

Job Satisfaction among Information Technology Professionals

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Abstract: The present study is an empirical research into the growth of a new profession, namely the information technology profession, in the rapidly evolving society. This article focuses on the job satisfaction the Bangalore-based IT professionals derive and their level of commitment to the job. In the light of its scope, it could be taken as a venture in the field of sociology of professions which has emerged as a leading segment of sociology. The sociology of professions is a study of the various professions on the one hand and the practitioners of the said professions and their experiences, on the other. Such sociology is mainly concerned with the existing workforce in industrial and urban societies even as it extends to the new professions that may crop up every now and then. The present research seeks to probe into the intricate realities confronting the IT professionals in the Indian setting. The geographical universe of the study is restricted to IT professionals based out of Bangalore city. The researcher has analysed the primary data collected from two categories of respondents, namely, IT professionals and IT consultants for the purpose, to ensure that the findings are as accurate and as unbiased as possible. The researcher concludes that job satisfaction tends to be rather high in IT professionals in the higher age bracket. Job satisfaction tends to be lower in the case of IT professionals in the lower age bracket. Upon analysing the collated primary data furnished by the IT professionals and the consultants, the researcher concludes that the work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on their job satisfaction levels.

Keywords: Consultants, Information Technology, Job Satisfaction, Practitioners; Professionals

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I. INTRODUCTION

The present study is an empirical endeavour into the growth of a new profession in the rapidly evolving national economy. This study focuses on the job satisfaction the Bangalore-based IT professionals derive and their commitment to the job. In the light of its scope, it could be taken as a venture in the field of sociology of professions which has emerged as a leading segment of sociology. The sociology of professions is a study of the various professions on the one hand and the practitioners of the said professions and their experiences, on the other. Such sociology is mainly concerned with the existing workforce in industrial and urban societies even as it extends to the new professions that may crop up every now and then. Much has been said and written about the job satisfaction derived by those who are into professional occupations in sociological literature. But only a few studies have been undertaken on the job satisfaction derived by professionals in India. Further, the examination of job satisfaction obtaining in IT professionals is of considerable significance given the implications of their job satisfaction levels for the technological advancement of the national economy and for the advancement of society and its members.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The IT industry is knowledge-based and in the case of India, has been a major driver of the country's economy too. At times, the IT exports of the country have been so buoyant that they have led the country to achieve a surplus on the current account of the country's overall balance of payments. A closer look at the industry reveals that it is the human resources or the intellectual capital possessed by the said human resources, to be more precise, which have been behind the phenomenal growth clocked by the sector. It is thus essential that the people behind the IT industry are helped to operate in an ecosystem where they can look forward to a healthy work-life balance and contribute optimally to the growth of the industry they work for and the development of the country they are citizens of. This is possible only if the associated stakeholders ensure that the people behind the IT industry are in a position to achieve job satisfaction. It is this problem the present article focuses on.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Morse and Weiss found that the middle class worker had felt a sense of accomplishment about his work (Morse & Weiss, 1955). Further, the middle class worker was more concerned about the quality and volume of his output and his contribution to the workplace. The most important aspect of job satisfaction was that it was a function of the person's status at the workplace. According to Inkeles, job satisfaction being a function of one's status at the workplace was true across national lines in the industrialized west. He also noticed variations in the extent and types of satisfaction. The variations obtained at and across the various hierarchical levels (Inkeles, 1960). Fried in his research into West End working class residents of Boston, inferred that working class people were highly satisfied with their jobs (Marc, 1973). In other words, the income from their occupation allowed them to support their families. Hiremath assessed the extent and ascertained the determinants of job satisfaction in workers in an industrially backward region of the state of Karnataka, India (Hiremath, 1994). According to him, the Indian working class found it difficult to come to terms with the demands placed on it by the industry given the agrarian origin of the former. This incompatibility dented their job satisfaction and workplace commitment at least in the field of industry. Weibull analysed the job satisfaction of officers of the armed forces and inferred that the younger officers were on the whole least satisfied with job conditions. All the same, they were most optimistic about their working conditions in the days to come.

Scope of the research

The present study dwells empirically on the intricate realities related to the IT profession in general and the Bangalore-based IT professionals in particular. It also seeks to ascertain the career patterns and job satisfaction levels of IT professionals as manifested by their professional affiliations, allegiance and competence. Apparently IT professionals are individuals in their own right, with their own attitudes and orientations towards the various components that characterise their profession.

Objective & Hypothesis of the research

The objective of the research is to ascertain the influence of age and work experience on the job satisfaction levels of the IT professionals. In other words, the research seeks to ascertain whether a correlation obtains between the age and work experience of the IT professionals on the one hand and their job satisfaction, on the other. The study proposes to test the following hypothesis: *The work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals.*

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study seeks to probe into the intricate realities pertaining to IT (Information Technology) professionals in an Indian setting. The findings of the present research are primarily based on the relevant data gathered through the introduction of an interview schedule in Bangalore city. The instrument was so designed as to gather the relevant data from the respondents. The instrument was pre-tested in a pilot study in order to enhance its validity and reliability. Thus, in order to qualitatively assess the validity of the present study, the researcher decided to make use of appropriate research techniques. The present study is based on a sample of one hundred IT professionals and thirty IT consultants operating from Bangalore City. These professionals belong to IT and its other segments like ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) and BPO (Business process outsourcing) working at various hierarchical levels in the organisations from entry level officers to controlling officers.

Primary data has been collected from the respondents, viz., one hundred IT professionals and thirty IT consultants. Secondary data has been collected from the publications of the IT industry body NASSCOM, reputed IT journals, magazines and newspapers, in hard version and soft version.

IT professionals: Simple random sampling under the probability sampling method was undertaken to select the IT professionals since it gave each element an equal and independent chance of being selected. Accordingly, Interview Schedules were administered to two hundred IT professionals. The first one hundred Interview Schedules received from the respondents, duly completed, were selected for the study.

IT consultants: Given the rather limited number of IT consultants operating in the vicinity where the researcher lives and the time constraint, purposive or judgement sampling under the non-probability method was deployed to select the IT consultants. Applying a minimum exposure of five years to IT consultancy services, the researcher selected thirty such respondents. This criterion, according to the researcher, is the most appropriate one for the present study. What is important is the typicality and the relevance of the sampling units to the study and not their overall representativeness to the population. Thus it guarantees the inclusion of the relevant elements in the sample. Probability sampling plans cannot give such a guarantee.

Interview schedules, specially designed for the purpose, were administered to the respondents for collection of primary data. Non-parametric statistical units were used to test the association between some qualitative characters and conclusions were drawn on the basis of formation of H_0 and H_1 . Primary data has

sometimes been deduced through constant topic-oriented discussions with the respondents. It is possible that a certain degree of subjectivity, even if negligible, has influenced their views.

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V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the following paragraphs, the primary data collected from the one hundred IT professionals is analysed. Received wisdom has it that with age, one’s quality of judgement improves. Hence the researcher collected the data pertaining to the respondents’ age. Their replies to the query appear in the following Table.

Table-1: Age of the respondents

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Up to 30 years	39	39
31 years to 45 years	34	34
46 years & above	27	27
Total	100	100

The data presented in the above table reveals that significant proportion (39 percent) of the respondents come under the age group of 30 years. More than one-third (34 percent) of the respondents fall under the age group of 31 years to 45 years. And 27 respondents accounting for 27 percent are 46 years & above. On the whole sizeable proportion (73 percent) of the respondents are up to the age of 45 years.

The relevance of educational qualification to a knowledge-based activity like IT hardly warrants an emphasis. Hence the researcher collected the data regarding their educational qualification.

Table-2: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Educational Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Graduates	59	59
Post graduates	28	28
Doctorates	13	13
Total	100	100

The data reveal that majority (59 percent) of the respondents are graduates and 28 respondents accounting for 28 percent are post-graduates. And the rest of the 13 respondents accounting for 13 percent are doctorates. It is heartening to note that significant proportion (41 percent) of the respondents are highly educated. The following table reveals the data pertaining to job satisfaction.

Table-3: Job Satisfaction of the Respondents

Level of satisfaction	Number of respondents	Percentage
High	57	57
Low	43	43
Total	100	100

The data reveals that majority (57 percent) of the respondents are with the higher level of job satisfaction. Whereas, 43 respondents accounting for 43 percent reveal that their level of satisfaction with the job is low. With the respondents communicating their job satisfaction levels, the following Table examines whether a correlation obtains between the two variables.

Table-4: Correlation between job satisfaction and the age of the respondents

Age of the respondents	Level of job satisfaction		Total
	Low	High	
Up to 30 years	25 (58.14)	14 (24.56)	39 (39.00)
31 to 45 years	16 (37.21)	18 (31.58)	34 (34.00)
46 years & above	2 (4.65)	25 (43.86)	27 (27.00)
Total	43 (100.00)	57 (100.00)	100 (100.00)

(Source: Primary data; figures in parentheses represent their percentage to the column total)

The Table reveals is rather tell-tale: Of the 43 of the 100 respondents who term their job satisfaction level as “low”: Only two out of the 43 (accounting for a paltry 4.65 percent) are at least 46 years of age. 16 out of the 43 (accounting for 37.21 percent) are above 31 years but below 45 years of age. As many as 25 out of the 43 (accounting for 58.14 percent) are up to 30 years of age.

More of junior respondents (in terms of age) derive a low level of job satisfaction relative to their senior counterparts in absolute terms. The converse would also sound fair considering what the Table reveals – more of the respondents in the lowest age bracket term their job satisfaction level as low in their category in absolute terms and relative terms. Of the 57 of the 100 respondents who term their job satisfaction level as “high”: As many as 25 out of the 57 (accounting for 43.86 percent) are at least 46 years of age. 18 out of the 57 (accounting for 31.58 percent) are above 31 years but below 45 years of age. Only 14 out of the 57 (accounting for 24.56 percent) are up to 30 years of age.

Taking a little liberty with these facts and figures: One can infer that more of senior respondents (in terms of age) derive a high level of job satisfaction relative to their junior counterparts at least in absolute terms. As one gains more experience as an IT professional, one’s satisfaction with the job tends to rise. The corollary is that the younger crop of IT professionals over a period of time will get to derive a high level of job satisfaction triggered possibly by their rising levels of achievement and their rising levels of role fulfilment.

With the respondents revealing their levels of satisfaction with the job, the researcher sought to know from them if they believed that work experience has a bearing on their job satisfaction. Their replies to the query appear in the following Table.

Table-5: Work Experience has a bearing on Job Satisfaction

Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	61	61
No	39	39
Total	100	100

The data represents that majority (61 percent) of the respondents opined that work experience has a bearing on job satisfaction. The remaining 39 respondents accounting for 39 percent would beg to differ. The factors contributing to satisfaction level such as, privileges, interpersonal relations, working-environment, client relationship, the organization's facilities, career development, and the scarcity of human resources (HRs) play a significant role in the gratification of the practitioners associated with the IT profession.

Analysis of primary data collected from consultant respondents

In the following paragraphs, the primary data collected from the 30 consultant respondents is analysed. With the IT professional respondents revealing their levels of satisfaction with the job, the researcher sought to know from the consultant respondents if they too believed that work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals. Their replies to the query appear in the following Table.

Table-6: work experience has a bearing on the job satisfaction of IT professionals

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	11	37
No	19	63
Total	30	100

The data presented in the above table reveals that majority (63 percent) of the respondents have negative response to the impact of work experience on job satisfaction. However, remaining 11 respondents accounting for 37 percent aver that work experience has a bearing on job satisfaction.

Findings of the study:

In the following paragraphs, a summarised version of the findings arrived at in respect of the two categories of respondents is furnished.

IT professional respondents

The data suggest that majority of the respondents with higher level of job satisfaction with increasing age. More of the junior respondents (in terms of age) derive a low level of job satisfaction relative to their senior counterparts in absolute terms. The converse would also sound fair considering what the Table reveals – more of the respondents in the lowest age bracket term their job satisfaction level as low in their category in absolute terms and relative terms. Taking a little liberty with these facts and figures: One can infer that more of senior respondents (in terms of age) derive a high level of job satisfaction relative to their junior counterparts at least in

absolute terms. As one gains more experience as an IT professional, one’s satisfaction with the job tends to rise. The corollary is that the younger crop of IT professionals over a period of time will get to derive a high level of job satisfaction triggered possibly by their rising levels of achievement and their rising levels role fulfilment. 61 respondents accounting for 61 percent aver that work experience has a bearing on job satisfaction. It is hearting to note that significant proportion (41 percent) of the respondents are highly educated. It has been observed that majority of the respondents from IT consultant category have opined that work experience has no bearing on job satisfaction.

VI. CONCLUSION

Conclusions relate to the hypotheses. They are answers to the research questions.

Hypothesis testing

As already explained, the following is the hypothesis proposed to be tested: “Work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals”. Hence H_0 and H_1 are as follows:

H_0 : work experience of the IT professionals has no bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals

H_1 : work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals

On the basis of the primary data collected from the respondents, vide Tables: 5 and 6, a chi-square test was applied to ascertain the association, if any, between the two variables, namely, price and buy decision. The

following Table reveals the computation made using MS-Excel: The calculated value of χ^2 is 5.529773308, higher than the Table value of 3.841458821 for an alpha of 0.05 at one degree of freedom. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. $p=0.018695527$ is the inverse of the one-tailed probability of the chi-squared distribution. In other words, *the work experience of the IT professionals has a bearing on the job satisfaction of the said professionals.*

Observed Values			
Category	Yes	No	Total
IT professionals	61	39	100
IT consultants	11	19	30
Total	72	58	130
Expected Values			
Category	Yes	No	Total
IT professionals	55.38	44.62	100.00
IT consultants	16.62	13.38	30.00
Total	72.00	58.00	130.00
	Yes	No	
o-e	5.615384615	-5.61538462	
	-5.61538462	5.615384615	
(o-e)^2	31.53254438	31.53254438	
	31.53254438	31.53254438	
((o-e)^2)/e	0.569337607	0.706763926	
	1.897792023	2.355879752	
CV	2.46712963	3.062643678	5.529773308
TV			3.841458821
p			0.018695527

VII. CONCLUSION

It augurs well for the IT industry and by extension, for the national economy, that majority of the IT respondents aver that their level of job satisfaction is high. But this has to rise further in the light of the IT industry’s contribution to the country’s exports and its potential to contribute even more in the days to come. Hence the IT players have their task cut out: they have to, if necessary, recast their workplace management strategy as to maximise the job satisfaction of the professionals that work for them. Towards this goal, the two sides have to define a roadmap and adhere to it. Since the younger crop of IT professionals confesses to a lower level of job satisfaction, the senior IT professionals should take it upon themselves to mentor them in such a way that they too, like their senior counterparts, realise job satisfaction sooner than later. Once the younger crop

of IT professionals is mentored in this manner, they tend to stick with their current organisations, gain experience and a la their mentors, gain more satisfaction from the job. Such satisfied professionals are an asset not only to the organisation they work for but also to the country they are citizens of.

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