



The Study on Job Satisfaction Levels among Young and Older Adults in India during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Amidst the unprecedented challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic, this study delves into the realm of job satisfaction among IT professionals and teachers in India. Revealing intriguing trends, the findings underscore the significance of tailored interventions and workplace policies to enhance job satisfaction amidst adversity. This study examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on job satisfaction levels among IT professionals and teachers across different age groups in India. The findings reveal higher job satisfaction among younger adults compared to their older counterparts. The study highlights the importance of age-specific interventions and workplace policies in fostering job satisfaction across diverse age groups. The self-constructed survey provides valuable insights into the pandemic's impact on job satisfaction dynamics. The research contributes to understanding age diversity and job satisfaction in evolving work environments, offering insights for organizational strategies and interventions.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction; Younger Adults; IT Professionals; Teachers; COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global workforce, with older workers being disproportionately affected. Factors such as the economic downturn, social isolation requirements, and heightened health risks have contributed to increased job insecurity and unemployment among older workers. At the same time, the shift to remote work during the pandemic has also affected job satisfaction and work-life balance for employees of all ages [1]. Studies have shown that remote work can be associated with both positive and negative outcomes, with the relationship mediated by factors such as perceived stress, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. Given these complex dynamics, it is important to examine how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted job satisfaction levels among both young and older

adult workers in India. Understanding the unique challenges and experiences of these different age groups can inform policies and interventions to support the well-being of the aging workforce. This research paper aims to investigate and compare the job satisfaction levels of young adults (aged 25-35) and older adults (aged 35-50) during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The findings can provide valuable insights to help organizations and policymakers develop targeted strategies to promote job satisfaction and support the needs of workers across the age spectrum during times of crisis.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a critical factor that influences employee well-being, productivity, and organizational performance. It is defined as the positive emotional state resulting

from the appraisal of one's job experiences. Factors such as job autonomy, work-life balance, compensation, and opportunities for growth and development have all been shown to impact job satisfaction levels. High levels of job satisfaction are associated with numerous benefits, including increased employee engagement, reduced absenteeism and turnover, and improved physical and mental health¹³. Conversely, low job satisfaction can lead to negative outcomes such as decreased motivation, poor work quality, and increased risk of burnout [2]. Given the importance of job satisfaction, it is crucial to understand the factors that influence it, particularly during times of significant disruption or crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, has dramatically altered the work landscape, with many employees transitioning to remote work and facing increased job insecurity and work-related stress [3].

Job satisfaction is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that has been extensively studied in various fields, including psychology, sociology, and management. It is a crucial aspect of employee well-being and organizational performance, as it directly impacts employee motivation, productivity, and retention. Over the years, numerous theories have been developed to explain the factors that influence job satisfaction. These theories provide valuable insights into the psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Review of Literature

Hu Y, et al. [4] study from 2024 looks at how teleworking affects performance and job satisfaction in Chinese IT organizations while taking individual and cultural variables into account. Based on ideas of empowerment and self-efficacy, it discovers that, although work-family conflict has a detrimental impact on both, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and leadership empowerment have favourable associations. When teleworking for more than 33-40 hours, satisfaction declines. In this quantitative study, Wibowo S, et al. [5] examine how organizational and psychological factors affected technical professionals' job satisfaction in Indonesia during the COVID-19 epidemic. Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling was used to analyse data from 103 respondents. The findings show that work pressure and safety concerns have an impact on job satisfaction, with work pressure acting as a mediator in the interaction between the two.

The study by authors Kabir SMH, et al. [6] looks into how the COVID-19 epidemic affected Bangladeshi academic staff members' job satisfaction and the education system as a whole, especially with regard to the move to online learning. Using a quantitative methodology and data gathered from 293 professors in Dhaka, the study looks at

aspects including attitude towards online learning, work-life balance, and happiness as decision-making factors. The data is analysed using Structural Equation Modelling and Exploratory Factor Analysis methodologies. The results close a gap in satisfaction-behavior alignment by shedding light on the relationship between academic staff members' attitudes towards online learning and their job satisfaction. Esposito P, et al. [7] uses longitudinal data from Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic to study the effect of working from home (WFH) on job satisfaction. The study, which makes use of a difference-in-differences approach, discovers that WFH has a favourable impact on job satisfaction, especially for women. But the impact differs according to the Big Five personality traits; for example, higher levels of neuroticism or conscientiousness are linked to lower levels of satisfaction when working remotely, whereas higher levels of openness to experience are linked to higher levels of contentment.

Using the principles of industrial and organisational psychology, Kioulepoglou P, et al. [8] examine how the COVID-19 epidemic has affected the job satisfaction of military and airline pilots. Survey information from 205 pilots after the pandemic and 203 pilots during the epidemic shows a considerable decline in airline pilot satisfaction, which is linked to lower prospects and pay reductions. On the other hand, because of government backing, military pilots' satisfaction stayed consistent. Enhancing crisis planning and communication tactics are among the suggestions made to lessen negative effects on pilots' health and flight safety. Dreer B [9] explores the relationship between German school teachers' job satisfaction and job-related well-being. Data from 511 teachers are analyzed using the PERMA framework, which includes Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement. Results show that job happiness increases with stronger PERMA profiles, and that pleasant emotions had the largest predictive power. In order to improve teacher satisfaction and retention, the study emphasizes the value of promoting job-related well-being, particularly pleasant emotions. This will help school systems that are struggling with teacher shortages and high attrition rates [10].

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To investigate and compare job satisfaction levels between a younger group (aged 25-34) and an older group (aged 35-50) in the context of the Indian workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - Assess the overall job satisfaction levels of the younger group (aged 20-39) and the older group (aged 40 and above).
 - Examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on job satisfaction levels for both the younger and older age

groups, and how this may have differed between the two groups.

- To contribute to the existing literature on job satisfaction by examining age-related differences and their impact on job satisfaction levels, particularly in the context of a challenging and evolving work environment like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

The alternate hypothesis.

- Younger group will be more satisfied with their job as compared to elder group

Description of Sample

The study population consisted of employees from the IT and teaching sectors in India. A total of 700 respondents were initially surveyed, with 489 valid responses included in the final analysis. Participants were classified into two age groups: the “younger group” (aged 25-34 years) and the “elder group” (aged 35-50 years), based on Erikson’s developmental stages.

The inclusion criteria for the study were:

Age group: 25-34 years (younger group) and 35-50 years (elder group)

Gender: Male and female

Occupation: IT sector and teaching sector

Work experience: Participants who have worked both from home during the COVID-19 pandemic and in an offline setting prior to the pandemic

The exclusion criteria were:

Age group: 24 years and below

Occupation: Other than IT sector and teaching sector

Sample collection: Outside of India

Participants who have not experienced both remote and in-person work modes

The age range of 25 to 50 years was selected to include individuals who have been actively working in the specified occupations. Participants over 50 years old were excluded, as the research team found that they were less likely to respond to the online survey method used for data collection. All participants were residing in India at the time of the study. The sample was drawn from across the country to ensure geographical diversity.

Sampling Technique

The current research study employed a combination of purposive, convenience, and snowball sampling techniques to collect data. Purposive sampling was used, as the researchers selected participants based on their understanding of the target population and the research objectives. This allowed

the researchers to choose individuals who were most suitable and knowledgeable about the topic of interest. Convenience sampling was also utilized, as the researchers recruited participants who were readily available and willing to take part in the survey. This method was particularly useful given the time and resource constraints of the study.

Finally, the snowball sampling technique was employed, where the initial participants assisted the researchers in identifying and recruiting additional subjects for the study. This approach was beneficial in reaching a wider pool of respondents, especially for sensitive or hard-to-reach populations. The use of these diverse sampling techniques ensured that the researchers were able to gather a representative sample of the target population, while also accounting for practical considerations such as accessibility and feasibility. This multi-pronged approach to sampling helped to enhance the validity and generalizability of the research findings.

Description of Tools

An online Google Form survey was created to understand the effect of the COVID-19 lockdown and behavioral changes of teachers and IT professionals during the work-from-home period. The researchers developed a self-constructed tool for this purpose. The tool consisted of a total of 51 items, and the responses were collected using a Likert scale. Participants were instructed to answer the questions by selecting the response that most accurately reflected how much the statement applied to them since the onset of the pandemic. The response options were: 1 (always), 2 (often), 3 (sometimes), 4 (rarely), and 5 (never).

The aim of the questionnaire was to assess how the lockdown and digital working style had affected different aspects of the lives of IT professionals and teachers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of corporate working executives had been significantly disrupted. The survey explored the impact of the pandemic on various areas of their lives, including mental health, work-life balance, and overall well-being. Participants were informed that their data would remain confidential, and they were provided with the following instructions: “Please answer these questions and tick the answer that indicates most accurately how much the statement applies to you since the onset of the pandemic.” The development of this self-constructed tool was necessary to capture the unique experiences and challenges faced by the target population during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a significant impact on their work and personal lives.

Procedure

The researchers developed a self-constructed tool in the form of an online Google Form survey to understand the

effect of the COVID-19 lockdown and behavioral changes of teachers and IT professionals during the work-from-home period. The survey consisted of a total of 51 questions and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Prior to filling out the survey, participants were asked for their consent. The questionnaire was then circulated to IT professionals and teachers using various social media platforms, including LinkedIn, email, and WhatsApp. A total of 489 responses were collected from participants across different age groups, starting from 25 years and above. The data was gathered between January and June in 2023. The data was analyzed using the t-test, and the results were further examined and discussed.

Statistical Analysis

In this study, statistical analyses such as Mean and Standard Deviation were employed. The Mean provides insights into the average score of the data collected, while the Standard Deviation indicates the extent to which individual scores deviate from this average or expected value. Moreover, the comparison of job satisfaction levels between two age groups (25-34 years and 35-50 years) was conducted using the t-test. This test is a robust statistical method utilized to assess whether there exists a statistically significant difference in means between two distinct groups.

Results and Discussion

		t	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Df (degrees of freedom)	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	13.29	7.825	0.589	487	0
	Equal variances not assumed	13.26	7.825	0.59	413.96	

Table 2: Indicates job satisfaction on the basis of age groups.

The results of the t-test indicate a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction levels between the age groups. The high t-values, along with the low p-values (0.001), suggest that there is a substantial difference in job satisfaction between the two age groups. Specifically, the mean difference of 7.825 points in job satisfaction scores between the age groups indicates a notable disparity in how individuals in different age brackets perceive their job satisfaction. Overall, the findings suggest that age plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction levels, with one age group reporting significantly higher levels of job satisfaction compared to the other. This statistical analysis provides robust evidence of the impact of age on job satisfaction within the sampled population.

Result

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job Satisfaction	25-35	243	35.02	7.735
	35-50	246	27.19	5.011

Table 1: Indicates job satisfaction on the basis of age groups.

The data indicates that, on average, individuals in the 25-34 age group reported a higher level of job satisfaction (mean score of 35.02) compared to those in the 35-50 age group (mean score of 27.19). The higher mean job satisfaction score for the younger age group suggests that individuals between 25-34 years old tend to be more satisfied with their jobs compared to those in the 35-50 age group. Additionally, the standard deviation provides information about the variability of job satisfaction scores within each age group. A higher standard deviation in the 25-34 age group (7.735) indicates more variability in job satisfaction scores within this group, while a lower standard deviation in the 35-50 age group (5.011) suggests less variability in job satisfaction scores among individuals aged 35-50. Overall, the data suggests a notable difference in job satisfaction levels between the two age groups, with younger individuals showing higher average job satisfaction scores compared to their older counterparts.

Discussion

The discussion of job satisfaction levels among young and older adults in India during the COVID-19 pandemic reveals valuable insights into the factors influencing employee well-being and organizational performance. The study's findings highlight the significant impact of age on job satisfaction, with younger adults exhibiting higher levels of job satisfaction compared to their older counterparts. This disparity underscores the importance of considering age diversity in workforce management strategies to enhance job satisfaction and overall employee engagement. The Pew Research Center's recent analysis (2023) suggests that young workers express lower levels of job satisfaction compared to older workers, with around 32% of employed

U.S. adults aged 18 to 29 finding their jobs stressful most of the time. Despite this, the majority of young workers are at least somewhat satisfied with their jobs. The current study's results contradicts with these findings.

The study's findings also underscore the impact of external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on job satisfaction. The disruption caused by the pandemic has led to changes in work environments, work arrangements, and overall job experiences, influencing how employees perceive their job satisfaction. Kniffin KM, et al. [11] discuss the implications of the pandemic on workplace dynamics, emphasizing the need for organizations to adapt to these changes to support employee well-being and job satisfaction. The discussion points to the significance of age-specific interventions, workplace policies, and employee well-being programs in fostering job satisfaction across different age groups. By addressing the unique needs and preferences of young and older adults, organizations can create a more supportive and engaging work environment that promotes job satisfaction and overall employee satisfaction.

Overall, the study's findings contribute to the growing body of research on job satisfaction and age diversity in the workforce, providing valuable insights for organizations and policymakers to enhance employee well-being, engagement, and organizational performance in the face of evolving work environments and external challenges.

Conclusion

The study explored how the COVID-19 pandemic affected job satisfaction among IT professionals and teachers of different age groups. Contrary to prior research, younger adults in these sectors reported higher job satisfaction levels compared to older counterparts. The findings underscored the resilience of younger workers amidst pandemic challenges. The study highlighted the need for tailored interventions and workplace policies to support diverse age groups. By using a self-constructed survey tool, the research provided valuable insights into pandemic-induced changes. Overall, it contributes to understanding age diversity, job satisfaction, and workplace dynamics during the pandemic.

Limitations

The current research study on job satisfaction levels among young and older adults in India during the COVID-19 pandemic has the following limitations:

- The study relied on self-reported data from the participants, which may be subject to biases, such as social desirability bias or recall bias. Participants' perceptions and experiences may not always accurately reflect the actual state of their job satisfaction.

- The study focused on employees in the IT and teaching sectors, which may limit the applicability of the findings to other occupational groups. Job satisfaction may vary across different industries and professions.
- The study did not collect longitudinal data, which could have provided insights into the dynamic nature of job satisfaction and how it changes over time, particularly in response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic.
- The study primarily focused on age as the key demographic variable, but other factors, such as gender, educational background, and work experience, may also influence job satisfaction and were not extensively explored.
- The study did not account for potential confounding factors, such as organizational culture, leadership styles, or work-life balance policies, which may also contribute to job satisfaction levels.

Implications

The research paper on job satisfaction levels among young and older adults in India during the COVID-19 pandemic carries significant implications for organizational practices and policies. The findings suggest the importance of implementing age-specific interventions to enhance job satisfaction, emphasizing the need for tailored strategies that address the unique needs and preferences of different age groups. Organizations can leverage these insights to develop workplace policies that prioritize factors such as job autonomy, work-life balance, and opportunities for growth, fostering a more inclusive and supportive work environment. Employee well-being programs can be designed based on the study's findings to address the specific challenges faced by young and older adults, promoting a positive work culture and enhancing job satisfaction. Policymakers can utilize the study's results to inform labor policies that prioritize job satisfaction and well-being in the workplace, contributing to a healthier and more productive workforce. As organizations navigate changing work environments, such as remote work arrangements, the study emphasizes the importance of adapting to evolving needs and preferences to maintain high levels of job satisfaction and employee well-being.

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