

## Abstract

### Nature of Job satisfaction among Information System Professionals

A knowledge economy is one that relies intensively on human skills and creativity, the utilization of intellectual capital, supported by life-long learning and adaptation, the creative exploitation of existing knowledge, and extensive creation of new knowledge through research and development. The rise of the knowledge economy has resulted in enhanced focus on attracting and retaining of skilled manpower. Information Technology (IT) production is a significant factor in the knowledge economy both because it is a major enabler of that economy and because it is itself highly knowledge intensive. Many countries around the world are looking for ways to promote the development of the knowledge economy, and Information Technology industries in particular. It is a fact in the world over that India's main competitive advantage in software and services are its abundant, high quality and cost effective pool of skilled knowledge workers.

In India the performance of the IT sector primarily has been contributed by IT software and services exports, IT-enabled services (IteS), the domestic IT market, Telecom infrastructure and Venture capital. Further, it is claimed that Indian Software as well as ITeS play a significant role in the service economy. But this sector has witnessed a major critical issue related to human resources, that is, high attrition rate. Some more emerging practices like rise in off shoring activities and process innovation in the Indian IT industry have changed the perceptions, attitudes and roles of IS specialists. There is also a scarcity and shortages of supply of qualified knowledge workers in the marketplace. As knowledge workers comprise the major chunk of workforce who drives the IT industry, it becomes important to manage and retain by keeping in view the scarcity and shortages of

supply of qualified knowledge workers in the marketplace. The entrance of women into the IT sector has increased compared to other engineering sectors in India. It becomes imperative to keep female IS professionals satisfied for the growth of the IT organization. The IS literature on gender studies has shown disparity between male and female professionals on various attitudinal and behavioural issues. Non-IS literature in the Indian context on gender studies shows glass ceiling for female employees. It has been also observed that new roles have emerged leading to division of labour among IS professionals due to the advent in Information technology and expansion of operation in the IT Industry. The attempted IS literature on differences among sub-groups of professionals has not been updated within the context of changing scenario. Therefore, the study has also explored the differences among subgroups of system professionals with the increasing operation of software engineering and wide variety of roles demanding specialization with different set of skills. Last but not the least it has also investigated the differences between BPO IT group and software IT group in the context of rising offshore business and activities.

The early literature on IS Job satisfaction has held a very myopic view on the present subject. Thus, this dissertation attempts to test empirically comprehensive model proposed on Job Satisfaction of information system Professionals. The model is an extension and modification of Price and Mueller Model (1993). The model of Job satisfaction in the present study provides the insight into direction of effect for each independent variable (negative and positive) along with their explanatory power towards the dependent variables.

Thus Chapter-I depicts how with decades after independence Indian economy has shifted from agro to knowledge with the emergence of IT sector, detail description on nature of Indian IT industry, narrates the issues of IS professionals in the Indian context. It thoroughly covers theoretical evolution of concept on Job satisfaction, Job satisfaction as

predictor and criterion variable in IS literature, research gaps and eventually arrives at the objectives of the study.

A pilot study was undertaken in local companies of Ahmedabad to study both the set up of BPO and Software organization. It helped to confirm the predictors of Job Satisfaction as proposed in the model. The quantitative survey method was used to procure data. The model has been empirically tested in both software and BPO sectors with a sample size of 308 out of which 240 respondents belong to software sector and rest 68 respondents belong to BPO sector. Chapter II describes the research method of the present study in detail. This section is divided into sections dealing with overview on pilot study sample, data collection procedure, and description of scale.

The results section has been covered under Chapter III. The student version 10.0 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 1999) was used for the statistical computation and analyses under this result section. Categorical variables such as gender and highest-level degree obtained, for example, were coded before data entry. Continuous variables were entered into the computer as they had been responded to on the questionnaire. The hypotheses are tested through statistical tools like ANOVA test, t-test, Stepwise Multiple Regression, and Pearson Correlation test.

The results section consists of the presentation of the findings for the study in different Sections. The first section examines the differences between information system professionals of Software and information system professionals of BPO. The second section makes the comparison among groups of Information system professionals in software sector. Similarly the third section examines the differences between male and female system professionals with respect to various dependent variables. The fourth section, on the other hand, describes the correlation findings. The fifth section finally presents the stepwise regression model to explain the proportion of variance in job satisfaction by set of independent variables such as organizational characteristics, job

characteristics, burnout, stress and social support. Last but not the least, the relationship among the variables have been illustrated in the form of regression coefficients beta ( $\beta$ ).

Chapter IV presents a wide coverage on the discussion and conclusion of the analysis reported in the previous chapter. It highlights about the future directions on research, which have evolved from the present studies. It also encompasses the contributions made by the present study towards theoretical world, its practical implications and finally enunciated the limitations of the study.

The study provides an integrative framework by taking into account the traditional variables like Job characteristics and Stress along with the organizational and individual variables which are unlike to be found in the IS literature. This provides a clue to the future research to investigate the causal-effect relationship among the variables. Organizational wide characteristics have proved to be pronounced factor while predicting Job satisfaction which is itself a significant and different from the contemporary research. It is predominant in Software sector while determining job attitude of IS professionals compared to that prevailing in BPO sectors.

The findings from the generalized results are confirming the findings of the Software sector but it is completely different from the findings of BPO sector. In BPO sectors, social support and stress have high explanatory power determining Job satisfaction of IS professionals. Then it is followed by organizational climate and job characteristics to be explaining variance in job satisfaction to a significant extent. Interestingly, it is also observed that autonomy and independence are enriching the job of IS employees in BPO sectors whereas it is very much absent in the Software sectors. The findings carry two fold meanings for software sector. Firstly, it is also seen that operational autonomy is enjoyed at higher level, for instance at project manager level by virtue of the position, authority and their experience in executing the projects. Secondly, the job enrichment

practices in absence of autonomy seek a new direction in research to study the best applicability of behavior of supervisor towards the team effectiveness in the Indian context.

The empirical evidence even shows that the job attitude is not significant and preceding factors to turnover intention in BPO sector. Interestingly it has been found that environmental characteristics are the significant predictors of the turnover intention as per this study. The results further shows that the other dimensions of environmental characteristics should be studied in detail as predictors of turnover intention.

The present study reveals that the subgroups of IS professional cannot be assumed and treated as homogenous in nature. The heterogeneity among sub groups draws attention of management to engineer HR practices which are idiosyncratic in nature depending upon the roles of information system professionals. This phenomenon helps the IT manger and HR division manage and retain subgroups of IS professionals. As programmers are found to be least satisfied among all subgroups of IS professionals, adding variety to their task can enrich job content, which overcomes the monotonous nature of the job. The foremost attention should be given to programmers in dealing directly with clients. This would enhance the software application conforming the quality standard and meeting need of the clients. The enrichment of the job content would enable them to work at higher value chain. The results have indicated some of the career anchors like variety, technical competence, and managerial competence, work-family balance that are significant and the requirements vary among subgroups of professionals. It can be practiced in career development programs to meet their job expectations and demands of life.

The reciprocal relationship between job feedback and Job satisfaction is a noteworthy result thereby contributing something new to the theoretical world. It shows that IS professionals are not positive towards feedback at the time of periodical assessment by their seniors. Their seniors are either sharing same age or a marginal difference in age. So

they take it as an offence. It is probably also due to their inexperience in appraising their subordinates and lack of training in such aspects.

Further the role ambiguity being positively related to Job satisfaction carries tremendous practical and theoretical implications. The knowledge worker prefers to work in complexities, uncertainties with no structured role. Sometimes the project is accomplished under inexperienced team leader lacking managerial skills who has been promoted to such positions for his technical excellence. In such conditions roles are never clear and structured. Tolerance for ambiguity of IS professionals suits the organization which has adopted the software process innovations. As a result of which IS professionals have to assume new roles and the earlier roles expertise become unclear.

The findings have also shown that the IT organizations consider male and female IS professionals on equal footing. There is no disparity between them on Job satisfaction and other explanatory variables precedent to it. Female IS professionals earn the support of supervisor on career development issues to maintain work-family balance. The study reports that they possess high tolerance for stress, which help them cope up with the pressure generally faced in the IT industry. Thus, the Indian IT industry has put a step ahead in the aspect of gender equality compared to other Indian industries.

The findings on the comparison between IS professionals of Software and that in BPO sectors on Job satisfaction are noteworthy. The findings register that the BPO sector has scored higher in job characteristics and IS climate compared to Software sector. Thus it can be stated that successful of BPO sectors depends upon IS efficiency and infrastructure, which is further dependent upon the team of IS professionals to look after back offices operations. Their endeavor towards successful running of back operation should be supported by enriched job content, healthy and harmonious IS climate.

Findings also reveal that feeling of competence among IS professionals in Software sector helps them reduce burnout through self-managed means. Whereas in BPO sector the burnout is controlled externally that is the top management has to implement several motivational schemes to overcome the effect of burnout on Job satisfaction.

Last but not the least the significance of organizational commitment towards turnover intention seems decrease due to its very low explanatory power. It shows that management should give more importance to occupational commitment. It confirms the earlier studies that occupational commitment is playing major role among the knowledge workers.

Finally, the thesis concludes with, future directions, theoretical and practical implications and limitations of the study. The model has been empirically tested for both software and BPO sectors. The findings of this study increase the understanding of the nature and behaviors of Indian IS professionals among practitioners and academicians.