

The Role of Managers in Employee Job Satisfaction Considering Multiple Mediating Effects

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Job satisfaction, manager, work management relationships, well-being, and job promotion.

ABSTRACT

In today's world, the critical and highly effective role of industry in economic development is undeniable. Industrial managers also play a crucial role, making it important to examine their management styles and status concerning employee job satisfaction and ultimately the economy of society. Job satisfaction is a significant factor in career success and contributes to increased efficiency and personal fulfillment. This study aims to investigate the role of managers in job satisfaction due to multiple mediating effects. The necessary data for the research were collected through a survey. The study population consisted of employees of Isfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company, from which 300 individuals were selected for the study using Cochran's formula and random sampling. The research hypotheses were examined using Amose21 and SPSS software. The findings indicate that the manager's role has a positive and significant impact on colleague relationships, as well as on aspects of well-being and job promotion. Additionally, the results showed a direct and moderate effect on work conditions, duties, and processes. This study contributes to understanding the role of managers in job satisfaction by clarifying interactions between five dimensions of job satisfaction and highlighting the connection between management styles that lead to organizational growth and job satisfaction.

Introduction

Human resources are the most crucial determining factor in an organization's progress toward its goals. One of the main concerns of managers at various organizational levels is how to create a conducive environment for employees so that they perform their duties responsibly and with a sense of commitment, leading to optimal performance (Barati et al., 2013). Job satisfaction relates to the emotional nature of the job. For an organization to be successful, it must continuously ensure employee satisfaction (Judge et al., 2020). The happier the workers are, the more satisfied they feel; a satisfied worker is also a productive one. Organizations with more satisfied employees are more effective, as motivated and committed employees contribute positively to the organization. The well-known concept of job satisfaction refers to "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's job experiences." However, job satisfaction is a multidimensional and cross-cultural concept. It can be broadly understood as the extent and reasons why employees like their jobs (Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005). Job satisfaction is a predictor of productivity and performance and includes both negative feelings and attitudes towards the job as well as positive attitudes towards the organization and colleagues.

Many researchers have observed that job satisfaction is linked to personality tests, individual work factors, and living conditions (such as performance-related pay systems, and employee efficiency and productivity). Many researchers have observed that job satisfaction is related to personality tests, individual work factors, and living environment (performance-related pay systems, employee efficiency, and productivity). The workplace is a second home for every person, as many individuals are compelled to spend most of their day in their work environment. It goes without saying that this environment, like a home, must meet minimum spiritual and psychological needs so that individuals can not only earn an income but also advance their professional knowledge and provide honest service. Various factors can increase or decrease an individual's job satisfaction in an organization, or even create conditions that lead an individual to turn away from their job and have no desire to stay within the system (Özpehlivan and Acar, 2016). Income level, social status, the potential for job advancement, the nature of management at work, lack of discrimination, and the level of awareness about one's job are among the most important variables that create job satisfaction in the human resources of an organization. In most societies, the level of income is a significant factor in job selection, and it is also one of the newest and most important reasons for individuals choosing a job, to the extent that it can often overshadow other factors. Sometimes we see individuals who, despite having important and key jobs with a solid social base, express dissatisfaction simply due to low job income, to the point where they might consider changing jobs even for those with lower status. A high level of job satisfaction means that the job provides desirable aspects such as challenges, good pay, diversity, security, a pleasant working environment, independence, and recognition of the worker's contribution to the organization's progress (Bakotić, 2016). As a result, this leads to the achievement of their goals and an increase in their productivity and performance. Additionally, job satisfaction is a source of innovation and autonomy; in the absence of public organizations, it leads to reduced effectiveness, performance issues, disruptions, the creation of isolated groups, and high employee turnover, which causes departures from the organization.

Job satisfaction is considered an important factor for increasing efficiency and individual satisfaction within an organization. Managers are actively seeking ways to enhance the job satisfaction of their employees (Demircioglu, 2021). Various researchers have provided different definitions of job satisfaction: 'Fisher and Hana' regard job satisfaction as a psychological factor and define it as a type of emotional adjustment to the job and working conditions. This means that if a job provides desirable conditions for an individual, the person will be satisfied with their job; however, if a job does not provide sufficient satisfaction and pleasure, the individual will start to criticize the job and, if possible, will leave it (Robbins, 2004).

This research clarifies the role of management across five defined dimensions of job satisfaction (salary, working conditions, colleague relationships, employee welfare and career advancement, and responsibilities and processes) and proposes a model focusing on the role of management, regardless of style and hierarchical level, based on data obtained from the employees of Isfahan Steel Company.

1. Theoretical Foundations

1.1 Job Satisfaction and Its Dimensions

Job satisfaction is a work-related attitude that has often been studied and examined. According to Cook, "Job satisfaction is an attitude that reflects an individual's evaluation of their job and the employing organization as a meaningful aid in achieving their personal goals." This means that they truly enjoy their job, have positive feelings about their work, and value it highly. Job satisfaction refers to a positive and pleasant

emotional state that arises from evaluating work and professional experiences, which can affect employee performance and the overall performance of the organization (Madera et al, 2013). Smith et al. (1969) define job satisfaction as "the feelings a worker has about their job." According to Daley, job satisfaction assesses the organization in terms of individual "happiness." He concludes that job satisfaction reflects individual focus rather than organizational focus (Daley, 1986). In general, job satisfaction refers to a sense of contentment and satisfaction that an individual feels about their job within the organization, which is related to suitable work aligned with talents, the level of success in the job, meeting logical needs, nurturing talents, career advancement, successful experiences, and the organizational atmosphere (Wulandari et al., 2015).

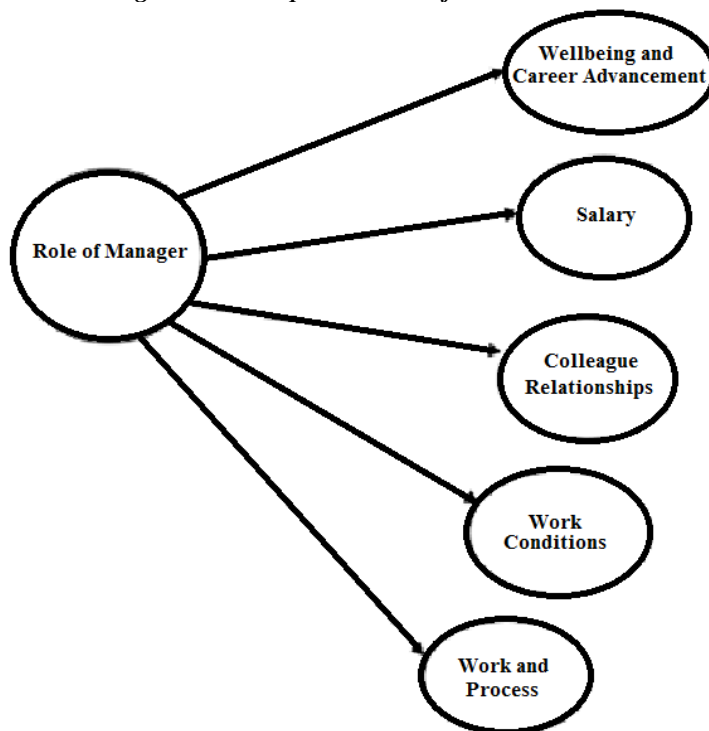
Job satisfaction is a multifaceted concept that includes both internal and external dimensions. Internal sources of satisfaction relate to the individual's personality traits, such as the ability to take initiative and establish communication with supervisors, which are referred to as qualitative aspects of the job. External sources of satisfaction are contextual and dependent on environmental conditions, such as pay, promotion, and job security. The differences in job satisfaction levels among organizational units can be an indication of potential problem areas (Wolf, 2001).

Employee satisfaction, or job satisfaction, simply refers to the level of contentment or satisfaction that employees feel regarding their jobs. Employee satisfaction is usually measured through employee satisfaction surveys. These surveys address topics such as rewards, workload, management perception, flexibility, teamwork, resources, and more. Job satisfaction can have various dimensions; an employee who is satisfied with one aspect of their job may not be satisfied with other aspects. For employees, not all dimensions of job satisfaction hold equal importance. Moreover, job satisfaction differs among individuals and organizations. Hong, Smith, and Salovey (2003) identify the dimensions of job satisfaction as including satisfaction from empowerment, satisfaction from job performance, satisfaction from pay, satisfaction from teamwork, satisfaction from job security, and satisfaction from working conditions (Stewart et al., 2014).

1.2 Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical and empirical background of the research, a conceptual model of the study is presented in Figure 1 to clarify the relationship between the research variables.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Research



The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. The role of the manager directly affects work conditions.
2. The role of the manager directly affects wellbeing and career advancement.

3. The role of the manager directly affects colleague relationships.
4. The role of the manager directly affects work and process.
5. The role of the manager directly affects salary.

1.3 Research Methodology

The statistical population included 2,000 employees and managers of Esfahan Steel Company. The sampling method used in this study was simple random sampling. The sample size was calculated using the Cochran formula. The number of samples determined using the Cochran formula for an unknown population size with a 6% margin of error was 300 individuals.

In this study, both documentary (library) and field methods were used to collect data. To gather information related to testing or examining the research hypotheses, a survey was used to measure job satisfaction. This survey included five dimensions (working conditions, wellbeing and career advancement, colleague relationships, work and process, and salary) and 25 indicators. Additionally, 9 indicators were considered for the role of the manager beyond the 25 indicators. A self-assessment Likert scale was used for scoring. The scoring was as follows: from 1 to 3 (1 - I am satisfied, 2 - I am neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 - I am dissatisfied). Participants voluntarily responded to this survey in written form. It took approximately 20 minutes, and there was a detailed prior explanation regarding the scoring of each dimension.

1.4 Model Fit for Measurement

To determine the validity and reliability of the constructs and variables of the research, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used (Table 1).

Table 1: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the Marketing Mix Questionnaire

Variables	AVE
Wellbeing and Career Advancement	0.686
Salary	0.627
Colleague Relationships	0.551
Working Conditions	0.530
Work and Process	0.641
Role of Manager	0.581

With regard to Table 2, it can be seen that the reliability of the variables is greater than 0.5, indicating that they possess acceptable reliability. In this research, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, and the hypotheses were tested using Amose21 and SPSS 21 software. The validity of the model was evaluated using the standardized factor loading (SFL).

2. Findings

Descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the participants showed that the highest frequency was in the age group of 20 to 30 years (42.6%), while the lowest frequency was in the age group over 50 years (7.1%). Additionally, 67.4% were men and 32.6% were women. Most respondents had a bachelor's degree (47.9%), while the smallest frequency was among those with less than a diploma (4.7%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Participants

Demographic Variables	Status	Frequency Percentage
Gender	Female	32.6
	Male	67.4
Age	Under 20 years	17.2
	20 to 30 years	42.6
	30 to 40 years	21.9
	40 to 50 years	11.2
	Over 50 years	7.1
Education	Below Diploma	4.7
	Diploma and Associate Degree	22.5
	Bachelor's Degree	47.9
	Master's Degree and higher	24.9
Minimum Monthly Income	Less than 1 million	63.9
	Income 1 to 2 million Tomans	25.4

	2 to 3 million Tomans	8.3
	3 million Tomans and above	2.4

2.1 Testing the Hypotheses

In examining the effects of the manager's role on working conditions, the path coefficient has been estimated at 0.683. Given that the T-Value is 4.697 (for a coefficient to be significant, its significance value must be outside the range of -1.96 to 1.96, meaning it is less than the significance level of 0.05), it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the 0.05 error level, indicating that the manager's role has a positive and significant impact on employees' working conditions, thus confirming the first hypothesis.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the path coefficient has been estimated at 0.531. Given that the T-Value is 3.885, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the 0.05 error level, meaning the manager's role has a positive and significant impact on employee welfare and promotion, thereby confirming this hypothesis.

In examining the third hypothesis, the path coefficient has been estimated at 0.279. Considering that the T-Value is 4.378, it can be concluded that the manager's role has a positive and significant impact on colleague relationships, thus confirming the third hypothesis.

Based on the T-Value of 4.377, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the 0.05 error level, indicating that the role of the manager has a positive and significant effect on work and processes, thus confirming the fourth hypothesis. In examining the effect of the manager's role on employee salaries, the path coefficient is 0.364, and the T-statistic is 2.872, which is greater than 1.96; therefore, the fifth hypothesis is accepted.

Figure 2: Research Model with Standardized Coefficients

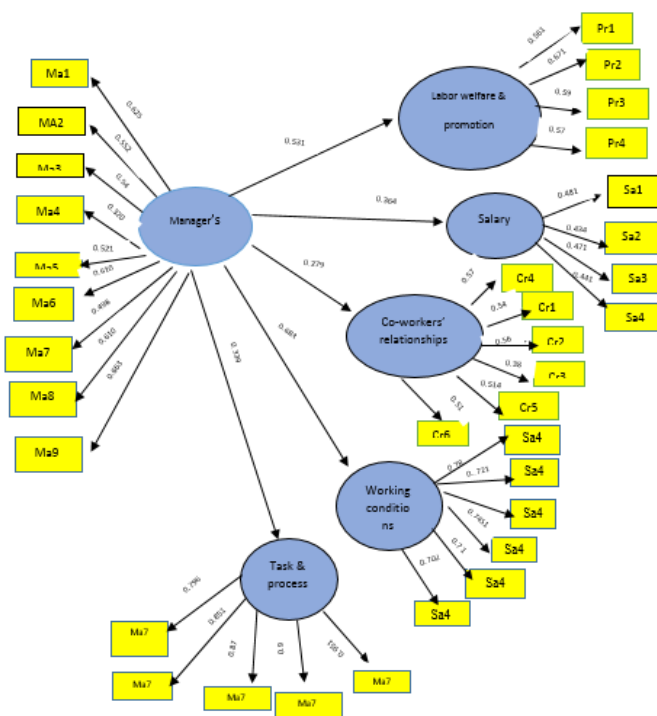


Table 3 :Results of Hypothesis Testing

Direct Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	T-Value	Result
Manager's Role → Working Conditions	0.683	4.697	Hypothesis Confirmed
Manager's Role → Job Satisfaction and Promotion	0.531	3.885	Hypothesis Confirmed
Manager's Role → Colleague Relations	0.279	4.378	Hypothesis Confirmed
Manager's Role → Work and Processes	0.339	4.377	Hypothesis Confirmed
Manager's Role → Employee Salaries	0.364	2.827	Hypothesis Confirmed

3. Discussion and Conclusion

Organizations are fundamental building blocks of today's society, and management is the most crucial factor in the survival, growth, and flourishing or demise of organizations. A manager guides the transition from the "current state" to the "desired state" and is always striving to create a better future. Management practices, especially talent management, significantly contribute to enhancing the organization's competitive advantage across several organizational dimensions, developing high-performance teams, improving the recruitment structure of qualified employees, and ensuring ongoing organizational commitment. Talent management encompasses the full range of human resource processes for attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining high-performing employees. Talent management practices influence employee attitudes and behaviors, making them more agile, motivated, and engaged (Khoreva et al., 2017).

The results of the present study showed that employee satisfaction is directly related to the role of the manager and directly impacts several organizational dimensions related to satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the results of Ozturk et al. (2021) and Moslehpour et al. (2022). A manager can understand emotions and needs, provide emotional support to achieve goals, motivate employees toward a positive internal attitude, and enhance team cohesion from an emotional perspective (Yang, 2016). By prioritizing environments where workers can freely express their opinions, managers can develop effective communication, leading to increased satisfaction. In other words, an active set of relationships among individuals, trust, mutual understanding, shared values, and common behaviors connect the members of organizations and facilitate collaboration (Omar et al., 2017). Therefore, the second hypothesis, which states that there is a direct relationship between the role of the manager and colleague relationships, is confirmed. Managers regulate emotions and the pace of activity within the organization and possess the power to lead and promote a culture of well-being. This implies an organizational need to define clear responsibilities for managers in the area of improving employee well-being. According to Gallup findings, advanced organizations have achieved positive business outcomes by enhancing the impact of managers on the physical and mental health of employees. The direct impact of the manager's role on well-being and job enhancement (second hypothesis) leads to well-being activities created by human resources or other dependencies. The support that employees feel from their managers is based on the belief regarding how much the organization appreciates their collaboration and values their well-being. Managers can enhance the perceived level of support by valuing employee cooperation to improve their performance, timely appreciation of employees' extra efforts, focusing on the overall well-being of employees, and considering their comprehensive satisfaction. This results in positive outcomes such as emotional attachment and a desire for employees to stay. The direct impact of the manager's role on colleague relationships (third hypothesis) can be analyzed in light of previous research on services (Ozturk et al., 2021). These managerial styles require greater empowerment for workers, leading to increased job satisfaction. Similarly, the emotional and ethical competence of managers leads to positive changes at all organizational levels and helps employees manage their emotions effectively.

Management plays a crucial role in the job satisfaction of employees and staff and is, in fact, one of the most important pillars of any work environment. In the private sector, managers have significantly more influence on employee satisfaction due to their greater flexibility in making changes within their units. Fair and timely payment of salaries, opportunities for career advancement, and creating a friendly atmosphere in the workplace are among their most important provisions. Salary and benefits are recognized as one of the indicators of organizational factors affecting job satisfaction. Wages and salaries are part of the compensation package. Managers can calculate salary increases based on individual performance by improving employee performance and achieving their job satisfaction. Fair wages give employees the opportunity to continue their work without worrying about meeting basic needs and to think about the organization's growth; thus, the fifth hypothesis is affirmed. Javad et al. (2019) found that job satisfaction, due to limitations in emerging economies—such as the availability of suitable jobs, low job security, and financial constraints that necessitate job retention despite dissatisfaction—does not mediate between rewards and organizational commitment. Our socio-economic conditions are similar to those studied in the aforementioned research.

Overall, the results of this study show that the dimensions identified for measuring job satisfaction—such as working conditions, colleague relationships, well-being and career advancement, and tasks and processes—are highly dependent on the role of management. This is an important finding for Isfahan Steel Company and other organizations in the industry. These results can be used to guide human resource policies in selecting and hiring managers. Additionally, considering the impact of satisfaction with wages and satisfaction with promotion processes on the job satisfaction of the subjects studied, clarifying and making promotion rules fair and improving the compensation and rewards system based on the competencies and qualifications of

employees will play a significant role in increasing their job satisfaction.

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