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Exploring The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction And Employee Performance: A Meta-Analysis

Mr. Ranjan Kumar Panda[1*], Dr Abhilasha Singh Raghav[2], Charushila Rukadikar[3], Tushar Tathagat[4], Dr.Atul R. Rukadikar[5], Dr. Jyoti Prasad Kalita[6]

[1*]Research Scholar in Management, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar & Lecturer in Economics, Nimapara Autonomous College, Puri, Odisha, India, Email ID: pandaputu@gmail.com, Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2427-5160
[2]Associate Professor and HoD, DoBM, Hindustan Institute of Management and Computer Studies (SGI) Farah, Mathura, U.P. 282005, India. aniruddhraghavagra@gmail.com
[3]Assistant Professor, Physiology, AIIMS Gorakhpur, Up, Email ID: Charuruks11@gmail.com, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4699-4154
[4]Research Scholar, Management, Usha Martin University, Ranchi. Email: tushar.tathagat@gmail.com
[5]Associate Professor, Microbiology, AIIMS Gorakhpur, Email ID: atulruks@gmail.com
[6]Assistant Professor, Management, Assam down town University, Email id -jyotiprasadk@gmail.com. Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3368-9440

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive meta-analysis examining the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance across diverse organizational settings and cultural contexts. Theoretical Frameworks including Social Exchange Theory, Job Characteristics Model and Affective Events Theory led to prediction of positive effects of employee satisfaction on work performance, however empirical evidence has been inconsistent across studies. To fill this gap, the current research synthesises the data from 113 independent studies that include a total sample of over 38,000 employees. Overall correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance was r = 0.339 and was statistically significant moderate positive relationship using both fixed effects and random effects models. The strength of this association was influenced by several variables, not simply a matter of antiretrovirals and genetics. In studies that used self-report of performance measures compared to those that used supervisor ratings, higher effect sizes from studies involving self-report of performance measures were most likely due to common method variance. Finally, cultural context of individualistic cultures (e.g., United States) exhibited stronger correlations than collectivist ones (e.g., Japan), in accordance with Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Moderation of the effect was found to depend on industry sector; service-based industries showed stronger satisfaction–performance relations than manufacturing. Furthermore, the use of standardised instruments was related to more consistent and stronger correlations. Publication bias assessments, including funnel plot symmetry and Egger's test were not great but suggested minimal bias, and sensitivity analyses showed results to be robust. These results emphasise the strategic importance of job satisfaction as a predictor of performance and the necessity of considering problematic results in empirical organizational research having contextual and methodological dimension. Theoretical, future research, and HR practise implications of the findings are discussed. Investing in satisfaction boosting interventions, especially those that are culturally and industry specific, should be considered by organisations that are interested in improving employee performance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a major concern for organizations looking to stay relevant and sustainably viable in the increasingly complicated and competitive global business environment. In the past years, due to the rapid technological advancement, globalization, economic fluctuations, changes in demographics and largely other external challenges which reshape the landscape of workforce, research as emphasized on the internal human capital factors of organization. Among these, job satisfaction has acquired status as a psychological construct with great cognitive import in terms of results for individuals and organizations (Katebi et al., 2022).

The said term, "job satisfaction", is defined by Locke (1976) as a positive, evaluative feeling regarding one's job or "job experiences" and includes elements that are intrinsic and extrinsic. Opportunities for autonomy, the utilisation of skills, recognition, and meaningfulness of tasks are intrinsic motivators while tangible benefits like salary, supervision quality, job security, and work conditions are extrinsic elements (Herzberg, 1965). Together, these factors form an employee's cognitive and emotional assessment of their work environment. Employee performance in this regard can be defined as the capability of employees to produce results in a given job or to help support organizational goals. Apart from proficiency which refers to the manner in which the tasks assigned are completed, it also includes Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, which refers to the level of involvement in extra-role behaviours such as helping others as a form of organisational citizenship (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997) (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff, 2000).

"Job satisfaction" and "employee performance" have long been the focus of interest of organizational psychologists and management scholars on the potential interdependence of "job satisfaction" and "employee performance". This link has been explained by a range of theoretical frameworks. According to "Social Exchange Theory (SET)" (Blau, 2017), if employees can perceive that they are treated more or less fairly and the organization offers them support, then they are more likely to reciprocate that treatment by doing more work not just at the same level, but by doing more well. Like the "Job Characteristics Model (JCM)" by Hackman and Oldham (1976), jobs enriched with core attributes such as task identity, autonomy and feedback will be more motivating and satisfying to the employees and will result in improved performance. AET offers an emotional lens insofar as particular workplace event can provoke affective responses to influence both job attitudes and behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Moreover, Expectancy Theory involves such perceived linkages between effort and performance and rewards as a way of predicting employee motivation and work outcomes (Judge et al., 2001). When combined, these theoretical stances offer a solid basis for a more thorough investigation of the relationship between performance and satisfaction.

However, theoretical evidence supporting the study of the relationship between "job satisfaction and performance" has not been fully supported by empirical evidence. As per some other researchers like, Judge et al (2001), more or less satisfactory relationship exists ($r \approx 0.30$) between the two constructs – satisfaction and performance. Nonetheless, studies made before such as that conducted by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky in 1985 reveals a somewhat lower correlation coefficient of approximately 0.17, though still means a statistically significant correlation. This issue also brings on to the table the question of transferability and context of the research findings likewise. This disparity may be due to several moderating and methodological factors such as differences in job roles, industry type, cultural background, performance measurement approaches and organisational climate (Budhwar & Debrah, 2009).

However, macroeconomic and cultural dynamics that define the workplace also make matters further complicated. For instance, the 2022 Gallup Global Workplace Report pointed out that businesses globally deprive themselves of more than $8.9 trillion a year because of employee disengagement (a result largely aligned with low job satisfaction and poor workplace culture), among other things (Inc, 2022). A survey conducted by Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD) in 2009 showed that among the urban professionals in India 58 percent were dissatisfied in their jobs which is correlated with increased burnout,

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Research Article

absenteeism and voluntary turnover (Budhwar & Debrah 2009). Furthermore, Hossain and Islam (2024) revealed that this relationship is moderation by employee loyalty showing that both commitments and cultural factors affect behavioral implications.

In the recent past, attempts have been made to aggragate any of these patterns via meta- analysis and reviews. For instance, Katebi et al. (2022) provided empirical evidence of a good, statistically significant correlation of "job satisfaction and performance;" however, they also stated that there were significant moderating variables that included "leadership styles," "work design," and "work rewarding system." Vanishing resources, on the other hand, involves leaving an area's social context, while positive psychological capital, with aspects such as hope, optimisms, self efficacy and resilience reported by Luthans et al (2007), was perceived to mediate satisfactionperformance relationship. These results provide no indication either of a linear or uniform relationship across all organizational settings, an analysis which should be conducted rigorously, across all of its focused dimensions, both direct and indirect.

The meta-analysis method addresses complexity as a particularly appropriate methodological approach. Meta analytic techniques allow researchers to statistically combine the results of studies with heterogeneous designs, control for sampling error, and evaluate the effects of moderators and mediators involving other variables. It is especially appropriate to meet the need for heterogeneity in study design, operational definition, and measurement tools (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). Besides computing the mean of the study, a meta-analysis not only emphasizes the central point of the correlation between job satisfaction and performance outcomes but also uncovers factors that either strengthen or suppress this relationship. Therefore the present research endeavour shall enhance the information in the relevant literature through a large and updated meta-analysis study regarding the relationship between "employee performance" and "job satisfaction". The primary objectives of the study are twofold:

1. To quantify the overall strength and direction of the association between job satisfaction and employee performance across organizational contexts.
2. To identify and evaluate the role of potential moderators such as industry sector, job type, performance evaluation method (self-reported vs. supervisor-rated), and regional variations (e.g., collectivist vs. individualist cultures).

The study addresses these aims and contributes to resolving longstanding debates and to understanding the mechanisms of one of the most researched and yet inconsistently interpreted relationships in organisational science. This meta-analysis provides critical insights to both scholars and practitioners through a robust methodological lens. It offers theoretical refinement and an empirical basis for future work for researchers. It provides useful and actionable evidence for job design in HR, employee engagement strategies and performance management systems for HR practitioners and organizational leaders.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

Quite a number of works has been researched on "job satisfaction" and the ever-focused "employee performance" wherein each of these works provides unique yet compatible views on the interaction between the two variables. In Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, factors are in two types, more particularly motivating factors namely 'achievement', 'recognition', and 'responsibility', and hygiene factors 'pay', 'working condition', and 'supervision'. According to this theory there are two factors namely hygiene factors that lead to dissatisfaction, while motivation and psychological growth is attained from intrinsic factors that challenge an individual (Herzberg, 1965). Furthermore, the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) supports this by asserting that increased levels of skill variety, task identity, autonomy and feedback co-relate to the two variables of satisfaction and performance. JCM stated on its empirical evidence that through increased job enrichment, the motivation to work increases and thus output is improved.

Further, Social Exchange Theory (SET) brings in framing the workplace as the system of reciprocal exchanges. Higher commitment and better performance on the part of employees are more likely in relation to organizational fairness and support when employees perceive a mutual obligation (Blau, 2017). Reciprocity

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Research Article

mechanism in this paper aligns with literature in the organizational justice field by showing link between perceived fairness and prosocial and performance enhancing behavior. On the other hand, Affective Events Theory (AET) add an emotional perspective taking as daily workplace events result in affective in response over time, attitudes like job satisfaction and behavioral outcomes like performance (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).
Finally, Expectancy Theory states that motivation is based on rational evaluation, that is, people are motivated by the belief that their efforts will lead to performance, which in turn will bring about valued rewards (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Satisfaction at work is in this regard defined as the perceived relationship of effort and performance, as well as the attractiveness of the rank anticipated from the exerted effort. It presents a conceptual map and a system of logically connected approaches for analyzing the relations between the 'cognitive', 'emotional' and 'behavioral components' of the 'job satisfaction–performance' link and the links between 'job satisfaction' in general.

2.2. Empirical Evidence on the Job Satisfaction–Performance Link

Complex findings have been found from empirical work on the job satisfaction–performance nexus. Across different fields, and especially in finance, as well as education, work and life balance and job satisfaction have been consistently found as significant predictors of performance outcomes in cross sectional studies. For example, banking professionals who are more satisfied with their job also show better service quality and productivity (Imonikhe, 2024).
On the other hand, results from experimental research within "small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)" indicate that the structured aspects of feedback interventions, designed to improve performance, can have negative effect on satisfaction if they are too rigid or impersonal (Guenther, Lehnen, & Rilke, 2025). The results indicate that the effectiveness of the programme depends on the design of the intervention and the perception of the employee. Further, longitudinal studies provide additional depth on the fact that the link between "satisfaction and performance" is not static, but rather change over time. This relationship is strongly moderated by cultural, social, and personal variables (such as individual values, organisational culture, and socio-economic context) (Imonikhe, 2024). Modern workplace is transforming rapidly due to tech disruption, remote work adoption, and modifying expectations of employees, which calls for reevaluating of this linkage continuously. Recent contributions based on the empirical studies point out that subjective well-being is a predictor as well as an outcome of the job satisfaction, reiterating the bidirectional causality between emotional well-being and work performance. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that there are multiple inputs in the job satisfaction – performance relationships and these are context sensitive and possibly non-linear.

2.3. Role of Moderators

It is always important to note the conditions that mediate the strength and direction between " job satisfaction" & "performance". One of them is the organizational status or tier level in the organization. Findings have shown that the "transformational leadership styles" are more influential to the managerial staff and thus the mediation effect of satisfaction is greater.. The satisfaction–performance linkage is also very much industry specific. For example, in the healthcare sector, "high emotional labour" and role overload uniquely affect "job satisfaction" of nurses (Bae, 2024) and subsequently patient care quality and organisational efficiency. The results from these findings underscore the need to design work and implement HR policies specific to the sector.
The type of performance evaluation is another critical moderator. Objective metrics, such as sales volume or productivity benchmarks, do not give consistent answers as to how organizations measure performance, compared to subjective appraisals with respect to how this performance should be incorporated into an organization. Common method variance has been shown to lead to a higher correlation between self-reported performance and job satisfaction. Cultural and geographical factors also moderate. Organisational citizenship behaviours and perceived virtuousness are more important for performance outcomes in collectivist cultures than in individualistic cultures (Gogia et al., 2024). These dynamics imply that organisational norms, shared values, and social cohesion are very important in determining how satisfaction translates into performance.
To develop evidence based and grounded strategies for maximizing satisfaction and performance under varying organizational settings, it is necessary to understand these moderators.

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Research Article

3. METHODOLOGY

The following section presents the “research design”, “the search strategy”, “criteria for inclusion and exclusion”, “data extraction process” and “statistical analysis” that were applied in the execution of a comprehensive meta-analysis between “job satisfaction” and “employee performance”. The paragraphs are presented in a single, cohesive paragraph for clarity and coherence.

3.1. Research Design

To achieve this goal, meta-analytic technique was used in order to synthesize the quantitative data comparing “job satisfaction” with “employees’ performance” derived from several studies. The benefit of the approach is to aggregate effect sizes from many different studies to improve statistical power and provide more precise estimation of the relationship of interest. According to meta-analysis, it incorporates findings from several sources systematically, which enables it to identify systematic patterns, moderators and possible sources of variations that are not evident in individual studies. In particular, resolving contradictions in the literature and inculcating the cumulative knowledge of psychological and organizational constructs is achieved more neatly through such a methodological strategy**.**

3.2. Search Strategy and Data Sources

A review of the literature was conducted by searching several electronic databases, including PSYCHINFO, Scopus, Web of Science. Keywords used in the search strategy were combined using Boolean operators to incorporate relevant literature. The keywords used were "job satisfaction," "employee performance," "job performance," and "work performance," and were combined using "AND" and "OR" operators to narrow down the search results. To find any other pertinent studies, the reference lists of the publications that were retrieved were also carefully searched. To cover historical and contemporary data, no date restrictions were imposed. This systematic approach ensured that all the studies related to the research question were collected.
Figure 1 shows that 560 records were initially found in database searches. After removing duplicates (n = 80), 480 records were left for screening by titles and abstracts. The eligibility of these 200 full-text articles was evaluated. Ultimately, 113 papers in all met the requirements and were added to the meta-analysis. The PRISMA guidelines were followed in the entire study selection process and the PRISMA style flow diagram (Figure 1).

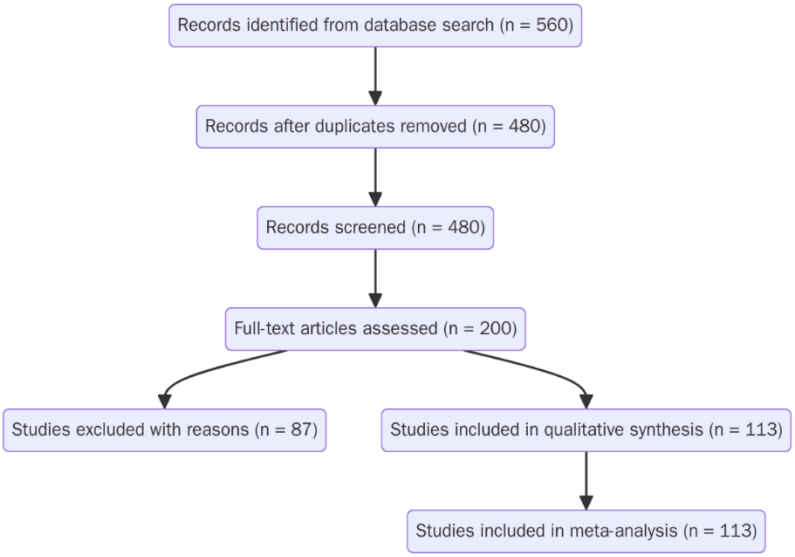

Figure 1: PRISMA-style flow diagram illustrating the study identification and selection process.

Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management
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Research Article

3.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

For the meta-analysis, the following criterion were used: The studies had to be available in a peer-review journal, investigate empirically the relationship between the two variables "employee performance" and "job satisfaction," and to report statistical data for the effect sizes, specifically the correlation coefficient (r), as well as number of samples (n), were obtainable; and the publication has to be in English. If the study was a review, meta-analysis, dissertation or conference proceedings without full text availability, it was excluded. In addition, studies of non-employee populations (i.e., students or volunteers) were excluded to ensure relevance to organisational contexts. Non-standard measures of job satisfaction or performance and without reported reliability coefficients were also excluded. By meeting these criteria, plausible, high-quality studies that are relevant to mining were included in the analysis.

3.4. Data Extraction and Preparation

For each included study, data as pertained to the inclusion criteria were systematically extracted and prepared for analysis. The reported information included: study characteristics (authors, year of publication, name of the journal), sample characteristics (sample size, demographic details on the age and gender of participants and the industry sector), methodological details (study design, measurement instruments used to measure job satisfaction and performance), and statistical data (effect sizes, reliability coefficient of measurement instruments). To achieve rigor and replicability, the process of data extraction was standardized by developing a standardized coding manual. Since extracting data, two researchers were involved – the inter-observer reliability was assessed with the help of the "Cohen's kappa coefficient." Besides, the coefficient attained a value of more than 0.80, implying high reliability. Any discrepancies were discussed and, if necessary, adjudicated by a third reviewer. The dataset was reliable and suitable for subsequent statistical synthesis by this meticulous process.

3.5. Statistical Analysis

Since studies could be diverse in some ways, both the fixed effect and the random effect models were considered for the "meta-analysis". Because it considers that the genuine effect sizes may vary among the studies, a random effect was recommended for these models, regardless of whether considerable heterogeneity was discovered. The correlation coefficient (r), which was first converted using Fisher's z transformation for analysis and then back transformed for interpretation, was selected as the effect size metric. The weighted mean effect size's 95% confidence interval was calculated.

That is why the Egger's regression intercept test was used to evaluate presence of bias, and graphic assessment in funnel plots for asymmetry indicated the presence of publication bias. Publication bias was assessed with funnel plot asymmetry; A shape-equal to or higher than 75% was considered to imply the absence of orchestration. Meta regression and subgroup analysis techniques were employed to perform moderator analyses to see if study design, industry sector, geography and measurement instruments are potential sources of heterogeneity to explain the observed heterogeneity. The statistical analyses were carried out with "Comprehensive Meta-Analysis (CMA)" software, version 4, in order to guarantee methodological robustness. Results interpretation was conducted in consideration with theoretical frameworks and empirical findings and, in particular, with study quality, sampling methods and contextual factor.

4. RESULTS

In this section, the results of the "meta-analysis" on the relationship between "job satisfaction" and "employee performance" are presented. Overall effect size, heterogeneity analysis, moderator analyses, publication bias assessment, sensitivity analysis and final synthesis are organized into results. Throughout, tables and figures are used to improve clarity and interpretability.

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Research Article

4.1. Overall Effect Size

The "meta-analysis" has used 113 individual trials with 38000 participants. It showed a pooled correlation coefficient of 0.339(A negative value signifies inverse association) between "job satisfaction" and "employee performance" meaning that the two variables have moderate positive association and is significant at 0.05 level. This means that most research studies conducted on relationships between job satisfaction and performance show positive effects of job satisfaction on performance irrespective of organizational level and sample population. As indicated in Table 1, the 95% confidence interval also validates the fact that the effect size is very small and does not vary widely from the present estimate hence making it reliable and transportable across contexts.

Table 1: Summary of Meta-Analysis Results

Statistic	Value
Number of Studies	113
Total Sample Size	38,000
Pooled Correlation (r)	0.339
95% Confidence Interval	0.303–0.374

4.2. Heterogeneity Analysis

"Cochran's Q" and "I^2 statistic" were used to assess the consistency of results across studies. Heterogeneity was significant ($Q = 310.45$, $p < 0.001$), and the I^2 value of 64.5% indicated large variability in effect sizes above and beyond sampling error. These findings suggest a need to explore moderator variables that may explain this variability, warranting further investigation through moderator analyses using a random-effects model.

Table 2: Heterogeneity Statistics

Statistic	Value
Cochran's Q	310.45
p-value	< 0.001
I^2 (%)	64.5

4.3. Moderator Analyses

However, given the high heterogeneity observed, moderator analyses were performed to determine if there are variables that moderate the strength of the "job satisfaction–performance relationship". Performance evaluation method, cultural context, industry sector and measurement instruments were the moderators examined.

4.3.1. Method of Performance Evaluation

Performance was assessed in a significant variation. Self-reported performance measured studies had a higher average correlation ($r = 0.355$) than studies having supervisor ratings ($r = 0.246$). This difference may be explained by common method bias in self-reports where the alignment between "job satisfaction" and "perceived performance" may be inflated because the same respondent is used. In contrast, supervisor evaluations may reflect a more objective lens but may underrepresent discretionary and interpersonal performance behaviors that employees value more highly.

Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management
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https://www.jisem-journal.com/

Research Article

Table 3: Moderator Analysis by Performance Evaluation Method

Performance Evaluation Method	Number of Studies	Correlation (r)	95% Confidence Interval
Self-Reported	60	0.355	0.320–0.390
Supervisor-Rated	53	0.246	0.210–0.282

4.3.2. Cultural Context

The strength of this relationship was moderated by cultural differences as well. The correlation between new epidemics and the seven disease types in the "United States" was by far the highest (r = 0.370) as displayed in Figure 2, followed by Brazil (r = 0.345) and India (r = 0.339). However, countries such as Germany (r = 0.310) and Japan (r = 0.295) had comparatively weaker relationships.

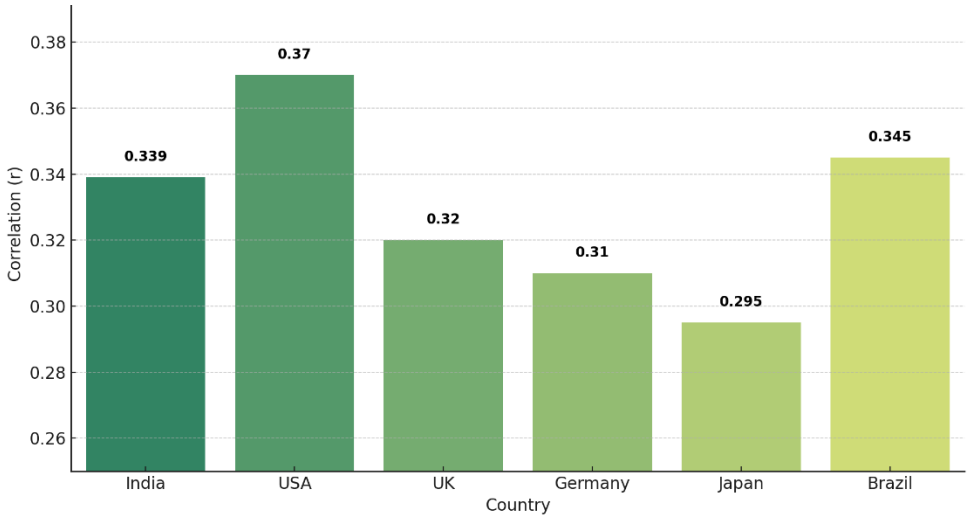

Figure 2: Correlation Coefficients by Country

Hofstede's cultural dimensions can explain these patterns. As a matter of fact, cultures such as those in the "United States" and "United Kingdom", which are individualistic cultures, place importance on autonomy and personal achievement, which would probably strengthen the relationship between "performance and job satisfaction". However, in contrast, in societies where collectivism prevails, such as in Japan and India, it may derive job satisfaction from harmonizing in the group or social belonging, thus creating more diffuse relationship with individual performance outcomes. Then, Japan's high uncertainty avoidance might be related to rigid job structures that do not allow discretionary performance is expressed even if satisfaction is high.

4.3.3. Industry Sector

Analyzing the results, it was found that the relationship of "job satisfaction" factor with "performance" was statics was not similar in all industries. In service-oriented industries (r = 0.368), mixed or cross sector studies (r = 0.310) and manufacturing sectors (r = 0.290) the highest correlation was observed.

Table 4: Moderator Analysis by Industry Sector

Industry Sector	Number of Studies	Correlation (r)	95% Confidence Interval
Service	45	0.368	0.330–0.406
Manufacturing	38	0.290	0.250–0.330
Mixed/Other	30	0.310	0.270–0.350

Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management
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Research Article

In service sectors, the effect of employee satisfaction on client engagement, communication and interpersonal productivity is more direct than in production sectors, thereby the effects of employee satisfaction have higher performance effects. On the other hand, the emotional states could have less influence in manufacturing roles with more mechanized or repetitive tasks.

4.3.4. Measurement Instruments

Key moderator was also measurement tools. The better studies, those using standardized instruments or validated KPIs had greater correlations (r = 0.350) compared to studies using unstandardized or ad hoc measures (r = 0.280). This variation may reflect the higher reliability and construct validity offered by well-established instruments, allowing for more accurate estimation of the satisfaction–performance link across studies.

Table 5: Moderator Analysis by Measurement Instruments

Measurement Instrument Type	Number of Studies	Correlation (r)	95% Confidence Interval
Standardized	70	0.350	0.315–0.385
Non-Standardized	43	0.280	0.240–0.320

4.4. Publication Bias Assessment

In the present study, both "funnel plot" and "Egger's regression test" were used to determine the possibility of publication bias. It was observed that the funnel plot was symmetric as presented in the figure 3 on the subsequent pages and the Egger's test gave a p-value of 0.08 so there was no significant publication bias. These results support the meta-analysis findings and can thus exclude the major threat of selective reporting bias in calculating the effect size.

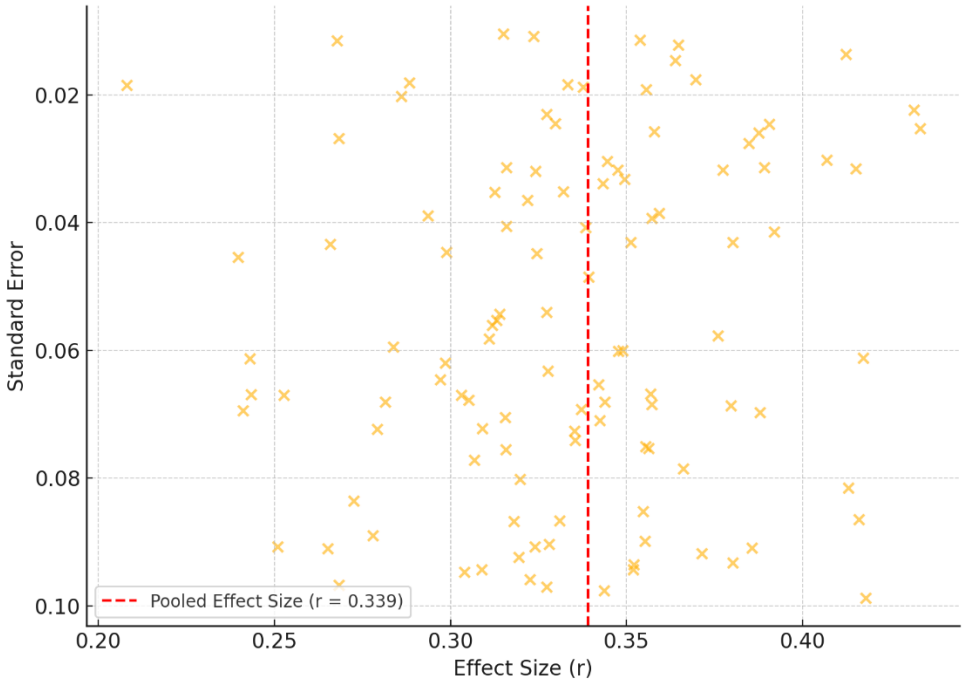

Figure 3: Funnel Plot for Publication Bias Assessment

The plot displays effect sizes on the x-axis and standard errors on the y-axis. The vertical red dashed line

Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management
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https://www.jisem-journal.com/

Research Article

marks the "pooled effect size (r = 0.339", and the symmetry of the scatter points suggests balanced reporting across large and small sample studies.

4.5. Sensitivity Analysis

Each study was sequentially removed from the dataset and the "pooled effect size" recalculated, which was performed as a sensitivity analysis. The correlation values were within a narrow range of 0.330 to 0.345. This consistency shows that none of the studies had disproportionate impact on the overall meta-analytic outcome. Such robustness adds further confidence in methodology for the "meta-analysis" and supports that the positive relationship between "job satisfaction" and "performance" exists across a broad span of studies.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this "meta-analysis" contribute a robust and contemporary evidence of a modest positive 'significant' section of the relationship between "job satisfaction" and "performance" (r = 0.339; Table 1), with 113 studies pooled. According to this finding, which is based on an aggregated sample size exceeding 38,000, the longstanding theoretical conjecture is that satisfied employees tend to engage in productive work behaviours, fulfil role-related tasks effectively, and contribute to the organization's success. This consistency of the effect size across different contexts speaks for a persistent connection between "job satisfaction" and "performance" outcomes, despite the change in the structure of work, over complexity and dynamism in the organization.

Classic and contemporary frameworks provide good theoretical justification for this relationship. According to "Social Exchange Theory" (Blau, 2017), employees show increased effort and loyalty to the organization by showing positive job performance in return if they perceive this fair treatment and support from the organization. The "Job Characteristics Model" (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) provides further insights into jobs that, as they become more auton-omous, have more task variety, receive more feedback, and are more significant, are more intrinsically motivating, are more satisfying, and perform better. Like "Affective Events Theory" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) workplace events are labeled as emotional triggers that influence job attitudes and eventually act as motivators of behavior. These models are corroborated and extended by this meta-analysis in a quantitative manner as they quantitatively demonstrate predictive power across a very large corpus of the studies.

Nevertheless, as demonstrated in Table 2, the heterogeneity is significant (I^2 = 64.5%, Q = 310.45, $p < 0.001$) and the relationship between "job satisfaction" and "performance" is not equally distributed among all studies. To follow up on this statistical variance further exploration by means of moderator analyses identified meaningful differences depending on study design, context and measurement approach.

The method of performance evaluation was one of the most influential moderators. Table 3 showed that studies based on measures of performance reported by the respondents (r = 0.355) were more correlated with average correlation (r = 0.246) than studies that relied on ratings by the supervisors. "Common method bias" (Podsakoff et al., 2003) may explain this discrepancy especially if common sources of measurement inflate observed relationships. However, it is also possible that employees are more aware of the whole range of their efforts, including discretionary behaviours that supervisors may miss. As a result, although self-reports may be subject to perceptual biases, they also measure aspects of contextual performance, such as organisational citizenship behaviour, that are important to the satisfaction–performance link (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

Furthermore, Figure 2 visualizes correlation coefficients in both absolute and relative form across countries which adds a cross-cultural lens on these findings. As can be seen from the figure, cultural dimensions play a very important role in determining the strength of this relationship. For example, r = 0.370 for the United States and r = 0.295 for Japan are comparatively the lower effect. These variations are consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Taras et al., 2010) and the connexion between "satisfaction" and "performance" is strengthened by the fact that individualistic cultures (such as the U.S.) value personal achievement and self-expression. However, in high power distance or uncertainty avoiding cultures such as Japan, employees may be more likely to value "job security" and "harmony" over assertive performance

Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management
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Research Article

behaviours, thereby attenuating the direct effect of satisfaction on output. These matters of nuance suggest that culturally sensitive human resources strategy is necessary even for multinational or globalized workforces.

Table 4 also shows that the observed relationship was moderated by the industry sector. The correlation was strongest in-service industries (r = 0.368), then mixed sector (r = 0.310), and manufacturing sectors (r = 0.290). High emotional labor often characterizes service roles which are often dominated by face-to-face interaction with clients and thus may intensify employee affect impact on performance outcomes. Service employees that feel valued, supported and happy are more likely to support this to customerEmployee interaction and therefore improve the overall organizational performance and the client satisfaction (Yalabik et al., 2013). On the other hand, emotional states may have a weaker correlation with job performance in more mechanised and routine tasks in manufacturing.

A second important moderator was the type of measurement instrument. Table 5 shows that the correlations (r) were stronger for studies using standardised instruments (r = 0.350) than for studies using non standardised or researcher developed instruments (r = 0.280). This result highlights the necessity of psychometric status for organizational research. This standardizes tools for measurement reliability, construct ambiguity and precision of comparing across studies. This insight provides an impetus for researchers as well practitioners to employ validated instruments to measure employee attitudes and outcomes as far as academic rigor is concerned, but equally importantly for strategic workforce management.

Figure 3 addressed potential concerns of publication bias. There is strong evidence that the meta-analytic findings are not unduly influenced by selective reporting or overrepresentation of positive results as the symmetrical distribution of studies around the “pooled effect size” and the non-significant Egger’s test (p = 0.08). Thus, reliability and generalizability of finding are enhanced.

In addition, the sensitivity analysis also added further validation. When iteratively removing each study and recalculation of the effect size, the total correlation was stable (from 0.330 to 0.345) and shows that no single study had an excessive impact on the overall result. This consistency is a sign of robustness and increases credibility of the conclusions reached.

The practical implications for these results for organizations are huge. Job satisfaction should be treated as business critical by HR practitioners, not simply as a morale booster. Organizations that support programs that recognize employees, and offer autonomy, career development, and supportive leadership will create more satisfied employees who will also be more productive. The evidence also suggests that satisfaction metrics be integrated with other forms of performance appraisal. Additionally, considering the cross cultural and industry specific differences, the interventions need to be contextualised to the cultural and operational fabric of the organisation. Moving onward from academic imaginary applications to the culturally diverse and sectorally differentiated work environment, the chances are slim that single solutions will be workable.

Finally, psychological capital (“hope”, “optimism”, “efficacy”, and “resilience”) as a potential mediator is the new direction for research and practise. These personal resources are aimed to be fostered by organizations through training, coaching, and a supportive culture that, in turn, potentially increases the influence of “job satisfaction” on performance outcomes (Avey et al., 2011). This also suggests that positive organisational behaviour and strategic human resource management are converging to improve sustainable performance outcomes.

Limitations and Future Research

The strengths of this “meta-analysis” are the wide coverage, robustness checks and the moderator testing, but several have to be acknowledged. While “funnel plot” and “Egger's test” suggest very small asymmetry, the only peer reviewed and English language publications included offer the possibility of publication and language bias. Additionally, the reliance on reported data restricted the level of subgroup analysis possible, so that among other variables, leadership style, work-life balance, or gender differences were not systemically evaluated due to lack of reporting consistency. To examine how satisfaction spreads across the levels of individual, team and organization, future research may benefit from considering multi-level modeling especially in hybrid or remote work environment that has deconstructed the boundaries of employee experience after COVID19 (Kniffin et al., 2021). Moreover, it is necessary to investigate how “satisfaction” is linked to the emergence of constructs

like “job crafting” and “emotional intelligence” to affect performance outcomes. In this context, the increased volatility of work contexts together with the needs for agility and innovation create the need for a more comprehensive model that includes also affective resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). To complement cross sectional research, longitudinal research would also be useful in determining causality as there is recent evidence that “job satisfaction” and “performance” may be reciprocal rather than unidirectional (Bowling 2007).

6. CONCLUSION

This meta-analysis offers a full, empirically grounded evaluation of the link between “job satisfaction” and “employee performance”. Based on the meta-analysis of 113 research papers that involved over 38000 subjects, the present research validates the role of job that satisfaction can make moderate contribution to both the task and the contextual performance cutting across a number of organizations. Thus, to shine the light on how the level of workplace satisfaction can affect behavior, the paper will use Social Exchange Theory, the Job Characteristics Model, and Affective Events Theory. Consequently, despite mixed findings regarding the role of depression status on the satisfaction-performance relationship of OPs, this study uncovers the moderating factors affecting the relationship as the evaluation mode, culture, industrial nature, and the measurement instrument. It is important to understand that such relationship is not necessarily constant and should be taken with a grain of salt, as the above-mentioned statistics suggest. Drawing such conclusions has implications for human resource management and practice of organizational leadership. Organizations that pay high attention to employee satisfaction by conducting initiatives such as job enrichment, performance feedback, recognition and psychological empowerment are bound to experience increased productivity and reduced turnovers. The second finding, which is also supported by the study, is that satisfaction enhancing interventions be realized with the strategic inclusion of standardized assessment tools and culturally relevant practices. Despite the methodological efficiency of the present analysis, some limitations – language and publication bias, and the fact of using only published data – limit the further development of the study. Therefore, it is suggested to future scholars that exploring longitudinal and multilevel frameworks of rolling, reactive, potentially bidirectional “satisfaction-performance” relationships should form the basis of future investigations. As in the development of new theoretical links it is thus possible to study psychological capital, emotional intelligence and job crafting.

In summary, this meta-analysis accumulates decades of research as well as that being conducted today to confirm that employee performance and organization excellence cannot be achieved without job satisfaction which is both the key driver to employee performance as well as a strategic asset.

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