

Job Satisfaction among Pharmaceutical Sales force in South Africa – A Case with Special Reference to Cape Town

*Güney Afrika'daki İlaç Mümessillerinin İş Tatmini –
Cape Town Örneği*

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Abstract

Job satisfaction is an attitude that employees have about their work and is based on numerous factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual. Job satisfaction is important from the perspective of maintaining and retaining the appropriate employees within the organization, it is about fitting the right person to the right job in the right culture and keeping them satisfied.

Job satisfaction at salesforce level has become a topic of growing concern since significant proportion of marketing budgets, especially in pharmaceutical industry of South Africa, is spent on them to achieve the assigned targets in the circular market. Although a large number of studies have been conducted to investigate job satisfaction in diverse range of the cultures, subjects and occupations yet none has attempted to explore the impact of job content and context factors on the job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salespersons in South Africa. Thus, the current study intends to determine the variance in salespersons' overall job satisfaction through job content and context factors as a whole. This study also extends the total repercussion on the sales persons and their satisfaction level that cement the good will of the company and personal upliftment.

Key Words: Job satisfaction, job security, Multinational

Özet

İş tatmini işgörenlerin işlerine ilişkin tutumları olup çeşitli faktörlere dayalıdır. Bu faktörler içsel ve dışsal faktörler olarak ifade edilebilir. İş tatmini uygun işgörenlerin örgüt içerisinde tutulması ve bunların devamlılığının sağlanması açısından önemlidir. İş tatmini aynı zamanda doğru kişinin, doğru işte ve doğru kültürde istihdamı ile ilgilidir.

İş tatmini Güney Afrika'da değişen Pazar şartlarında hedeflerini başarabilmek için harcama yapan ilaç firmalarının Pazar bütçelerine ayırdıkları pay büyüdükçe ilaç mümessilleri açısından artan düzeyde bir ilgi konusu haline gelmiştir. Çok sayıda farklı kültürde iş tatminine yönelik çalışmalar yapılmış olmasına rağmen bu çalışmalarda iş

içeriğinin ve çevresel ortam faktörlerinin etkisi araştırılmamıştır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma Güney Afrika'daki ilaç mümessillerinin toplam iş tatminlerini etkileyen değişkenlerin iş kapsamı ve kavramsal faktörler açısından belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş tatmini, İş güvenliği, Çokuluslu.

Introduction

South Africa is an upper-middle-income country in per capita terms. The number of South African dollar-millionaires increased by almost 14% between 2006 and 2007, and a rapidly growing black middle class is boosting the country's house, car and retail sales. But despite this relative wealth, the distribution of income is among the most unequal in the world with 75.5% of South Africans earning below Rand 50,000 PA. South Africa has two very different tiers; one well-developed and prosperous, the other poor and struggling to access opportunities for upliftment. A great deal of money has gone into social and economic development in South Africa since the fall of apartheid. A recent Human Sciences Research Council national survey on social giving in South Africa found that regular citizens give roughly Rand 12 billion a year from their own pockets to help others whilst corporate philanthropy stands at an estimated Rand 5 billion per year.

With the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) moving ever closer, it is saddening that sub-Saharan Africa is now the furthest away from achieving them. The current financial crisis is highly likely to further entrench the barriers to achieving the MDGs with expected reductions in social spending in response to the global recession. This situation demonstrates more clearly than ever that philanthropy and corporate giving is not sufficient to achieve sustainable solutions to the world's problems. Without fundamentally changing our thinking about development – as individuals, as companies and as communities – we will not achieve real and lasting change. The last decade has seen an explosion of innovation as a growing international community has experimented with a great variety of approaches to tackling some of the world's most intractable social problems.

Cape Town in South Africa is the second-most populous city and the largest in land area, forming part of the City of Cape Town metropolitan municipality. It is the provincial capital and primate city of the Western Cape, as well as the legislative capital of South Africa, where the National Parliament and many government offices are located. The city is famous for its harbour as well as its natural setting in the Cape floral kingdom, including such well-known landmarks as Table Mountain and Point. It is hailed as one of the most beautiful cities in the world as officially recognised by Forbes. National Geographic has also enlisted Cape Town as one of the most iconic cities on the planet and "Places of a Lifetime". Cape Town is also Africa's most popular tourist destination.

Located on the shore of Table Bay, Cape Town was originally developed by the Dutch East India Company as a victualling (supply) station for Dutch ships sailing to Eastern Africa, India, and the Far East. Jan van Riebeeck's arrival on 6 April 1652 established the first permanent European settlement in South Africa. Cape Town quickly outgrew its original purpose as the first European outpost at the Castle of Good Hope, becoming the economic and cultural hub of the Cape Colony. Until the

Witwatersrand Gold Rush and the development of Johannesburg, Cape Town was the largest city in South Africa.

Today it is one of the most multicultural cities in the world, reflecting its role as a major destination for immigrants and expatriates to South Africa. As of 2007 the city had an estimated population of 3.5 million. Cape Town's land area of 2,455 square kilometers (948 sq mi) is larger than other South African cities, resulting in a comparatively lower population density of 1,425 inhabitants per square kilometer (3,690 /sq mi).

As this study was focused on the Cape Town pharmaceutical companies but Job satisfaction at salesforce level has become a topic of growing concern for the practitioners and organizational researchers because a significant proportion of the marketing budgets are spent on them for the achievement of the assigned targets. In this connection, sales and marketing management of pharmaceutical companies regard salespersons' job satisfaction as a critical factor in developing and sustaining long-term profitable relationships with their focused valued customers.

The biggest prelude to the study regarding job satisfaction was Hawthorne studies (1924-1933). The findings of the study were challenged on the ground that productivity improvement was not resulted from novel change in the working conditions but from the knowledge of the workers that they are being observed. This paved the way for the researchers to identify the factors, other than pay, that are linked with job satisfaction. Scientific management by Frederick Winslow Taylor also had a great impact on the study of job satisfaction and contributed substantial change in philosophies of industrial production. Later on, the dissatisfaction among the workers motivated researchers to address the new questions regarding job satisfaction.

Rationale of the Study

Job satisfaction is an elusive, even mythical, concept that has been increasingly challenged and refined particularly since the Herzberg, Mauser and Snyderman study in 1959. The job satisfaction of an employee is a topic that has received considerable attention by researchers and managers alike (Gautam; Mandal and Dalal, 2006). The most important information to have regarding an employee in an organization is a validated measure of his/her level of job satisfaction (Roznowski and Hulin, 1992). Behavioral and social science research suggests that job satisfaction and job performance are positively correlated (Bowran and Todd, 1999). A better understanding of job satisfaction and factors associated with it helps managers guide employees' activities in a desired direction. The morale of employees is a deciding factor in the organization's efficiency (Chaudhary and Banerjee, 2004). Thus, it is fruitful to say that managers, supervisors, human resource specialists, employees, and citizens in general are concerned with ways of improving job satisfaction (Cranny et al 1992).

Job satisfaction is defined as a collection of feelings that an individual holds towards his or her job (Robbins, 2005). Job satisfaction represents attitude rather than a behavior. Job satisfaction is taken as dependent variable because of two reasons. First, is its demonstrated relationship to performance factors and, second is the value preferences held by organizational behavior researchers. Researchers with strong humanistic values argue that satisfaction is the legitimate objective of an organization (Robbins, 2005). The five facets of job satisfaction measured by the Job Descriptive

Index (JDI) are: The work itself which is related to responsibility, interest and growth, Quality of supervision related to technical help and social support, Relationships with coworkers related to social harmony and respect, promotion opportunities related to chance for further advancement and Pay which is related to adequacy of pay and perceived equity (Schermerhorn. Jr, et al., 2005).

It is evident that experience as an outcome of tenure and age is considered for the promotion as well as benefits and rewards in the organization. The promotion, benefits, rewards and higher income is directly linked with seniority and this phenomenon can be translated into job satisfaction by tapping this behavior in the practical field. This study will certainly add value to the existing knowledge base and simultaneously give us courage to indulge in further advanced researches in the field of management sciences.

Literature Review

Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their jobs (Schermerhorn. Jr, et al., 2005). It is an attitude or emotional response to one's tasks as well as to the physical and social conditions of the workplace. From the perspective of Herzberg's two-factor theory some aspects of job satisfaction should be motivational and lead to positive employment relationships and high level of individual job performance. The association of age and tenure with job satisfaction as discussed by (Herzberg, et al., 1957) was a U shape relationship. Herzberg explained his findings that individuals at their early stages of employment usually experienced low job satisfaction due to unfulfilled work expectations. He further added that these individuals or employees when advanced in their careers gain maturity and work experience which led them to a more realistic level of work expectations.

In another study (Hulin & Smith, 1965) reported a positive monotonic relationship of age, tenure and job satisfaction under all conditions for all individuals. But, when (Gibson & Klein, 1970) studied the relationship of age, tenure and job satisfaction after considering a sample of 2,067 blue collar workers they found a linear relationship between age and job satisfaction. Where as, for the negative linear relationship between tenure and job satisfaction, they developed "disconfirmed original expectations" to support their arguments.

In a study conducted by (Saleh and Otis, 1964) it was reported that general satisfaction of an employee increased up to age 60 and declined until retirement. The study of (Carrell and Elberth, 1974) found that the general satisfaction is observed at the age of 50. Where as a study conducted by (Arvey and Dewhirst, 1979), reported a positive 5 relationship between age and job satisfaction for extrinsic satisfaction components only. The basic and more consistent findings in research on age differences in job satisfaction are that older workers are more satisfied with their jobs than are younger workers (e.g., Vollmer and Kinney, 1955; Hulin and Smith, 1965; Sheppard and Herrick, 1972; Quinn et al., 1974; Kalleberg, 1977; Wright and Hamilton, 1978; Janson and Martin, 1982).

A study conducted by (Kalleberg and Loscocco, 1983) reported that work role and family life cycle of individual employee have a strong impact on the level of job satisfaction. They have empirically proved that work values and rewards are the key

concepts that basically strengthen the relationship of age and job satisfaction. They further added that older workers are more satisfied than their younger counterparts because they actually have “better” or more highly rewarded jobs (Quinn et al., 1974; Wright and Hamilton, 1978). In another study conducted by (Hunt and saul, 1975) based on the evaluation of job satisfaction regarding age and tenure in two groups that are male and female reported U-shaped, significant, positive and linear relationships between age-tenure-job satisfaction. They found a high level of correlation among overall job satisfaction with the age of employees under 25 and tenure of less than 12 months.

Research Methodology

Today's business environment is characterised by weak economies, rapidly changing technology, organisational re-engineering, shortened length of tenure, and outsourcing of peripheral business activities. The pharmaceutical industry is reflective of this environment. Under these circumstances, one should concentrate on removing sources of dissatisfaction from the workplace in order to keep employees busy, productive and satisfied. At the same time, employees need to take responsibility for their own satisfaction in their job. To validate the hypotheses, the research methodology of the study is as follows:

Hypothesis A: Job content and context factors contribute significant amount of variance in pharmaceutical salespersons' overall job satisfaction in South Africa.

Hypothesis B: Demographic clusters of the salesforce differ significantly in their overall level of job satisfaction in South Africa.

Sample

As far sampling is concerned the multistage sampling technique is used to get the representation of the sample. At the first stage, multinational and local pharmaceutical companies operating in Cape Town, South Africa are selected by using disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. At the next stage, salespersons are randomly selected from within each cluster of Multinational and local pharmaceutical companies located at Cape Town.

Data

Of the 300 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, the response rate was 74%. Local pharmaceutical companies returned 157 (52%) while Multinational pharmaceutical companies returned 65 (21%) the filled questionnaires.

Instrument of the Survey

Survey questionnaire is administered to pharmaceutical salesforce to get the qualitative data about their attitude towards job content and context factors. Thus, Likert five point scales are used in order to measure the qualitative responses of the study participants. The survey questionnaire consists of following parts:

1: In this section, respondents are asked to give information regarding gender, age, academic qualification, marital status, company type, job position, and job experience.

2: It contains the measures developed by Spector (1997) to determine satisfaction with “promotion opportunities”, “work itself”, “operating procedures”, “recognition”, and “relationship with co-workers” with responses range from 1 (**strongly disagree**) to 5 (**strongly agree**). It also includes the measures developed by Hackman and Oldham (1974) to determine satisfaction with “job security”, “supervision” and “growth” and “pay and fringe benefits” with responses ranging from 1 (**strongly dissatisfied**) to 5 (**strongly satisfied**). In addition to it, this part of the instrument contains one-item measure of “Overall job satisfaction” as used by Davis (1971) that is read as “Considering all the dimensions of my job, my overall level of job satisfaction is...” The Cronbach’s alpha calculated for the instrument is 0.77.

Note: Care has been taken to exclude one-item measure of overall job satisfaction while calculating internal consistency of the instrument.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

A Stepwise regression analysis is being used to determine the variance in salespersons’ overall job satisfaction extended to job content and context factors. The suitability of the data for regression analysis is examined by exploring the relationship among job content and context factors (independent variables) and the overall job satisfaction (dependent variable) and by plotting the residuals. Correlation matrix indicates low to moderate relationships among job content and context factors, which implies that collinearity is not a problem. Multivariate outliers are identified (by examining Mahalanobis’s distances) and deleted for subsequent analysis. Independent samples t-test is used to determine significant differences in overall job satisfaction among salespersons’ demographic subgroups.

Analysis

The descriptive statistics of job content and context factors and overall job satisfaction are displayed in table A.

Table A
Means and Standard Deviations of Independent and Dependent Variables

Job Content Factors	Mean	SD	Job Context Factors	Mean
Promotion Opportunities 0.56	3.51	0.70	Operating procedures	2.66
Work Itself 0.59	3.68	0.61	Relations with Co-Workers	3.55
Self Recognition 0.84	3.13	0.65	Pay & Fringe Benefits	3.42
Personal Growth 0.95	3.70	0.57	Job Security	3.31
			Supervision	3.66
			Overall Job Satisfaction	3.19
				0.75

As shown in table B, Pearson Correlation Coefficients, reflect moderate to substantial relationships of overall job satisfaction with job content and context factors.

Table B
Relationships of Job Content and Context Factors with Overall Job Satisfaction

Job Content Factors	r	Job Context Factors	r
Promotion Opportunities	0.46*	Operating procedures	0.34*
Work Itself	0.50*	Relationship with Co-Workers	0.51*
Self Recognition	0.48*	Pay and Fringe Benefits	0.35*
Growth	0.53*	Job Security	0.51*
		Supervision	0.46*

* Significant at .01 level: One-tailed

The results of stepwise regression analysis (Table C) reveal that job content and context factors such as “growth”, “relationship with co-workers”, “promotion opportunities”, “recognition”, “job security”, “operating procedures”, “work itself”, and “supervision” explain 77% variance in overall job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salespersons. This is concurrent with the postulated hypothesis A. The analysis reflects that “growth” on its own contributes 28% variance in overall job satisfaction. On

adding “relationship with co-workers” to regression equation, it accounts for additional 19% variance in dependent variable. When “promotion opportunities” is added to regression equation, it explains additional 11% variance in overall job satisfaction. On adding “recognition” to regression equation, it accounts for additional 7% variance in dependent variable. When “job security” is added to the regression equation, it explains about 6% variance in overall job satisfaction. “Operating procedures” predict 3% variance in dependent variable while “work itself” and “supervision” contribute 2% and 1% additional variance in overall job satisfaction respectively. However, the independent variable “pay and fringe benefits” has failed to meet the selection criteria (t-statistic is not significant at alpha level .05) to be entered in the regression equation. This implies that although “pay and fringe benefits” is not less important, yet it has no effect on overall level of salesforce job satisfaction.

Table C

Regression of Dependent Variable (Overall Job Satisfaction) on Independent Variables (Job content and context factors)

Independent Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	R ² Change	B
Growth	0.53	0.28	0.273	0.28	0.28 *
Relations with Co-workers	0.69	0.47	0.469	0.19	0.28 *
Promotion Opportunities	0.76	0.58	0.574	0.11	0.31 *
Rewards and Self Recognition	0.80	0.65	0.642	0.07	0.27 *
Job Security	0.84	0.71	0.703	0.06	0.16 *
Operating Procedures	0.86	0.74	0.731	0.03	0.31 *
Work Itself	0.87	0.76	0.75	0.02	0.19 *
Supervision	0.88	0.77	0.764	0.01	0.14 *
Constant					-3.30 *
F		89.77 *			

* Significant at 0.001 level: One tailed

The results of independent samples t-test (Table D) reflect that significant differences do not exist among salespersons' demographic subgroups regarding their current level of overall job satisfaction, which is inconsistent with the hypothesis B. However, female salespersons feel somewhat more satisfaction with job than male counterparts. Multinational salespersons are somewhat more satisfied with job than those in local companies. Master degree holders are more satisfied with job than those having graduate degree. Married individuals are somewhat more satisfied with job than unmarried counterparts. Experienced sales representatives (Greater than 5 years) feel somewhat more satisfaction with job than those having job experience less than 5 years. Older salespersons (Greater than 35 years) are somewhat more satisfied with job than

younger counterparts (Less than 35 years). Junior salesforce feel more satisfaction with job than senior sales force.

Table D

Comparison of Mean Scores for Overall Job Satisfaction among Salespersons' Demographic Subgroups

Demographic Groups	N	Mean	SD*	T-value	Probability
Male -Total	190	3.17	0.76	0.74	0.46**
Female-Total	32	3.28	0.73		
MNC's Companies	65	3.17	0.88	0.23	0.82**
Local Companies	157	3.20	0.70		
Master degree	35	3.29	0.93	0.63	0.53**
Graduation	187	3.17	0.72		
Married	126	3.21	0.82	0.58	0.56**
Single	96	3.16	0.67		
More Experienced (above 5 years)	99	3.24	0.81	0.94	0.35**
Less Experienced (5 years or less)	123	3.15	0.71		
Older (Over 35 years)	53	3.20	0.81	0.01	0.99**
Younger (35 years or less)	169	3.19	0.74		
Junior Salespeople	101	3.21	0.68	0.34	0.74**
Senior Salespeople	121	3.17	0.81		

* Standard Deviation

** Not Significant at 0.05 levels, Two-tailed

Conclusion and Suggestions

In today's pharmaceutical industry, one must ensure that they employ the right people for the jobs within their organisation, a concept that applies to the entire organisation and includes the managers themselves. At the same time, management must create a work environment that is free from dissatisfies in order that employees can go about achieving the aims and mission of the organisation that are in line with their own career goals and objectives. They should encourage employees to take responsibility for their own job satisfaction by developing an environment that allows them the scope to perform well. In this environment, employees need to accept that responsibility and take steps to build on their own satisfaction.

This study has attempted to determine the amount of variance in overall job satisfaction among frontline pharmaceutical sales force at Cape Town, South Africa. Besides, it has investigated whether demographic subgroups of the salesforce are statistically different regarding their overall job satisfaction.

The results of regression analysis indicate that job content factors such as “growth”, “relationship with co-workers”, “promotion opportunities”, and “recognition” as well as job context factors such as “job security”, “operating procedures”, “work itself”, and “supervision” explain significant proportion of variation in overall job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salesforce. The study findings lead to the conclusion that five job content and context factors such as “growth”, “relationship with co-workers”, “promotion opportunities”, “recognition”, and “job security” can contribute drastically to improve overall level of job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salesforce. Therefore, it is advisable that sales and human resource management of both multinational and local pharmaceutical companies should pay special attention to these factors in order to improve productivity and performance of their salesforce. As regards growth and development, the management should evaluate managerial practices for the participation and autonomy of salespersons.

To meet their growth and development expectations, empowerment and involvement are the best strategies to promote perceptions of control on their career, reinforcement of competence and internalization of objectives on their part. Regarding relationship with co-workers, supervisors should develop such a climate in which salespersons recognize and admire one another on successful selling strategies and tactics and avoid highlighting mistakes and weaknesses. Management should devise and execute effective communication strategies to promote the sense of job security among salesforce. As regards promotion opportunities, it is advisable that salespersons to be empowered with more job responsibilities while enjoying the benefits like a manager.

The policy of promoting the salespersons form within the company may help improving their level of satisfaction with job resulting in more productivity and performance. Decision makers should periodically review the rewards and recognition systems in place in light of the many contemporary changes taking place, especially in pharmaceutical selling, to determine whether or not the current reward and recognition systems are meeting with the expectations of their unique salesforce.

Demographic subgroups of the salesforce are not found to be statistically different in their current level of overall job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that

demographic variables do not contribute variations in overall job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salesforce. The data analysis also suggests that pharmaceutical industry is male dominated; therefore it is advisable that human resource management should put more efforts to promote gender diversity among pharmaceutical salespersons and also to facilitate the female cluster.

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Note: This study was done when the first author was in Cape Town, South Africa in 2009.