THE JOB AND LIFE SATISFACTION RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Organisations have always been striving for higher performance from their employees. The early management proponents were influenced primarily by scientific management principles and altogether neglected the human dynamics involved in the process. The famous Hawthorne experiments by Elton Mayo shifted the focus from 'Taylorism' and paved the way for the human relations movement. The decades that followed witnessed burgeoning literature on employee attitudes as a primary variable to influence performance, with job satisfaction and life satisfaction permeating practically most of the research owing to their hypothesised interrelationships to higher performance. The research, though not conclusive either on the relationship or causality between the two variables, the issue thus remains contested.

Building on this, the present paper attempts to examine the available published research in the domain and explore the relationship and causality between the two constructs, supporting it with evidence from the Indian dairy industry. The findings endorse the "top-down" model implying that life satis*faction has a higher influence on job satisfaction.*

INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation has always attracted practitioners and researchers alike, with researchers proposing various models and theories recommending many variables, which presumably might lead to increases in employee motivation.   One factor which has always been arguable in the literary domain is job satisfaction, due to its intuitive appeal to influence higher performance, and thus, has been the prime focus of most of the studies. This presumption gained almost instant acceptance as it complemented the values endorsed by the human relations movement. The famous Hawthorne experiments from 1924-1933, set the preamble for future studies on job satisfaction, which was further accelerated by the Human Relations movement. The thirties and forties witnessed a proliferation of studies on job satisfaction owing to its

hypothesised relationship to higher performance (Lawler & Porter, 1967). However, the years that followed witnessed the addition of another variable - life satisfaction, as a crucial variable influencing employee motivation. Work and life have always been presumed to be the two most important domains of an individual's life and hence have attracted researchers' interest in identifying how the two influence each other, unidirectionally or bidirectionally. However, despite the intuitive appeal and brimming empirical evidence, the relationship between the two constructs has always been debatable among researchers. Over the years, experts have proposed diverse arguments on the possible correlation between the two constructs. Years of research, though not conclusive and unanimous, however, had unanimity that there cannot be a simple, all-pervasive answer to the relationship between the two constructs which shall apply to everybody, at all times and under all circumstances. The prime concern thus shifted to ascertain whether these two variables are related to each other or whether the relationship between them is spurious. Additionally, if the empirical evidence displays a positive relationship, then the next question is regarding the causality between the two. However, the vast empirical evidence is inconclusive and thus presents divergent recommendations on causality between job and life satisfaction. It has become more like the causality dilemma "*Which came first, the chicken or the egg*?"

Against this backdrop, the paper is structured into two sections. The first section seeks to comprehend the existing literature on the correlation and causality between job and life satisfaction. The second section seeks to further validate the approaches suggested by the literature with results from a survey on the Indian dairy sector.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature is loaded to the brim trying to establish causality between job and life satisfaction. However, an adroit analysis reveals that the extant literature on their relationship can be categorised into three distinct approaches: spill-over, compensatory and segmentation. The author attempts to trace theoretical explanations and empirical evidence to support all three approaches.

The **segmentation approach** is based on the presumption that individuals simply perceive jobs to be instrumental in earning a living to support their family and/or as a means to finance their leisure activities which are of real interest to them. Being on the job as an employee is just one

of the roles played by an individual and the moment an individual moves out of his workplace, he gets into another role of a father, son, husband, wife etc. The proponents of this approach thus assume that individuals respond to each role independently and hence there is little or almost negligible effect of the satisfaction derived from one role to influence the satisfaction level of other role/s. Based on this theoretical argument, this approach thus suggests a weak or non-significant relation between job and life satisfaction.

Robert Dubin (1956) supported this approach when he concluded that work and its locale were not central life interests to workers and thus job satisfaction plays an almost negligible role in influencing life satisfaction. A similar conclusion was given by Andrews and Withey (1974) wherein they concluded satisfaction with one's family and non-work activities have the highest relative importance while measuring life satisfaction and hence feelings about one's job had a rather mild impact on their general well-being. The results by Andrews and Withey (1974) found further endorsement in a study by White (1981) specifying that family life, friendships and non-work activities were at an advantage over job satisfaction while predicting life satis-faction. Consistent results were reported by London, Crandall and Seals in 1977, highlighting the importance of non-job variables like satisfaction with family and friends for a holistic life. A study by Weaver in 1978 concluded that for a large majority of employees covered by the study, happiness in life is dependent on happiness from a job as well as happiness derived from other domains in life, thus further endorsing previous research that job satisfaction is not solely responsible to influence the overall happiness of most employees. Similar results were reported in the meta-analysis by Near, Rice & Hunt (1980) wherein they concluded that work/job does not play a very substantial role in enhancing the total life satisfaction of most adults. Their results highlighted that the empirical results for the proposed relationship between the two constructs are not as strong as is presumed theoretically and convincing intuitively.

The empirical work conducted to appraise the causality between job and life satisfaction, though substantial, was primarily based on cross-sectional data, thereby challenging the pre-dictability of a causal relationship. To fill this gap Near conducted a longitudinal study over the period 1972 and 1977, as the use of longitudinal data provides stronger support to establish causal relationships. His study concluded that the presence of job satisfaction at time 1 had no direct influence on life satisfaction at time 2, and the presence of life satisfaction at time 1 had no direct influence on job satisfaction at time 2. However, Near argued that although job and

life satisfaction did not influence each other over two time periods spread over five years, it is not definitive proof to conclude that they do not influence each other. He argued that there is a possibility of the effect getting diluted over a long period of five years, and hence causal relationships could not be identified in the long term. To address this Rode and Near conducted another study in 2005 measuring the effect over three years. The results were, however, the same as in the earlier study by Near measuring causality over five years. The findings given by Near, neither matched the findings given by Orpen (1978) who concluded the causality to flow from JS to LS nor did it match the findings of Schmitt and Mellon (1980) who concluded the causality from life satisfaction to job satisfaction.

An interesting observation was however made by Brayfield and Wells in 1957 when they identified that the causality between the two constructs was influenced by gender. They found no significant relationship between the two variables for women respondents, but for men respondents, the results were strikingly different as job satisfaction played a critical role in predicting their life satisfaction. However, the results were also challenged in later studies by white (1981) and by Kavanagh and Halpern in 1977, as both studies found no significant relationship between the variables across gender.

In its entirety, with sufficient empirical evidence to its credit, the segmentation approach assumes that work/job does not enjoy a supreme status in people's lives and hence satisfaction/dissatisfaction on the job fails to affect satisfaction with life. This approach, thus presumes a sharp segmentation between work and life domains, on the premise that as societies evolved, work is no longer central to people's lives and they choose different hobbies or involve themselves in cultural and social activities which make up for their life satisfaction.

The **compensatory** approach as the name suggests, assumes that either of them – job satisfaction or life satisfaction tries to make up for what is missing in the other, thus signifying a negative relationship between the two variables. This approach is based on the presumption that when individuals have routine and/or boring jobs, they compensate it with challenging activities off the job. If their jobs are too challenging, they would not like to go for challenging off-job activities. They would rather pursue activities which are more comforting and relaxed. Thus, individuals dissatisfied or less satisfied with their jobs are likely to compensate for it by finding enjoyment in other domains of life. Thus, a negative relationship exists between jobs and life. The compensatory model has received an almost negligible response, as the approach

has proved to hold only for jobs with extremely undesirable features. As such, the compensatory model found empirical support in studies involving employees working in highly stressful occupations such as coal mining (Dennis, Henriques and Slaughter,1956) and fishing (Tunstall, 1962). Employees working in such occupations often try to compensate for the stress of the job by involving themselves in leisure activities outside the realm of their jobs to improve their life satisfaction.

The **spillover approach** is undoubtedly the most popular and acceptable amongst academi-cians and practitioners. This approach presumes that satisfaction/dissatisfaction derived from one domain is likely to spill over to the other domain, and hence there exists a positive rela-tionship between the two constructs. The approach seems theoretically rational as satisfaction in one life domain (job or life) is bound to have implications for other life domains (job or life). Though the empirical evidence is skewed in favour of the spillover approach, however, the conclusions lack unanimity over the direction of causality. A large number of studies argue theoretically and have empirical evidence to endorse that job satisfaction influences life satis-faction, and an equally good number of studies argue that life satisfaction has a potential influ-ence on job satisfaction. Still, another school of thought asserts that the causality is bi-direc-tional, with both of them influencing each other and in turn also getting influenced by each other. To address this lively debate, an analysis of all three approaches thus becomes desirable.

Job satisfaction leads to life satisfaction

Work has always been a means of living and the working population spends most of their waking hours at work (Quinn et al., 2016). Considering the time individuals spend on their jobs, it seems almost impossible to assume that it shall not leave any impact (positive or nega-tive) on their lives. Individuals do carry home the baggage of pleasant or awkward feelings or incidents at work. Job not only provides monetary benefits for subsistence but also bestows intangible gains like security, prestige, confidence, a sense of accomplishment, recognition, honour and dignity, which go a long way in influencing life satisfaction and hence, one can safely endorse the notion that job satisfaction influences life satisfaction.

The initial empirical support for the Spill-over approach came from Kornhauser(1965), who proclaimed that workers who experienced dissatisfaction in their jobs, had reported unhappi-ness in their personal lives also. They did not report compensating job dissatisfaction by finding

alternate enjoyment in other domains of life, thus suggesting no support for the compensatory hypothesis. The findings of Kornhauser found endorsement from Iris and Barrett (1972), in their study on male supervisors when their results reported that respondents who were high on job satisfaction were also high on life satisfaction and vice versa. Martin Meissner (1971), in his paper titled "*The Long Arm of the Job*", suggested that the burden at work - light or heavy, happy or sad is carried home, thus supporting the spillover approach. An individual spends approximately forty hours every week on the job which is about one-third of his waking hours, so the impact a job has on the worker cannot be easily shaken off on the way back home. Similar results were reported by Rousseau (1978), in a study conducted on employees of an electronic firm and radio station. Rousseau's findings supported the spillover model and reported the causality to flow from job to life. Evans and Bartolome (1980), also supported the causality to flow from job to life. Their results supported the spillover approach and confirmed that the direction of the spill is from job to private life and additionally emphasised that the spill is essentially negative. Their respondents reported that tensions at work are more likely to get spilled over into life. The respondents found it difficult to recollect instances when their personal life had affected their work life, except in extreme cases such as death, divorce or a very serious medical emergency. They, thus endorsed the causality to flow from job to life and not vice-versa.

To find more accurate answers to causality, Orpen conducted a cross-lagged correlational technique in 1978 and obtained data at two-time intervals which were a year apart. The results endorsed the spillover approach and additionally provided empirical evidence on the direction of the spill. The cross-lagged correlation between job satisfaction at Time 1 and non-work/life satisfaction at Time 2 was quite higher as compared to non-work satisfaction at Time 1 and work satisfaction at Time 2, thus, suggesting that work satisfaction has a stronger effect on non-work/life satisfaction. Another such attempt was carried out by Chacko in 1983. Chacko also argued that as the empirical work is primarily based on static correlation, the results obtained cannot provide conclusive evidence of the causality between the two variables. His study went a step ahead of Orpen's work as he collected data over four years as against one year. His conclusions Ls has on JS. To integrate the diverse empirical findings on the suggested relationship between JS and LS in a much more systematic way, Tiat et al., (1989) conducted a meta-analysis of 34 studies. After correcting for all sampling and measurement errors, their results

reported a correlation of 0.44, thus endorsing a strong positive connection between the two variables.

An interesting addition to the extant literature was provided by a large number of studies reporting the conclusions of the spillover approach from job satisfaction to life satisfaction to remain unaffected even when the construct of job satisfaction was segregated into intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Factors such as pay, prestige, working conditions and the like are responsible for influencing extrinsic job satisfaction whereas the core job itself influences intrinsic job satisfaction. White (1981), concluded that a job which can provide recognition, prestige and higher monetary rewards shall assume higher importance in people's lives and thus has a positive impact in enhancing their overall life satisfaction also, thus supporting the crucial role played by extrinsic factors to enhance life satisfaction. The study reported that intrinsic factors even when rated favourably by employees failed to significantly influence their life satisfaction. Similar results supporting the spillover approach to extrinsic job satisfaction were obtained in a study by Steiner and Truxillo (1987) when they concluded that extrinsic factors related to the job had a direct relationship with life satisfaction whereas the intrinsic factors related to job failed to significantly influence the level of life satisfaction of individual(s) covered under survey. However, it is also suggested that the intrinsic outcomes shall have an impact on life satisfaction only in situations where an individual places high importance on work.

Life satisfaction leads to job satisfaction

Life satisfaction is considered an important and all-pervasive aim of all individuals. Popularly known as the 'top-down model', the approach assumes that life satisfaction leads to job satisfaction. This approach is based on the theoretical argument that an individual with higher life satisfaction is more likely to have a higher positive perception towards his or her career and work as compared to a person with lower life satisfaction. If research reveals a positive answer to this approach, then it will most likely influence the management policies aimed at increasing employee satisfaction and thereby productivity. Employers can reap economic benefits by assisting or supporting employees solve their personal life problems as it shall help improve their job performance.

An obvious logic for this approach is found in the Cognitive Dissonance theory as proposed by Festinger in 1957. The theory argues that individuals have a strong inner drive to have

harmony across distinct life domains. Resultantly, to achieve harmony and/or reduce discord between life domains, individuals satisfied with their life in general also tend to feel/find satisfaction with their jobs as well and vice-versa. The valence-expectancy theory suggested by Hackman and Lawler (1971) also suggests the causality to flow from life satisfaction to job satisfaction. Similar conclusions were reported by Schmitt and Mellon in 1980, in their study involving young, low-level job holders as against managerial or professional jobholders. For this category of the workforce, outside interests and hobbies may be more important and their satisfaction in these domains may get carried over to their jobs, thus supporting life to job satisfaction. Support for the top-down model was also received from the work of Hagmaier, T, et al., (1980), in their longitudinal study concluding that the causal association between the two variables is best represented by the top-down model i.e. life satisfaction leads the way to job satisfaction. The longitudinal study by Judge and Watanabe (1993) also supported the 'top-down' approach, thus clearly revalidating that the impact of life satisfaction in influencing job satisfaction is much greater than the impact of job satisfaction in influencing life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction and job satisfaction are bidirectional

The above two approaches have restricted the relationship between job and life satisfaction to flow one way, from either job-to-life satisfaction or life-to-job satisfaction and have further validated it with empirical evidence supporting either of the notions to hold for the selected sample. This approach, however, offers a much broader perspective arguing that both the variables might be mutually related to each other and hence it is likely that they are interactive, with each possibly affecting the other and in return getting affected by it. Job satisfaction may have a significant influence in enhancing life satisfaction as salary and positional esteem not only contribute to better job satisfaction but also contribute to an enriching life experience. Likewise, life satisfaction, such as marital happiness is likely to positively impact one's job performance. Thus, both variables are mutually interrelated.

The study by Keon and McDonald (1982) provided empirical evidence to support the mutual interdependence between the constructs, arguing that job and life satisfaction are affective spheres of one's life and thus can influence one another. Unanue et al., (2017), endorsed this view as their study also concluded that high job satisfaction positively influences life satisfaction, which in turn positively influences job satisfaction, and vice versa thereby creating a vicious cycle which is beneficial for both, individual and organisational well-being.

The three approaches elucidated above as propounded by Wilensky (1960) are not mutually exclusive and hence it is always possible that all three approaches are present simultaneously in a single work setting. Within the same work context, some workers may respond to a bad work situation by compensating it with better leisure activities whereas another set of workers in an identical situation might produce an opposite spillover effect. Thus, while a dull, repetitive job may stimulate some workers to compensate for it by seeking enjoyable leisure alternatives, the same job might produce habits of passive or negative behaviours back home in other workers. Judge and Watanabe in their longitudinal study in 1994 supported this notion. They argued that the empirical evidence seeks validation for only one approach, totally disregarding the other two. Hence, more detailed research is required before concluding the causality of the relationship between the two constructs, with special emphasis to be given on acknowledging the likelihood of all three approaches coexisting in a particular work set-up.

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

Sample and data collection

To study the correlation and causality of the proposed relationship between job and life satisfaction, responses were obtained from employees of two leading dairy firms (names kept anonymous) as promised to the HR heads. One of the organisations has its Head office in New Delhi, India, and the other is a market leader in South India having its Head office in Hyderabad. The study covered all employees from junior and middle management across all functional areas. The study strictly adhered to principles of ethical conduct such as voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents which is essential to ensure factual responses. To ensure mature responses, a minimum of 5 years of total work experience was set as a filter.

In all, 416 valid (217 responses from one organization and 199 from the other organization) responses were obtained from a total target population of 800, thereby indicating a response rate of more than 50%. The average age of respondents varied from 27 to 62 years. Of the total respondents, 92.07 % (N = 383) were male and 7.93 % (N = 33) were female. Age-wise distribution revealed that 26% fell in the age bracket of 25-35 years, 43% belonged to the age bracket of 35-45 years, 25% were in the age group of 45-55 years and only 6% were in the age bracket of 55-65 years. The study used self-reporting to assess their job and life satisfaction. A seven

point Likert rating scale was used (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree).

Measures used

The study used global measures to capture job satisfaction as they allow the respondent to respond from a much broader perspective by not limiting their responses to the facets mentioned in the survey questions. However, multiple questions to measure global job satisfaction were used, as the use of multiple questions enhances the reliability of the instrument. The Job Satisfaction Index (JSI) was developed by Brayfield and Rothe in 1951 and is the most used scale to measure global job satisfaction. The scale has stood the reliability test with a Cronbach Alpha score of .87. Though the original version of the scale has 18 items, the smaller adaptation of the scale with five items is normally used (Judge, Bono and Locke, 2000). A sample question is *"I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job"*.

To measure life satisfaction 'The Satisfaction With Life Scale' (SWLS) was used. SWLS has demonstrated reliable and valid results in previous studies with good psychometric characteristics (Pavot and Diener, 1993). Resultantly, it is widely used to measure an individual's satisfaction with his/her life as a whole. It is a five-item, 7-point Likert scale, wherein all five statements are phrased positively, and the scores can be summed up to arrive at a total score ranging from 5 to 35 (Pavot and Diener, 2007). A sample question is "*In most ways, my life is close to my ideal*".

Results

To ensure that the survey responses have good internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha scores for both domains were determined using IBM SPSS statistics 22. The Cronbach Alpha score stood at 0.845 and 0.838 respectively for job and life satisfaction. As both have an alpha value higher than the acceptable limit of 0.7, it ensures that the data has good internal consistency.

To ascertain the correlation between JS and LS Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient was calculated. With a positive correlation coefficient of 0.403, at a 5% level of significance, the present survey reveals that both JS and LS have moderate to strong correlations and they move in the same direction. To ascertain the direction of causality, the regression coefficient was calculated. Table 1 depicts the regression coefficient with job satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Table 1: Regression Coefficient of Regression Model of JS on LS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.642	1.210		7.145	.000
	LS	.719	.046	.611	15.701	.000

a. Dependent Variable: JS

The p-value for the LS coefficient is shown as 0.000, indicating a very low p-value (less than 0.001) thereby confirming the statistical significance of the proposed relationship. It suggests that LS as a predictor variable has a significant and positive effect on the dependent variable (JS), thus indicating that as LS increases, JS also tends to increase. The model suggested is as follows:

$$JS = 8.642 + 0.719*(LS) \tag{1}$$

This regression equation represents the estimated relationship between the dependent variable (JS) and the independent variable (LS), suggesting that for every one-unit increase in LS, JS increases by 0.719 units, keeping other variables constant. The constant term of 8.642 represents the estimated value of JS when LS is zero. Table 2 depicts the regression coefficient with life satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Table 2: Regression Coefficient of Regression model of LS on JS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.763	.923		12.751	.000
	JS	.519	.033	.611	15.701	.000

a. Dependent Variable: LS

the p-value for the JS coefficient is shown as 0.000, indicating a very low p-value (less than 0.001) and thus confirming that the relationship is statistically significant. It suggests that JS as a predictor variable has a significant and positive effect on the dependent variable (LS), thus indicating that as JS increases, LS also tends to increase. The model suggested is as follows:

$$\text{LS} = 11.763 + 0.519*(\text{JS}) \tag{2}$$

This equation represents the estimated relationship between the dependent variable (LS) and the predictor variable (JS) in the linear regression model. The equation indicates that for every unit increase in JS, the estimated value of LS increases by 0.519 units, with all other variables kept constant. The constant term of 11.763 represents the estimated value of LS when JS is zero.

The results thus help the author conclude that the impact of life satisfaction on job satisfaction is much stronger than the effect job satisfaction has on life satisfaction.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Increasing organisational performance by motivating employees to perform to the best of their competency has always been the focus of management practitioners and researchers have followed suit with the intent to provide them with conclusive solutions. Resultantly, job and life satisfaction of employees have always been the most widely researched variables due to their intuitive appeal. This is evident as the literature is loaded with studies trying to establish consensus on the causality between the two variables. Three approaches - segmentation, compensatory and spillover have been theoretically supported and empirically validated by researchers, however, the results are skewed in favour of the spillover approach and also support that the causality runs from job to life satisfaction.

However, the conclusions are conflicting, part of which may be attributable to different samples used across studies and/or using different statistical techniques. However, an adroit literary analysis compels the author to believe that there cannot be a universal model of the said relationship between job and life satisfaction, which applies to everybody, at all times and under all circumstances. A review by Kabanoff (1980) also concluded that the vast empirical literature is not unanimous and thus does not strongly advocate either of the three approaches.

More empirical research on this issue is necessary if the relationships among the work and non-work domains of employees' lives are to be understood.

The present work has focussed on the employees of the Indian dairy sector as this sector has witnessed phenomenal development since the launch of "Operation Flood" by Dr. Verghese Kurien, in 1970. Despite its stellar progress, the dairy sector has received negligible academic attention vis-a-vis research studies related to human resources. The sector has been predominantly unorganised, but the pace with which big organisations are entering this domain also supports the need to have research on their human capital.

The published literature has reported the presence of a significant positive correlation between job and life satisfaction ranging from 0.30 (Near, Rice and Hunt, 1978) to 0.44 (Tait et al., 1989), indicating that the two variables not only share a strong relationship but also move in the same direction. This means that when one increases the other also increases and vice-versa. The results of the present study with a strong positive correlation ($r = .403$) between job and life satisfaction are very much consistent with the literary findings. Having established a positive significant correlation between the variables, regression analysis was conducted to establish a causal relationship between LS and JS. The result supports the '*top-down*' perspective as advocated by Judge and Watanabe in 1993, implying that life satisfaction has a positive significant influence on job satisfaction. Findings such as these validate prior research and have pragmatic implications for management practitioners desirous of increasing their employees' job satisfaction with the intent to improve their performance to also focus on their employees' life satisfaction, as it plays an appreciable role in influencing job satisfaction.

Finally, it would be remiss if the limitations of the study were not mentioned when interpreting the results. The study has used cross-sectional data, hence causality cannot be conclusive. The use of longitudinal data certainly gives better and more accurate results. The author claims causality purely based on theoretical logic which is supported by prior findings. Secondly, the present survey uses self-reported data, which is often accused of leniency, and/or personal bias. Further research including different raters such as supervisors and peers shall provide a fair comparison to arrive at more convincing conclusions. More detailed studies involving moderators and mediating variables shall provide a more elaborate and candid analysis of the stated relationship between the two constructs. A study by Bamudo and Kopelman in 1980 reported that education, income, occupation, gender, and job longevity are a few variables which are

found to often moderate the relationship between job and life satisfaction. Marital status family size, financial strength and individual personality can be a few other potential mediating variables, which may influence the results, hence future studies can include them to have a holistic solution. Besides this, the present work has been undertaken on employees of the dairy sector only, hence more research across different industries, involving a larger sample size is desirable before the results can be generalised.

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