings about it. Job satisfaction is an important attribute which organizations expect from their employees. Job satisfaction is often a collection of attitudes about specific factors of the job. Employees may be satisfied with certain aspects of job while simultaneously dissatisfied with other aspects. Employee satisfaction is significant for the success of any organization. Even in a relatively weak economy, retention and recruitment of qualified and skilled employees is the foundation of any business whether small or large. Generally, employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to stay with their existing

employers. But holding happy and motivated employees is more elusive as their expectations often shift.

Historically speaking, the concept of job satisfaction came into vogue during 1935. Hoppock (1935) defined job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say, 'I am satisfied with my job'. It is assumed that employees balance specific satisfactions against specific dissatisfactions and arrive at a composite satisfaction with the job as a whole. Locke (1976) defined it as a pleasurable emotional state which results from the appraisal of or satisfaction about one's job value. It emanates primarily from the interaction of one's value, perception of job and environment. Spector (1997) regarded job satisfaction as an employee's attitude toward job and job situation. It is simply the degree of liking of people for their jobs. Therefore, some enjoy work and consider it a central part of their lives while others do so only because they have to. Robbins (1998) defined job satisfaction as a collection of feelings that an individual holds towards his or her job. This implies that

a person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive feelings towards the job whereas dissatisfied person holds negative feelings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To achieve success, organizations tend to depend more on intangible assets like integrity, trustworthiness, collaborative relationships, research and development than that of traditional 'hard' assets such as real estate, equipment and inventories. Employees have become one of the most significant intangible assets determining organizational competitive success (Zuboff et al 2002). The human resource function in organizations is vital since organizations deal with increased competition, globalization, on going technological change etc. Hence, there is a dire need to focus on job satisfaction and develop human resources proactively to achieve competitive advantage (De Cieri, et al 2003).

Bhatia (1983) divided the study of job satisfaction into several schools of thought. The first one is psychological needs school. It was exemplified by famous psychologists like Maslow, Herzberg, Likert etc. They opined that motivation is the vital factor of job satisfaction. They have paid attention on the needs of individuals for achievement, recognition, responsibility, status and advancement. The psychologists such as Blake, Mouton, and Fiedler constitute the second school. They have concluded that the supervisors' behaviour significantly influences attitude of employees. The third school represented by Lupton, Gowler and Legge approached job satisfaction as a bargain between effort and reward. Yet another school of thought studied job satisfaction from a different angle. Management ideology and values are crucial factors in job satisfaction. Fifthly, behavioural scientists have concentrated on the contents of work and job design. Sixthly, some contributors have concluded that identification of employees needs is necessary. In his Two-factor theory, Herzberg's (1966) has summed up that job content-related facets viz. achievement; responsibility, nature of work etc facilitate satisfaction. On the other hand job context-related factors i.e., pay, security, working conditions cause dissatisfaction.

Kanungo, Gorn and Dauderis (1976) have developed an instrument to measure the perceived job outcomes of employees. The satisfaction level is indicated on six point scale. Of the fifteen outcomes, eight are organizationally controlled rewards like comfortable working conditions, restricted hours of work, adequate earnings, fair pay, sound company policy, job security, benefits and promotional opportunities; four outcomes are interpersonal mediated rewards such as-considerate supervision, competent technical supervision, good interpersonal relations and respect and recognition; three are internally mediated rewards like responsibility and independence, achievement and interesting nature of work. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job attributes theory explains the relationship between job attributes and job satisfaction. This theory was initially tested to diagnose and redesign jobs which this in turn improves employee motivation and productivity. Kapoor (1967) has analyzed the determinants of job satisfaction which is a function of discrepancy between workers expectations and actual achievement of workers. The author has opined that the workers were dissatisfied due to non-achievement of expected wages.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study are:

- (i) To study the perceptions of select bank employees on job attributes concerning economic rewards such as pay promotion, fringe benefits etc.
- (ii) To study the perceptions of select bank employees on job attributes with reference to non economic rewards like power, prestige, recognition, achievement etc.
- (iii) To study the perceptions of select bank employees on job attributes pertaining to task factors viz., autonomy, use of skills etc. And
- (iv) To study the perceptions of select bank employees on job attributes relating to social factors i.e., leadership, working conditions, interpersonal relations with peers etc.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the aforesaid objectives the following hypothesis was formulated and tested to find out the degree and direction of variables.

H₀: The perceptual assessment of job attributes by employees is independent of type of bank

H₁: The perceptual assessment of job attributes by employees is dependent of type of bank

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample design and size

The employees working in different commercial banks situated in Bangalore city, constitute the population for the present study. The commercial banks include both public and private sector banks. Altogether there are branches of twenty five public sector banks including SBI and its associates and branches of twenty private sector banks. To ensure reliability and representativeness, adequate care is taken at every stage of sampling process.

Measuring instruments and data collection

The data for the present study are collected from both the primary and secondary sources. For collecting primary data, a structured questionnaire is specially designed for the purpose. The researcher has personally contacted the respondents and administered it. Secondary data are also collected from the publications of Reserve bank of India, head offices of banks, books, journals, magazines, periodicals, internet papers and so on. There are a number of possible methods such as conducting focus groups, interviewing or carrying out surveys for measuring the attitude of employees. Of these methods, the most accurate measure is a well-constructed employee attitude survey. For purpose of the present study, questionnaires are considered appropriate instruments for data collection. The sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction emerge from job attributes themselves. The perceptual assessment of these characteristics is measured. Sixteen job attributes were included in this study. They are broadly classified into four categories; (i) economic rewards/factors (pay, promotion, fringe benefits and security); (ii) non-economic rewards/factors (power, prestige, recognition, achievement and banking policies and administration; (iii) task factors (autonomy, use of skills and interesting job) and; (iv) social factors (leadership, working conditions interpersonal relations with peers and superiors). These are subjective in nature and hence

accuracy of grouping of factors could not be done. The employees' responses are recorded on a 'five point' scale for each of job. The job attributes are measured in terms of two extremes of the 'most' and the 'least'.

Tools of analysis

The collected data are processed, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted with the help of the various statistical tools. The various statistical tools that are considered appropriate for the present research include: frequencies are used to display the total number of observations; chi-square test is employed to know the strength and direction of relationship and the association between background variables and job satisfaction.

DATA ANALYSIS

The relationship between characteristics of job and attitude of employees is a continuing cause of concern for researchers. A great deal of controversy rests on the influence of specific characteristics of job on overall job satisfaction. But this does not undermine the importance of studying the effect of specific job attributes on the job satisfaction of employees. Job attributes mean all those aspects which are associated with several dimensions of job situations. Job attributes include economic rewards such as pay promotion, fringe benefits etc; non economic rewards like power, prestige, recognition, achievement etc; task factors viz., autonomy, use of skills etc; and social factors i.e., leadership, working conditions, interpersonal relations with peers etc. These characteristics may be present in a particular job at different degrees. The distribution may differ between jobs in public and private sector banks. At the same time, perceptions of employees on these characteristics vary. When job satisfaction is measured in terms of perceived job characteristics, level of job satisfaction in different jobs has to be explained.

Details of perceived assessment of job attributes by the employees of public and private sector banks and their relationship with job satisfaction are described in this section. The employee responses, recorded on five point scale are condensed into three categories, i.e. low, moderate and high. That is response '1' and '2' denote low, '3' moderate and '4' and '5' high. The results are presented in the Table 1.

Economic Factors

With regard to pay, in the case of public sector bank, 43.8 per cent of employees perceive that their pay is high, 46.4 per cent moderate and the rest 9.8 per cent low. With regard to private sector banks, the aforesaid form 35.7 per cent, 34.8 per cent and 29.5 per cent. When all the employees are consider together, the trend of public sector banks exists. The chi-square value is 13.76, which is significant at one per cent level. This shows that the difference in the perceptions of employees between public and private sector banks is significant. The perception of employees on promotion is almost the same in public as well as in private sector banks. The maximum percentage of employees (47.3) in each of public and private sector banks feels that they have ample promotional opportunities. There is no much difference in the proportion of employees who opine that the promotional opportunities are low or moderate. On the overall basis also, the views are identical. Hence the chi-square value is insignificant. This shows that perception of employees on promotion is independent of type of bank. It may be concluded that the responses of employee are similar with regard to promotional avenues.

The views of employees on fringe benefits in public, private and in general do not vary significantly. More than 50 per cent of employees opine that the fringe benefits are moderate in the aforesaid. These are high for 25 per cent, 23.2 per cent and 24.1 per cent of employees in the said groups serially. The fringe benefits are low for 25 per cent employees in the public sector 22.3 per cent in private sector and 23.7 per cent when both are put together. There is no association between perception of employees on fringe benefits and kind of bank since the chi-square value is 0.46 which is not significant. It may be concluded that, though there are variations in the percentage of employees who have perceived fringe benefits high, moderate and low, the differences are not significant. It is common knowledge that the employees are more secured in public sector as compared to private sector. Banking sector is not an exception to it. In the case of public sector, 46.4 per cent employees are of the opinion that there is a high security for their job as compared to private sector bank employees (26.8%). A dissimilar picture emerges in the percentage of

employees who feel that the job security is low. If all the employees are considered together, 36.6 per cent feel that the job security is high, 32.1 per cent moderate and the rest 31.3 per cent low. The variation in the perception of employees on job security between public and private sector banks reflects that the retention of employees is based on their performance in the private sector. This is indicated by the chi-square value i.e., 10.06 which is significant at one per cent level. Hence, private sector bank employees are more unsecured as compared to their counterparts in public sector banks.

Non economic factors

In the public sector banks 35.7 per cent of employees perceive that they enjoy high power followed by low (33%) and moderate (31.3%). As regards the private sector banks 40.2 per cent view moderate power followed by 34.8 per cent high power and the rest 25 per cent low power. The trend of private sector banks can be observed at the aggregate level. The chi-square value is insignificant which shows that the perception of employees on power is independent of type of bank.

There is no much difference in the view of employees on prestige and achievement between the public and private sector employees. The highest percentage of employees feels that they have low prestige in each of the categories of banks and at the aggregate level. A similar trend exists in the views of employees on achievement. On these job attributes lowest percentage of employees have high prestige and achievement. The chi-square values of the aforesaid are insignificant and therefore demonstrate that the perception of employees on prestige and achievement is independent of the type of bank. The opinions of employees on recognition are almost same across the categories of banks and overall. The proportion of employees who perceive high recognition form 46.4 per cent, 48.2 per cent and 47.4 per cent in public sector, private sector and aggregate level respectively. Reverse is the case with low perception on it. There is no significant difference since the chi-square value (2.23) is less than the corresponding book value.

Task factors

Though there are variations in the percentage of employees who perceived autonomy as high, moderate

and low in each of the category of banks, the relationship is insignificant. More than 50 per cent of employees are of the opinion that the opportunity to make use of skills is moderate. However, the chi-square value is insignificant. Thus, it may be inferred that employees' perception on the autonomy and opportunity to make use of skills is independent of the type of bank.

The opinions of employees on bank policy significantly differ between the banks. The bank policy is perceived low by 53.6 per cent employee in the public sector banks. Bureaucracy, stringent rules, inflexibility etc may be attributable causes. In the case of private sector banks, there is no much difference in the percentage of employees for the three categories. Thus the responses of employees are contradictory between the public and private sector banks. Hence, the perceptions of employees on bank policy significantly differ between the public and private sector banks. This is so, because the chi-square value is 12.54, which is significant at one per cent level. There is no much difference in the view of employees on interesting job between public and private sector employees. The highest percentage of employees feels that their job is less interesting in each of the categories of banks and at the aggregate level. On the other hand, the lowest percentage of employees perceives jobs to be more interesting. The chi-square value is insignificant and therefore demonstrates that the perception of employees on interesting job is independent of the type of bank.

Social Factors

The perception of employees on working conditions is significant between the banks. In the private sector banks, 59.8 per cent of the employees feel that the working conditions are good. But in the case of public sector banks, the percentage of employees who opined that the working conditions are good, moderate and bad constitute 39.3 per cent, 28.6 per cent and 32.1 per cent respectively. It may be concluded that there is significant difference between working conditions and type of bank. In the case of public sector banks, 45.5 per cent perceive that the leadership is high, 32.2 per cent moderate and 22.3 per cent low. Whereas in private sector banks, high, moderate and low constitute 52.7 per

cent, 13.4 per cent and 33.9 per cent respectively. It may be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the perception of employees on leadership and the type of bank.

A similar trend exists in the opinion of employees on interpersonal relations with peers and superiors. In both the cases, the highest percentage of employees opines that the interpersonal relations with peers and superiors are low. A contrary trend exists among the employees who perceived high interpersonal relations. It may be inferred that there is a significant association between perception of employees on interpersonal relations with peers and superiors and type of bank. This is based on the calculated value of chi-square which is significant at one per cent and five per cent levels between the former and the latter respectively.

A comparative analysis of perception of job attributes by the public and private sector bank employees reveals that there is no significant difference with regard to promotion, fringe benefits, power, prestige, recognition, achievement, autonomy, opportunity to make use of skills and interesting job. On the other hand, job attributes like pay, security, bank policy, leadership, working conditions and interpersonal relations differ significantly among the employees of public and private sector banks. However, the two groups seem to agree substantially so far the perception of job attributes is concerned. This is also confirmed by mean scores of each of the job attributes of employees of public and private sector banks when compared.

FINDINGS

- The perceptions of employees with regard to pay reveal that, in the case of public sector bank, 43.8 per cent of employees perceive that their pay is high while 35.7 per cent in private sector banks. The difference in the perceptions of employees between public and private sector banks is significant.
- The perceptions of employees on promotion are almost the same in public as well as in private sector banks. In other words, the perception of employees on promotion is independent of type of bank.
- The views of employees on fringe benefits in public, private and in general do not vary significantly and therefore, there is no association between perception of and kind of bank.

- It can be observed that, in the case of public sector banks, 46.4 per cent employees are of the opinion that there is a high security for their job as against 26.8 per cent in private sector banks. Hence the private sector bank employees are more unsecured as compared to their counterparts in public sector as observed in other occupations in the country.
- Maximum percentage employees i.e., 35.7 per cent and 40.2 per cent perceive that they enjoy high power in the both public and private sector banks respectively. This shows that perception of employees on power is independent of type of bank.
- There is not much difference in the views of on prestige and achievement between public and private sector bank employees. This demonstrates that the perception of employees on prestige and achievement is independent of the type of bank.
- The opinions of employees on recognition are almost same across the categories of banks and overall and so there is no significant difference.
- Though there are no significant variations in the percentage of employees who perceive autonomy as high, moderate and low in each of the category of banks. More than 50 per cent of employees are of the opinion that the opportunity to make use of skills is moderate. Thus, employees' perception on autonomy and opportunity to make use of skills is independent of the type of bank.
- The opinion of employees on bank policy significantly differs between the banks. There is not much difference in the opinion of employees on interesting job between public and private sector banks. Therefore, this demonstrates the fact that the perception of employees on interesting job is independent of the type of bank.
- The perception of employees on working conditions, leadership, interpersonal relations with peers and superiors is significant between the banks. As against this, there is no significant difference with regard to promotion, fringe benefits, power, prestige, recognition, achievement, autonomy, opportunity to make use of skills and interesting job between employees of public and private sector banks.
- The chi square value is not significant for promotion, fringe benefits, power, prestige, recognition, achievement, autonomy, opportunity

to make use of skills and interesting job. Hence there is no association between the type of the bank and perception of job attributes by the bank employees.

- On the other hand, chi square value is significant for job attributes like pay, security, bank policy, leadership, working conditions and interpersonal relations indicating that there is association between type of bank and the perceptions of the employees.

CONCLUSION

The study of job satisfaction is one of the most significant areas of research as it represents the core of organizational harmony. It plays an important role in the efficient and effective functioning of human resources. It contributes to the success of an organization. It is not technical processes, buildings or equipment but it is people who are the critical differentiators of a business enterprise. The organizations must endeavor to nurture the human assets, the knowledge pool to have a competitive advantage. The results of this study can be inferred to select respondent employees of public and private sector banks of Bangalore.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study is limited to select group of public and private sector commercial banks. The researcher could not cover foreign banks, cooperative banks, regional rural banks etc due to time, resource and other constraints. The sample is confined to managers and clerks. The sub-staff are excluded with the presumption that they would not understand the contents of the questionnaire and respond properly.

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Table 1: Perceptions of Select Bank Employees on Job attributes

Job Attributes	Level of perception	Type of bank		Total	Chi-square value (between col.3 and 4)
		Public	Private		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Pay	Low	11 (9.8)	33 (29.5)	44 (19.6)	13.76 *
	Moderate	52 (46.4)	39 (34.8)	91 (40.6)	
	High	49 (43.8)	40 (35.7)	89 (39.8)	
Promotion	Low	31 (27.7)	29 (25.9)	60 (26.8)	0.14 NS
	Moderate	28 (25.0)	30 (26.8)	58 (25.9)	
	High	53 (47.3)	53 (47.3)	106 (47.3)	
Fringe benefits	Low	28 (25.0)	25 (22.3)	53 (23.7)	0.46NS
	Moderate	56 (50.0)	61 (54.5)	117 (52.2)	
	High	28 (25.0)	26 (23.2)	54 (24.1)	
Security	Low	27 (24.1)	43 (38.4)	70 (31.3)	10.06*
	Moderate	33 (29.5)	39 (34.8)	72 (32.1)	
	High	52 (46.4)	30 (26.8)	82 (36.6)	
Power	Low	37 (33.0)	28 (25.0)	65 (29.0)	2.51 NS
	Moderate	35 (31.3)	45 (40.2)	80 (35.7)	
	High	40 (35.7)	39 (34.8)	79 (35.3)	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Prestige	Low	51 (45.5)	48 (42.9)	99 (44.2)	0.75 NS
	Moderate	34 (30.4)	40 (35.7)	74 (33.0)	
	High	27 (24.1)	24 (21.4)	51 (22.8)	

Recognition	Low	25 (22.3)	32 (28.6)	57 (25.4)	2.23 NS
	Moderate	35 (31.3)	26 (23.2)	61 (27.2)	
	High	52 (46.4)	54 (48.2)	106 (47.4)	
Achievement	Low	48 (42.9)	46 (41.0)	94 (42.0)	1.70 NS
	Moderate	41 (36.6)	35 (31.3)	76 (33.9)	
	High	23 (20.5)	31 (27.7)	54 (24.1)	
Bank Policy	Low	60 (53.6)	35 (31.3)	95 (42.4)	12.54*
	Moderate	30 (26.8)	37 (33.0)	67 (29.9)	
	High	22 (19.6)	40 (35.7)	62 (27.7)	
Autonomy	Low	35 (31.2)	29 (25.9)	64 (28.6)	3.24 NS
	Moderate	42 (37.5)	35 (31.2)	77 (34.4)	
	High	35 (31.3)	48 (42.9)	83 (37.0)	
Opportunity to make use of skills	Low	26 (23.2)	30 (26.8)	56 (25.0)	0.97 NS
	Moderate	65 (58.0)	66 (58.9)	131 (58.5)	
	High	21 (18.8)	16 (14.3)	37 (16.5)	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Interesting job	Low	51 (45.5)	46 (41.1)	97 (43.3)	4.42 NS
	Moderate	32 (28.6)	46 (41.1)	78 (34.8)	
	High	29 (25.9)	20 (17.8)	49 (21.9)	
Leadership	Low	25 (22.3)	38 (33.9)	63 (28.1)	11.91*
	Moderate	36 (32.2)	15 (13.4)	51 (22.8)	
	High	51 (45.5)	59 (52.7)	110 (49.1)	
Working conditions	Low	36 (32.1)	27 (24.1)	63(28.1)	9.97*
	Moderate	32 (28.6)	18 (16.1)	50 (22.3)	
	High	44 (39.3)	67 (59.8)	111 (49.6)	
Interpersonal relations with peers	Low	64 (57.1)	37 (33.0)	101 (45.1)	13.16*
	Moderate	30 (26.8)	46 (41.1)	76 (33.9)	
	High	18 (16.1)	29 (25.9)	47 (21.0)	
Interpersonal relations with superiors	Low	57 (50.9)	44 (39.2)	101 (45.1)	7.06**
	Moderate	30 (26.8)	49 (43.8)	79 (35.3)	
	High	25 (22.3)	19 (17.0)	44 (19.6)	

Notes: (i) Figures in parentheses indicate the percentage to total

(ii) NS: Not significant

(iii) ** Indicates significant at 5 per cent level

(iv) * Indicates significant at 1 per cent level

Source: Sample survey