



Research Paper

Job Satisfaction: A Literature Review

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Abstract

When an employee is satisfied with the job, then such an employee will be more productive and creative and is more likely to be retained by the organization. Some job satisfaction theoretical frameworks and models are available to that effect namely; Herzbergs' Two Factor Theory, Adams Equity Theory, and Job Characteristic Theory among others. We find that all the above models have been widely employed in the study of job satisfaction studies. We notably argue that Smerek and Petersons' Model can be included on the list of job satisfaction models. Hence based on a thorough review of Smerek and Petersons' model, research hypotheses were derived to guide further studies on the factors related to job satisfaction and a review of the literature was conducted on these identified research hypotheses.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Personal Characteristics, Job Characteristics, Intrinsic Factors, Extrinsic Factors

Received 02 Oct., 2022; Revised 11 Oct., 2022; Accepted 13 Oct., 2022 © The author(s) 2022.

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I. Introduction

Several authors (e.g. Hoppock, 1935; Smith, Kendall &Hullin, 1969; Locke, 1976; Spector, 1985; Cranny, Smith & Stone, 1992; Paul &Phua, 2011) have defined the concept of job satisfaction. In particular, Hoppock (1935) defined job satisfaction as a combination of psychological, physiological as well as the circumstances of the environment which cause the employee to say: "I am happy with my job". In line with this definition, Hoppock developed an overall measure of job satisfaction based on the responses of workers to five questions concerning how satisfied they were. These included direct inquiries such as "how satisfied are you with your job" as well as indirect measures on whether the worker would recommend the job to a friend; whether the employee plans to look for a new job within the next year; whether the worker would take the same job again if given a choice and how the job measures up to the sort of job the worker wanted when one took it.

Smith et al. (1969) defined job satisfaction as the feeling an individual has about his or her job. To him, job satisfaction could be measured in terms of pay, work itself, promotions, supervision, and coworkers. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as an emotional-affective response to a job or specific aspects of the job. Locke was in agreement with Smith et al. (1969) on the measures of job satisfaction to include; work itself, pay, promotion, supervision, and relationship with co-workers. Spector (1985) defined job satisfaction as the extent to which people like (satisfiers) or dislike (dissatisfiers) their jobs. Satisfiers are those factors that fulfill an individual's need for psychological growth. Dissatisfiers on the other hand are those rewards that merely serve to prevent an individual from "feeling bad" about work. To him, he measured job satisfaction in terms of benefits, pay, work itself, promotion, supervision, relationship with coworkers, contingent rewards, communication as well as operating procedures.

Cranny et al. (1992) define job satisfaction as a general expression of a worker's positive attitude. To them, a person with high job satisfaction appears to hold generally positive attitudes and one who is dissatisfied tends to hold negative attitudes towards his or her job. These attitudes are important characteristics of the job like work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision and relationship with co-workers. On their part, Paul and Phua (2011) defined job satisfaction as how well outcomes meet or exceed expectations. For instance, if an employee feels that he or she is working much harder than others in a particular department but receiving fewer rewards, he or she will probably have a negative feeling toward the work, the boss and the co-workers. Thus when we talk of job satisfaction, we are talking of it as a sense of happiness with one's job (Hoppock,1935); as a feeling an individual has about his or her job (Smith et al, 1969); an emotional- affective state of workers (Locke,1976); as the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs (Spector,1985); as a general expression of a

worker's positive attitude (Cranny et al.,1992) as well as an expectation that shows the difference between the amount of rewards workers receive and the amount they believe they should be received (Paul and Phua, 2011).

II. The Importance/ Significance of Job Satisfaction

The importance/ significance of job satisfaction is well captured by authors such as Hoppock (1935) who suggested that job satisfaction helps trade unions to know exactly what employees want and what management is doing. In so doing, it facilitates mutual settlement of grievances and unwanted situations that may arise. Locke (1969) suggested that job satisfaction can be of great importance to an organization since it is associated with less effort, acceptance of the existing policies, the best possible salaries, working hours and excellent service delivery which are viewed as important pillars to organizational success.

Spector (1985) suggested that job satisfaction data helps evaluate the emotional wellness and mental fitness of employees and that an organization can use the information to improve departmental policies and practices where dissatisfaction is expressed. Seashore (1975) pointed out that when employees are satisfied, they tend to care more about the quality of their work, are committed to the organization, and have higher retention rates as well. Watson, Thompson and Meade (1997) observed that job satisfaction surveys were commonly used by organizations as tools to help manage, train and retain valuable employees. In addition, these surveys help assess employees' job satisfaction for many purposes, including gauging work morale and diagnosing potential problems. Paul and Phua (2011) stressed that when an employee is satisfied with their job; such an employee will be more productive and creative and are more likely to be retained by the organization.

III. Theoretical Reviews

Several authors have had interest in the factors/ determinants of job satisfaction, and have hence suggested theoretical frameworks or models to this effect namely; Herzberg's Two Factor Model, Job Characteristic Model, Equity Theory and Job Assessment Model.

3.1. Herzberg (1959)'s Two Factor Model of Job Satisfaction

Herzberg (1959)'s Two Factor Model of job satisfaction proposes that, to have job satisfaction in an organization, the organization should provide both motivational and hygiene factors respectively.

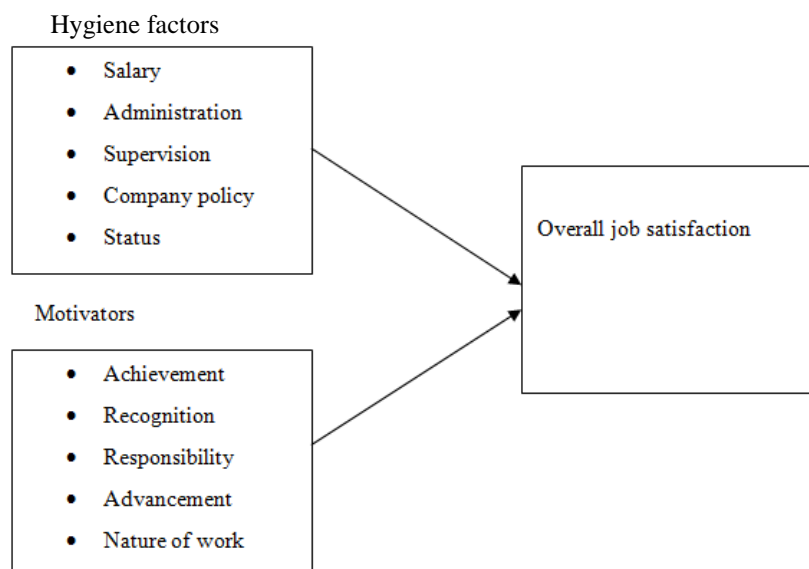


Figure 1: Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Source: Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959).

Hygiene factors according to Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) are defined as those factors that do not motivate or satisfy but rather prevent dissatisfaction. These factors concerning the model include; employee salaries, administration, supervision of employees, organizational policies, and employee status. Herzberg, et al. (1959) defined motivators as those aspects of the job that make people want to perform and provide people with satisfaction.

3.2. Job Characteristic Model of Job Satisfaction

Hackman and Oldham (1975) proposed the Job Characteristic Model as depicted in Figure 3.

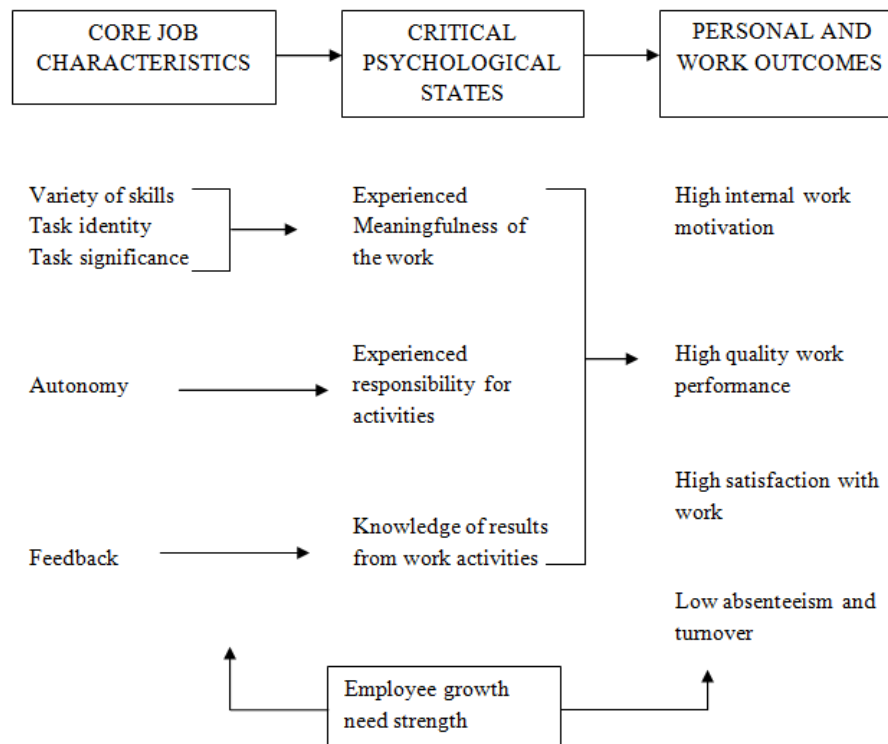


Figure 3: The Job Characteristics Model

Source: Hackman & Oldham (1975).

The job characteristic model proposes that high work satisfaction as a positive personal and work outcome can be obtained when three critical psychological states are present for a given employee (experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the results of work activities). All three psychological states must be present for the positive outcomes to be realized.

The Job Characteristic Model further proposes that these critical psychological states are created by the presence of five core job dimensions. Experienced meaningfulness of the work is enhanced primarily by three of the core dimensions: skill variety, task identity, and task significance. Skill variety has been defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work and involves the use of different skills and talents of the individual. Task identity has been defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as the degree to which the job requires the completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work that involves doing a job from the beginning to the end with a visible outcome. Task significance has been defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as, the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of people in other departments in the organization or the external environment.

Figure 2 also states that experienced responsibility for work outcomes is increased when a job has autonomy. Job autonomy was defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as the degree to which the job gives the employee substantial freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out. In addition, knowledge of results is increased when a job is high on feedback. In regards to Figure 3, feedback was defined by Hackman and Oldham (1975) as the degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information on the results of his performance. Therefore individual growth need strength is shown in Figure 3 as a moderator of the other theory-specific relationship.

3.3. Equity Theory of job satisfaction

Another model of job satisfaction is the Equity Theory as depicted in Adams (1965). The Theory stipulates that individuals, in a cognitive manner make decisions about the state of their satisfaction. According to this theory, individuals compare the ratio of their inputs and outcomes to the input-outcome ratios of another person. Adams (1965) defined inputs as the qualitative and quantitative contribution of an employee’s work. These inputs include; time, effort, hard work, commitment, ability, adaptability, flexibility, tolerance,

determination, enthusiasm and personal trust. On the other hand, outputs (outcomes) were defined as the positive and negative consequences that an individual (employee) perceives a participant has incurred as a consequence of his/ her relationship with the other. Outputs (outcomes) include; job security, esteem, salary, employee benefits, expenses, recognition, reputation, responsibilities and a sense of achievement among others. The Equity Theory of job satisfaction argues that a major input into job performance and satisfaction is the degree of equity or inequality that people perceive in their work situations. Adams' Equity Theory suggested that inequality exists for a person whenever he or she perceives that the ratio of his / her outcomes to inputs and the ratio of another's outcomes to another's inputs are unequal.

3.4 Smerek and Petersons' Model for Assessing Job Satisfaction

Smerek and Peterson (2007) proposed a model for assessing job satisfaction which proposes that to obtain job satisfaction in an organization, there should be job characteristics as well as a perceived work environment (intrinsic and extrinsic factors). Smerek and Peterson defined job characteristics as the main core dimensions of the job. Job characteristics in regards to the model are operationalised in terms of work units such as; facilities and operational units, human resource units, financial units and administrative IT, and union as well as non-union units. Smerek and Peterson defined perceived work environment as the surrounding conditions in which an employee operates. It includes a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. To them, intrinsic factors are "those factors that fulfill an individual's need for psychological growth" p 230. Intrinsic factors in regards to the model include; employee recognition, the work itself, employee opportunities for advancement, professional growth of employees, employee responsibility, a good feeling about the organization as well as clarity of the organization's mission.

Smerek and Peterson (2007) defined hygiene factors (extrinsic) factors as "those factors that merely serve to prevent an individual from feeling bad about work" p 230. Hygiene factors include; effective senior management, effective supervisors at work, a good relationship with co-workers, high satisfaction with salary, employee satisfaction with benefits as well as the presence of core values in an organization. Figure 4 also suggests that there is a significant relationship between personal characteristics and job satisfaction. Smerek and Peterson (2007) defined personal characteristics as assets of individual differences that are affected by the development of an individual. Personal characteristics in regards to the model are conceptualized as the gender of respondents, minority- status of the employees, age of respondents as well as length of service of an employee.

Conceptual framework

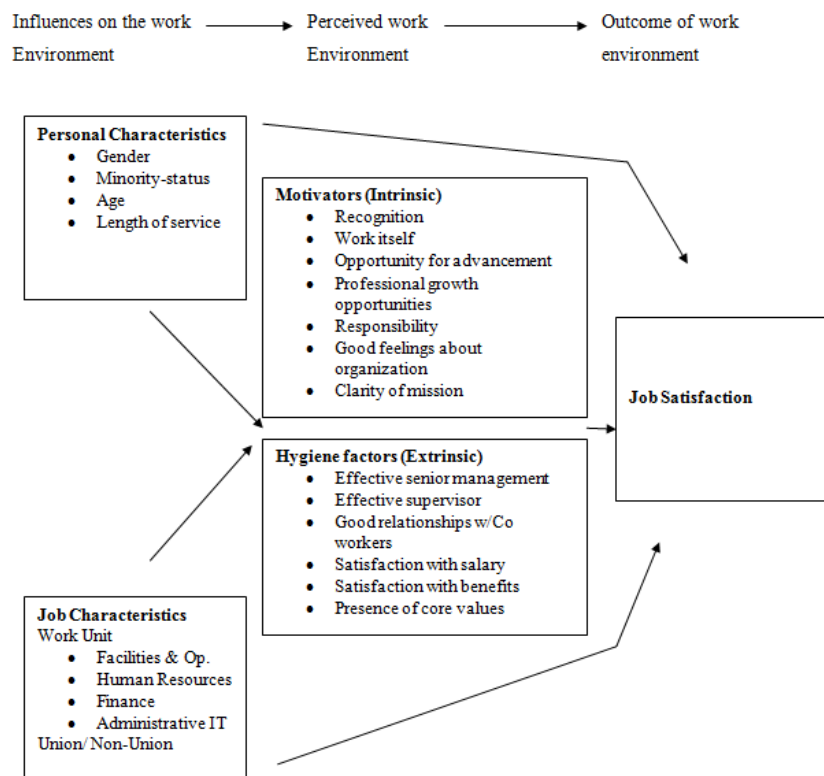


Fig 3: Model for assessing job satisfaction

IV. Hypotheses from Smerek and Peterson's Model: A Call for a Paradigm Shift

Following the review of theories and models on job satisfaction, it becomes apparent that research attention has not been given to Smerek and Peterson's Model of assessing job satisfaction. However, several gaps arose from the theories and models of job satisfaction after undertaking a theoretical and meta-analysis to that effect. To Herzberg's Two Factor model, Rao (1972) observed that some issues have emerged in making a distinction between hygiene factors and motivational factors. Rao noted that while some factors have proved to fall accurately within the two groups, others, particularly salary have proven ambiguous as to whether they are motivators or hygiene factors. Pritchard (1969) noted that the Equity Theory of job satisfaction does not elaborate on how or with whom a person will choose to compare his/her input-outcome ratio. In regards to the Job Characteristic Model, a meta-analysis by Fried and Ferris (1987) revealed serious methodological shortcomings that could illustrate the potential danger of relying on inappropriate analytical procedures undertaken in the Job Characteristic Model. Based on the limitations elicited from the job characteristic theories and models, the researcher sought to adopt Smerek and Peterson's model of assessing lecturers' job satisfaction that suggested the following hypotheses:

H₁: Personal characteristics relates to job satisfaction

H₂: Job characteristics relates to job satisfaction

H₃: Intrinsic factors relates to job satisfaction

H₄: Extrinsic factors relates to job satisfaction

V. Literature review

5.1. Personal characteristics and Job satisfaction. Smerek and Peterson (2007) defined personal characteristics as assets of individual differences that are affected by the development of an individual. In this study, personal characteristics will include the gender of respondents, minority- status of the employees, age of respondents as well as length of service of an employee. There are different empirical studies relating personal characteristics to job satisfaction. For instance, Spencer, Deal, Pruthi, Gonzalez, Kirby and Langston (2015) carried out a study aimed at analyzing the female workforce in Urology compared to that of men in income, workload and job satisfaction. Using a clustered sample of 6511 domestic members practising Urologists who filled in a questionnaire and a linear regression model, they established that gender was not a significant predictor of job satisfaction among the workforce in Urology.

Wickramasinghe (2016) investigated the level of job satisfaction experienced by IT graduates employed full-time offshore outsourced IT firms in Sri Lanka, the demographic characteristics that predict job satisfaction, perceptions towards IT jobs in outsourced IT firms, turnover and job search intentions. Using a clustered random sample of 122 respondents who filled in a questionnaire and a Pearson Correlation Coefficient, he established that gender and tenure are significant in job satisfaction measures. Bang (2015) examined the moderating role of age in the relationships between leader-member exchange dimensions and job satisfaction and between job satisfaction and intention to stay among volunteers in non-profit sports organizations. Using a clustered random sample of 214 volunteers in 22 non-profit sports organizations and a moderated hierarchical regression analysis, he established that age moderated the relationship between professional respect and job satisfaction such that it was stronger for younger volunteers, and job satisfaction had a greater positive influence on intention to stay for older rather than younger volunteers.

Singhapakdi, Sirgy, Lee, Sensasu, Yu and Nisius (2014) carried out a study to shed more light on gender disparity in job satisfaction in the context of western versus Asian managers. Using a self-administered survey both in the US and Thailand, and confirmatory factor analysis, they established that gender disparity in job satisfaction in Thailand is driven mainly by significant gender disparity in lower-order Quality of Work Life (QWL) and organizational socialization. Chaudhuri, Reilly and Spencer (2015) carried out a study to examine the effects of age and tenure on job satisfaction. Using a British household panel survey, they established that tenure shares a non-monotonic relationship with job satisfaction for females. For males, the same results are found only at higher levels of job satisfaction. All, the above studies were carried out in the context of the western world and Asia. This contextual gap made it necessary for this study in the context of Makerere University in Uganda.

5.2. Job characteristics and job satisfaction. Smerek and Peterson (2007) defined job characteristics as the main core dimensions of the job. In this study, job characteristics will include; facilities and operational units, human resource units, financial units and administrative IT, and union and non-union units. There are different empirical studies relating job characteristics to job satisfaction. For instance, Meneghel, Borgogni, Miraglia,

Salanova and Martinez (2016) carried out a study to examine the effects of collective work unit perceptions of social context on individual work resilience and two key individual outcomes: job satisfaction and job performance as rated by the supervisor. Using a clustered random sample of 305 white-collar employees who filled in a questionnaire, and hierarchical linear modelling, they established that there was a positive relationship between the collective work units and job satisfaction. Ko, Frey, Osteen and Ahn (2015) carried out a study to examine how immigrant status affects determinants of job satisfaction. Using data from the 2002 and 2008 National studies of the changing workforce, and hierarchical linear regression, they established that income satisfaction and job satisfaction were stronger in the immigrant units. This methodological gap made it necessary for this study to use simple and stratified random sampling techniques to address the relationship between job characteristics and job satisfaction at Makerere University Uganda.

3.3. Intrinsic Factors and Job Satisfaction. Herzberg et al (1960) defined intrinsic factors as those factors that fulfil an individual's need for psychological growth. Intrinsic factors in this study will mean employee recognition, the work itself, employee opportunities for advancement, professional growth of employees, employee responsibility, a good feeling about the organization as well as clarity of the organization's mission. There are several empirical studies relating intrinsic factors to job satisfaction. For instance, Kumar, Dass and Topaloglu (2014) examined the antecedent structure of the terminal level of job satisfaction of frontline service employees. Using a clustered random sample of former employees of a supermarket chain who filled in a questionnaire, and a Pearson correlational co-efficient technique, they established that there exist systematic variations in the relative importance of drivers of job satisfaction, such as work itself, personality and demographics across employee subgroups.

Lambert, Quresh, Hogan, Klahm, Smith and Frank (2015) carried out a study to examine the association of job variables with job involvement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment among Indian police officers. Using a clustered random sample of 827 police officers who were surveyed in two districts in the state of Haryana in the Republic of India, and an ordinary least square regression analysis, they established that there is a significant relationship between employee training and job satisfaction.

Buyukgoze-Kavas, Duffy, Guneri and Autin (2013) examined how variables from a social cognitive model of job satisfaction-goal progress, self-efficacy, perceived organizational support and positive affect predicted the job satisfaction of Turkish teachers. Using a purposive random sample of 50 teachers who filled in a questionnaire and hierarchical multiple regression analysis, they established that teacher job satisfaction was a significant and positive predictor of organizational support, goal progress and positive affect. In addition, Jiang, Lambert, Jin and Xiang (2016) carried out a study to reveal the extent to which Chinese community correctional officers were satisfied with their job. Using a clustered random sample of 255 community correctional officers from 15 counties in Hubei, China in 2013 who filled in a questionnaire and a standardized regression coefficient, they established that perceived promotional opportunities were a significant predictor of job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Bojadjev, Petkovska, Misoska and Stojanovska (2015) examined the effects of the perceived work environment on public employee feelings of job satisfaction. Using a clustered random sample of 169 employees working in one local government municipality in Macedonia who filled in a questionnaire, and a Pearson correlation coefficient, they established that recognition was a strong predictor of job satisfaction, followed by opportunities for professional advancement and work 'self. All, of the above studies exposed conceptual gaps. These conceptual gaps made it necessary for this study to use several constructs (e.g. recognition, work itself, an opportunity for advancement, professional growth opportunities, responsibility, good feeling about the organization and clarity of mission) to address the relationship between intrinsic factors and job satisfaction in Makerere University Uganda.

5.4. Extrinsic Factors and Job Satisfaction. Herzberg et al (1960) defined extrinsic factors as those factors that do not motivate or satisfy but rather prevent dissatisfaction. In this study, extrinsic factors will mean effective senior management, effective supervisors at work, good relationships with co-workers, high satisfaction with salary, employee satisfaction with benefits as well as the presence of core values in an organization. There are different empirical studies relating extrinsic factors to job satisfaction. For instance, Tesfaw (2014) carried out a study to determine the relationship between the transformational leadership of government secondary principals and teachers' job satisfaction. Using a clustered random sample of 320 teachers who filled a questionnaire and a Pearson correlational co-efficient technique, they established that the relationship between each component of transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction was found to be moderate, positive and significant.

Mathieu and Babiak (2016) employed a structural equation model to test the influence of both employees' perceptions of supervisors' psychopathy traits and abusive supervision on employees' job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Using a clustered random sample of 97 employees from a non-profit organization who filled in a questionnaire, and a Pearson correlation coefficient, they established that corporate psychopathy was

positively and significantly correlated with abusive supervision and negatively correlated with employees' job satisfaction. These conceptual gaps made it necessary for this study to use several constructs (e.g. effective senior management, effective supervisors at work, good relationship with co-workers, high satisfaction with salary, employee satisfaction with benefits as well as the presence of core values in an organization) to address the relationship between extrinsic factors and job satisfaction in Makerere University Uganda.

5.5. Job Characteristics and Extrinsic Factors. There are different empirical studies relating job characteristics to extrinsic factors. For instance, Koc, Cavus and Saracoglu (2014) explored the role of human resources management practices, job satisfaction and organizational commitment intentions of employees working in Turkish private organizations. Using a sample of 200 employees who filled in a questionnaire and the Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that there was a positive relationship between HRM practices in the department (recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and benefits, performance appraisals) and job satisfaction.

In addition, White and Bryson (2011) analyzed the association between HRM practices and employees' organizational commitment (OC) and extrinsic job satisfaction (EJS). White and Bryson found out that HRM practices have significant positive relationships with OC and EJS chiefly at high levels of implementation, but with important distinctions between the domain-level analysis (comprising groups of practices for specific domains such as employee development) and the across-domain or HRM-system level. Kanwar, Singh and Kodwani (2012) carried out a study to examine the impact of IT and ITES sectors and gender on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intent. Using a convenience sample of 313 respondents who filled in a questionnaire and a regression analysis, they established that the IT group had lower job satisfaction. All, the above studies were carried out in the context of the western world and Asia. This contextual gap made it necessary for this study in the context of Makerere University in Uganda.

VI. Conclusion

This paper reviewed the literature on job satisfaction at the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical levels. The paper was divided into five sections. In Section 1, the definition of job satisfaction is given, stressing its' nature as a multi-dimensional variable that denotes, a sense of happiness with one's job, a pleasurable or positive emotional state of workers, an attitudinal response, a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors as well as how well outcomes meet or exceed an expectation. In Section 2, the importance of job satisfaction is discussed, pointing out that satisfied employees tend to be more productive at work and creative and are most likely to be retained by the organization. In Section 3, four Theories (Herzbergs' Two Factor Theory, the Equity Theory, Job Characteristic Model and Smerek and Petersons' Model) relating job satisfaction to its antecedents were reviewed. In this section, a framework relating job satisfaction to the four dimensions (intrinsic, extrinsic, job characteristics and personal factors) was suggested. In Section 4, the researcher reviewed empirical studies on job satisfaction and raised gaps (contextual, conceptual, theoretical, and methodological as well as temporal gaps) in them for future studies to close. Hence it is against this background that the researcher deemed it necessary to apply Smerek and Peterson's model, from which hypotheses to guide further positivist studies on the dimensions of job satisfaction can base.

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