

Assertiveness and Job Satisfaction in the Workplace

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Abstract

The following study aims at establishing the relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction in the workplace environment. Assertiveness, that involves the capability of freely advocating for one's self and assertive rights whilst respecting other people's rights in organizational relationships is a core interpersonal competence. Employees' job satisfaction, on the other hand, is a critical measure of their level of satisfaction in their workplace that influences productivity, turnover and subsequently organizational outcomes. Survey questionnaire was used to obtain data from a diverse sample of employees that include the level of assertiveness and job satisfaction. Researched questions and hypotheses testing were based on correlation and one way ANOVA procedures with a view of ascertaining the nature and extent of relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction. The present research reveals that assertiveness bears a positive though insignificant association with job satisfaction. Gender does not significantly influence job satisfaction; however, gender plays a crucial role in determining assertiveness levels. On the same note, no significant differences were found in assertiveness and job satisfaction among the age groups.

Keywords: Assertiveness, Job Satisfaction, Workplace, Interpersonal Skills, Organizational Behavior.

I. Introduction

Given the modern tendencies of work environments that emphasize cooperation and communication with other people, assertiveness and job satisfaction should not be underestimated. Interpersonal assertiveness involves people's ability to present their ideas, feelings, and needs to other individuals; while job satisfaction is the level of satisfaction that employee demonstrates toward workplace. Ideally, it is essential to comprehend the complex interaction between assertiveness and job satisfaction in order to contribute to the improvement of organizations' corporate cultures and the overall satisfaction of their employees. This section gives an overview of the study theme, characterizing assertiveness and job satisfaction in professional context, and the existing gap in the literature that calls for theoretically grounded qualitative research.

Assertiveness is one of the interpersonal behaviors that involves the effectiveness in expressing one's ideas, rights and even saying 'no' in a polite and forceful manner (Bower, 2019). More so, assertive people are most efficient when it comes to voicing their opinion, negotiating and, especially, the management of conflicts (Woods and Lambert, 2018). In contrast with passive persons who may have rather low self-esteem and cannot defend their needs and rights or, on the opposite, aggressive people

who tend to disregard other people's rights and needs, assertive people are ready to open cooperation that is totally beneficial for everyone (Bower, 2019).

Obviously, assertiveness is crucial not only to interpersonal interactions at the employees' workplace, but also for organizational performance and staff members' psychological well-being. Thus, it can be stated that assertive employees are more prepared for the conflicts, conveying expectations, as well as for the collaboration and creative degree within the team (Bower, 2019). Furthermore, the findings attributed assertiveness to the increase in self-esteem, confidence, and job performance, lending credence to the factors that would work in favor of professional achievement and job satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001).

Job satisfaction refers to employees' emotions, cognitions, and behaviors with regards to many objects of organizations including but not limited to job characteristics, pay, organizational climate, and coworkers (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Positive attitudes towards job satisfaction increase employee's sense of accomplishment, drive, and allegiance to the job hence producing increased output, fewer cases of staff turnover and organizational success (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). On the other hand, low levels of job satisfaction result in lack of motivation, truancy and overall employee turnover which presents the employers with various difficulties in retaining talent and boosting productivity (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

This is to mean that the factors that influence job satisfaction are many and can be categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic. According to Klang, substantial evidence supports the idea that the core features of work, which include meaningfulness, autonomy, and opportunities for development, positively affect job satisfaction; however, another group of features involving the organization's financial resources, including monetary incentives or a proper work-life balance formula also influence the levels of employees' satisfaction and their overall well-being (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Furthermore, categories of interpersonal interaction and communication channels, which are also organizational within the workplace, influenced the employee's perceived job satisfaction, placing assertiveness back into the perspective of work related attitudes and experiences.

The Interconnection between Assertiveness and Job Satisfaction:

Based on the findings revealing the connection between assertiveness and job satisfaction, it is imperative to conduct a quantitative analysis of the phenomenon in question and determine its interrelated nature. First, assertiveness would be beneficial in that an assertive person would satisfy their needs more easily, communicate with others effectively and negotiate conflict situations successfully thus experiencing higher level of job satisfaction (Judge and Bono 2001). Hypothesized relationship associated with assertiveness is self-promotion where people are able to stand up for themselves and request for promotions and better working positions, setting of own boundaries and therefore causes and fosters an improved feeling of autonomy and self-efficacy in an individual's work place (Judge & Bono, 2001).

However, another examination of work experience and assertiveness and their relationships with job satisfaction may indicate that some form of work characteristics such as organizational climate, leadership factors, and job requirements moderate the role of assertiveness. When working in the setting, which encourages the maintenance of interpersonal communication, cooperation, and encouraging employees, assertiveness might be linked to satisfaction with the job and psychological safety, respect (Woods & Lambert, 2018). However, when organizations are organized as pyramid structures, employees are not encouraged to freely express themselves or when cultural factors hinder employees

from expressing themselves in assertive manners, there is likelihood that the correlations between assertiveness and job satisfaction will minimal or not at all present (Woods and Lambert, 2018).

Thus, it could be established that assertiveness and job satisfaction are two of the most salient organizing concepts in the study of work environments. While assertiveness helps the employee advocate for themselves as well as communicate and solve conflicts on the job, job satisfaction sums up the employees' views and feelings towards their workplace or work experiences. Studying this relationship is relevant to companies and organizations interested in improving the level of assertiveness and job satisfaction to develop strong positivist organizational performance.

The present paper aims to critically review the existing literature on assertiveness and job satisfaction in order to gain a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the relationship between these two variables and to determine strategies for teaching assertive communication skills and improving employees' satisfaction and productivity in the workplace. Through the application of psychological theories and practical knowledge from organizational behavior and communication studies scholars can provide practical knowledge and best practices for building assertiveness in the employees as well as for improving organizations' climate that, in turn, could lead to staff's wellbeing enhancement.

Objectives:

1. To determine the relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction among employees in the workplace.
2. To know the difference in job satisfaction and assertiveness based on age among employees in the workplace
3. To know the difference in job satisfaction and assertiveness based on gender among employees in the workplace.

1.2 Hypotheses:

1. There is a significant relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction at the work place
2. There is significant difference in job satisfaction based on age groups among employees at the workplace
3. There is significant difference in assertiveness based on age groups among employees at the workplace
4. There is significance difference in job satisfaction based on gender groups among employee at the workplace
5. There is significant difference in assertiveness based on gender groups among employees at the workplace

II. METHOD

2.1 Participants

The participants for this study consist of 150 (93 females, 55 males and 2 prefer not to say their biological sex) working individuals from Southern part of India. The participants were selected randomly, where their age range from 18 to 60. The academic qualification of the participants is as 14 studied up to 12th, 92 are graduates, 39 participants completed PG and 5 have done M.Phil./Ph.D./Above and the participants occupation field varies as 16 were from arts/communication, 37 from business/sales and marketing, 25 from education, 29 from health care, 33 from IT and Non IT, 10 from Law Enforcement. The table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1 Characteristics of participants in the study

Demographics	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Up to 30	113	75.3
	31 – 45	24	16
	45 – 60	13	8.7
Gender	Female	93	62
	Male	55	36.7
	Prefer not to say	2	1.3
Marital Status	Single	85	56.7
	Married	62	41.3
	Divorced	3	2
Academic Qualification	Up to 12/HSC	14	9.3
	Graduate	92	61.3
	Post graduate	39	26
	M.Phil. / Ph.D. / Above	5	3.3
Occupation	Arts/ Communication	16	10.7
	Business/Sales & Marketing	37	24.7
	Education	25	16.7
	Health Care	29	19.3
	IT / Non IT	33	22
	Law Enforcement	10	6.7

2.2 Instruments

1. Peterson Assertiveness Questionnaire (PAQ) was constructed by Peterson and Sampson in 1985 and it is one of the most common inventories aimed to reveal assertiveness levels of the respondents. It is comprised of statements that respondent's rate according to their degree of endorsement. The lower scores mean 'less assertive' while the higher scores equal 'more assertive', or 'more aggressive'. Its organization reveals how people communicate their needs, views, and claims in different circumstances. It has also exhibited satisfactory reliability, Cronbach's alpha values have been generally greater than 0. It was 80, thus illustrating high internal consistency. Evidence for its validity is obtained through studies on convergent validity which indicates that there is a good relationship with other assertiveness studies and other related measures.

2. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was standardized by Ed Diener et al in 1985. It features are well known tool which is used for assessment of global life satisfaction. It usually comprises five statements on satisfaction with life that the respondent rate according to the extent of endorsement. The scores of the SWLS range from 5 to 35, and the higher scores mean better life satisfaction. It shows very high reliability and the Cronbach's alpha range is commonly found optimal for this scale of 0.79 to 0.89 showing that there is internal reliability since it is close to 1. It also has strong test-retest reliability;

correlations in short-term periods (e. g., two months) are typically above 0.80, which symbolizes each measure’s ability to remain rather consistent in the present study. This paper provides substantial support for the validity of the SWLS through convergent validity consisting of reports of moderate to high correlations with other indices of SWB as well as discriminant validity featuring marked differentiation of life satisfaction from other forms of subjective experiences such as positive and negative affect.

2.3 Procedure

Google Forms were used as the primary tool to collect the data through the simple random sampling technique. The google form was sent along with the consent form and the participants who took part in the study were kept assured that their personal details would stay confidential and used strictly for the research purpose.

After collecting the data, the scoring was done as per the instruction given in the manual and the results were entered into a spreadsheet for statistical analysis, followed by SPSS analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To determine the nature of the distribution of the collected data, the descriptive statistics were calculated.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the variables under study.

Statistics	Assertiveness	Job Satisfaction
Mean	75.66	23.37
Median	75.50	24.00
Mode	72	30
Std. Deviation	13.462	6.426
Skewness	-.061	-.648
Kurtosis	2.427	.118

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the variables under the study, the computation mean of the assertiveness and job satisfaction were 75.66 and 23.37 the median for the variables were 75.50 and 24.00, the mode for the variables were 72 and 30, St. Deviation for the variables were 13.462 and 6.426, the skewness for the variables were -0.061 and -0.648, kurtosis for the variables were 2.427 and 0.118 respectively. From the above table values it can be concluded that the collected data is normally distributed and feasible of parametric statistical techniques.

3.1 To determine the relationship between the variables, assertiveness and job satisfaction, the Pearson’s correlation coefficient is calculated.

Table 2 Pearson’s correlation coefficient among the variables

Variables	Assertiveness	Job satisfaction
Assertiveness	-	
Job satisfaction	.097	-

The correlation of the variable under the study is indicated in the table above. The current study has shown the correlation coefficient between assertiveness and job satisfaction is 0.097(p > 0.05). This means that there is no significant relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction according to the

job holders. This means that there is no evidence of meaningful relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction.

In contrary to the study findings, Yohei et al. (2017) found a weak positive correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction. In another study, authors concluded that the correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction was not very strong, which means that other factors also influence the level of job satisfaction to a certain extent (Bhanu, et al. 2022). Another study has also found a weak positive correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction among psychiatric mental health nurses (Young, et al.2014).

According to the findings of the current study consistently found a weak positive correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction that indicates assertiveness has limited relationship on job satisfaction. This might be due to assertiveness is one of many personality characteristics that shape the job satisfaction and its influence may be diminished by the presence of other factors.

One way ANOVA is computed to detect statistically significant difference in study variables with reference to gender and presented in table 3 below.

Table 3 Summary of one-way ANOVA for gender and variables under study.

Variables	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F
Assertiveness	2568.003	2	1284.002	7.725**
Job satisfaction	152.774	2	76.387	1.871

Table 3 presents the conducted one-way ANOVA test for gender and given variables of the study. According to the table above, the F-value for assertiveness is 7.725, it suggests that there is significant difference in assertiveness level among the group gender.

The F- value for job satisfaction is 1.871 suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in job satisfaction level among the group gender. The result suggests that gender has a statistically significant effect on assertiveness but not on job satisfaction level. It concludes that gender plays a significant role in assertiveness but does not influence job satisfaction based on this analysis.

In support of the study findings, Poonam et al. (2013) found that gender has a crucial index in forming assertiveness behaviors. A study by Jerald et al. (2020) found that the female student tend to be less assertive than male students suggesting a potential gender difference in assertiveness level. Euckie et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between assertiveness and gender by assigning participants traditional or non-traditional gender roles, which influenced their assertiveness and sexual initiative, emphasising the impact of gender norms on assertive behaviour. According to Danica et al. (2013), gender has little influence on job satisfaction because it is mostly determined by individual characteristics such as personal experiences, perceptions, and work environment, not gender. Joe and Desai (2011) found that gender does not influence job satisfaction. Another study by Banerjee et al. (2010) indicated that job happiness is not influenced by gender or racial segregation, but rather by the presence of supportive coworkers, underscoring the importance of a healthy work environment and social support in moulding jobs.

According to the findings of the current study the research suggests that assertiveness varies by gender, but this variation does not impact job satisfaction directly. This might be because assertiveness is a trait that is shaped by gender norms and socialization that leads to distinct communication style between the

genders. On the other hand, job satisfaction is influenced by various factors that are not necessarily tied to gender.

3.3 To compare the study variables and identify if there is a statistically significant difference based on the age a one way ANOVA test is done and the results displayed on the table 4.

Table 4 Summary of one-way ANOVA for age and variables under the study

Variables	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	f
Assertiveness	87.499	2	43.749	.239
Job satisfaction	225.001	2	112.501	2.790

Table 3 presents the results of one-way ANOVA for age. The accompanying table shows that the F-value for assertiveness is 0.239. A low F-value of 0.239 indicates that there are no significant differences in assertiveness levels among age groups.

The F-value for job satisfaction is 2.790, indicates that it is not statistically significant. There is no statistically significant difference between job satisfaction and the age groups.

In contrary to the study findings, many authors found significant difference in assertiveness and job satisfaction based on their age. Warr et al. (2014) found that job satisfaction is positively related to age. Yeves et al. (2019) discovered that younger workers are less influenced by job insecurity in terms of intrinsic job satisfaction than older employees. Another study by Cavanagh et al. (2019) discovered that older workers have a larger relationship between their annual salary and job satisfaction. According to Beng Ang et al. (1993) age and job type as a separate factor also has a positive correlation with the level of satisfaction at work. The research done by Rožman et al. (2019) reveals that older employees exhibit significantly higher level of stress and burnout compared to younger employees.

According to the findings of the current study these trends might be due to various factors like increased experience and seniority, difference in generation, changing priorities and other societal factors.

IV.CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between Assertiveness and Job satisfaction at workplace. The data collected for this study is normally distributed enabling the use of parametric statistical techniques. Findings indicate no significant correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction in the work place; hence employers should explore alternative strategies to enhance job satisfaction, as assertiveness appears to have no significant impact. Among the employees studied, gender significantly impacts on assertiveness but does not have a significant impact on job satisfaction, here gender-specific assertiveness training may be useful, it may not necessarily translate to improved job satisfaction. Furthermore, no significant differences were found in assertiveness and job satisfaction among the age groups. Employers can expect assertiveness and job satisfaction levels to remain consistent across age groups, allowing them to modify their strategies accordingly. Finally, the data imply that assertiveness is not a significant determinant in job happiness, and companies should look into other ways to boost employee contentment.

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