

## Impact of Age and Designation on Satisfaction with Working Environment (Empirical Evidence from Power Sector of Pakistan)

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**Abstract:** Decades of research concludes that the most important input to organizational success is its human resources. With rapidly increasing competition among organizations, keeping employees contented with jobs has become strenuous for managers. It is believed that the key to satisfaction of employees lies in a pleasant working environment which includes its ergonomic features as well as the socio-political scenario of the workplace. The level of pleasantness depends on individual responses to it which are influenced by the age and designation of the employees. By clearly understanding the relationship between these demographic features and the satisfaction with the working environment, it may be possible to make alterations in organizational culture to have more gratified employees. This research is a case study on employees of Jamshoro Power Company Limited; a public sector power generation company. The paper explores impact of employee demographics (age and designation) on their level of satisfaction with working environment. Hypothesis were developed through literature survey and a questionnaire was developed. In order to obtain a quantifiable data, employees at Jamshoro Power Company Limited were asked to fill the survey questionnaire with their responses. Valid responses from 340 employees were analysed and formulated hypothesis were checked. Collected data was plotted keeping satisfaction as dependable variable and demographic features of employee's age and designation were kept independent. The results proved first hypothesis showing a significant relationship between age and satisfaction with job space. Second hypothesis however proved to reveal converse results. Hence, it was concluded that designation and satisfaction with working environment are oppositely related.

**Keywords:** Demographics; JPCL; Job Satisfaction; Work environment.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Modern day competition which offers multiple opportunities to the workers poses major challenges to managers in keeping their employees from hopping or delivering lower outputs. As most humans spend more than half of their waking up hours at work, the role which work environment plays in job satisfaction is vital and influences the resourcefulness of an employee. Landy (1989) declared it to be the Holy Grail of industry. Decades of research reveals that ergonomically sound environment improves contentment level of workers with their work. The physical comfort and safety are said to be directly related to job satisfaction in a manner that they ease posture, personal control of work space, moods and keeps away from distractions (Lee, 2006).

Job Satisfaction plays a very important role in our daily lives for both employees and organizations. Employees who are satisfied with their job, will be more committed to their employer and will be more productive (Agyemang and Arkorful, 2013). The most important input to organizational success is its human resources. Dissatisfaction with job and inefficiency of employees are said to be proportional to each other. The inefficiency is outcome of certain causes. This paper focuses on gauging the impact of certain demographics on level of job satisfaction of the employees of Jamshoro Power Company Limited (JPCL). The company is a national asset and improving its efficiency relies on improving the efficiency of its employees. Hence this research will make recommendations for improvement on a personal level to contribute towards overall organizational benefit.

JPCL is a public-sector energy generation company located in Sindh, Pakistan. The company was incorporated in August 1998 under companies' ordinance 1984 and later was owned by Water and Power Development Authority of Pakistan i.e., WAPDA on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999. The company has two power generation setups at Kotri and Jamshoro. Seven units of which 2 have been decommissioned produce 174 MW of power at

Kotri while the 4 units at Thermal Power Station Jamshoro have a total capacity of 850 MW. These plants are operated on natural gas and furnace oil. A total of approximately 2000 personnel are employed at the power stations ranging from higher management to first-line management. These employees having basic to higher education of Master level fall into the age bracket of 18-60 years.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Job satisfaction**

Decades of research has presented many definitions of job satisfaction. In general, it is about the overall feelings an employee has about his/her job. Job Satisfaction means that the happier the person at work, more satisfied he/she will be with job. When the employees are dissatisfied with their work, they are less engaged and will seek opportunities to quit (Hashim, 2015). According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is a positive or pleasant emotional state that results from a person's appreciation for their own job. A clearer and sound definition was presented by Oshagbemi (2000), who talked about job satisfaction as an effective reaction to a job that results from the person's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired, anticipated, or deserved. Researchers have also suggested that affective experiences at job are also a cause of job satisfaction and the reports of employee effectiveness can be used to determine job satisfaction (Brief and Weiss, 2002).

### **2.2 Workenvironment and job satisfaction**

Working environment and employee satisfaction has a positive relation that improves the work life quality. Employee productivity is determined by unusual levels in the environment in which employees work. Good working environment reduces sick leave, lowers turnover and increases efficiency (Salunke, 2015). Work environment constitutes of tangible and intangible surroundings in which an employee operates. Tangible surroundings include physical working conditions like heat, lighting, temperature, ergonomic conditions *i.e.* the physical comfort and safety of work space. Intangible environment is made up of political and social environment *i.e.* relationship with peers and the existence of office and organizational politics. These surroundings are said to be directly related to job satisfaction in a manner that they ease posture, personal control of work space, moods and keeps away from distractions (Lee, 2006). The quality of working environment in which an employee does his/her job has a greatest impact on their level of motivation and subsequent performance (Chandrasekar, 2011).

Multiple researchers have reported job satisfaction to be a direct determinant of comfort of work space. Ikonne (2014) suggested that efficient ergonomic designs can considerably reduce the risks of injuries and postural discomfort while contributing positively towards quality of work output and satisfaction. Workspace comfort also stimulates mental exercise as discovered by the study of Marras and Karwowski (2006). They also found that well established work ergonomics attracted more competent employees towards a job and yielded increased performances.

### **2.3 Demographic backgrounds and work environment**

The physical and mental comfort are also influenced by certain demographic features. The teacher's age does not significantly affect their satisfaction level (Cano and Miller, 1992). The demographic characteristics of the faculty members were negligible in relation to overall job satisfaction (Jaime and Jaime, 2004). The research conducted by Bas and Ardic (2002) focusing on the effect of age and job satisfaction proved the positive correlation with each other. When it comes to satisfaction with the physical environment, employees belonging to different age groups have varied ergonomic needs. As physical health degrades with age, satisfaction with physical ease tends to deviate from its existing pattern. Furthermore, much of the work space conditions are determined by the nature of job. Physical environment differs for office and site workers. Thus, the designation can also be thought of as an influencing facet for satisfaction with working environment and hence the overall job satisfaction.

### **2.4 Hypothesis development**

Based on the literature, following hypothesis were constructed:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between age and satisfaction with working environment.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between designation and working environment.

## **III. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

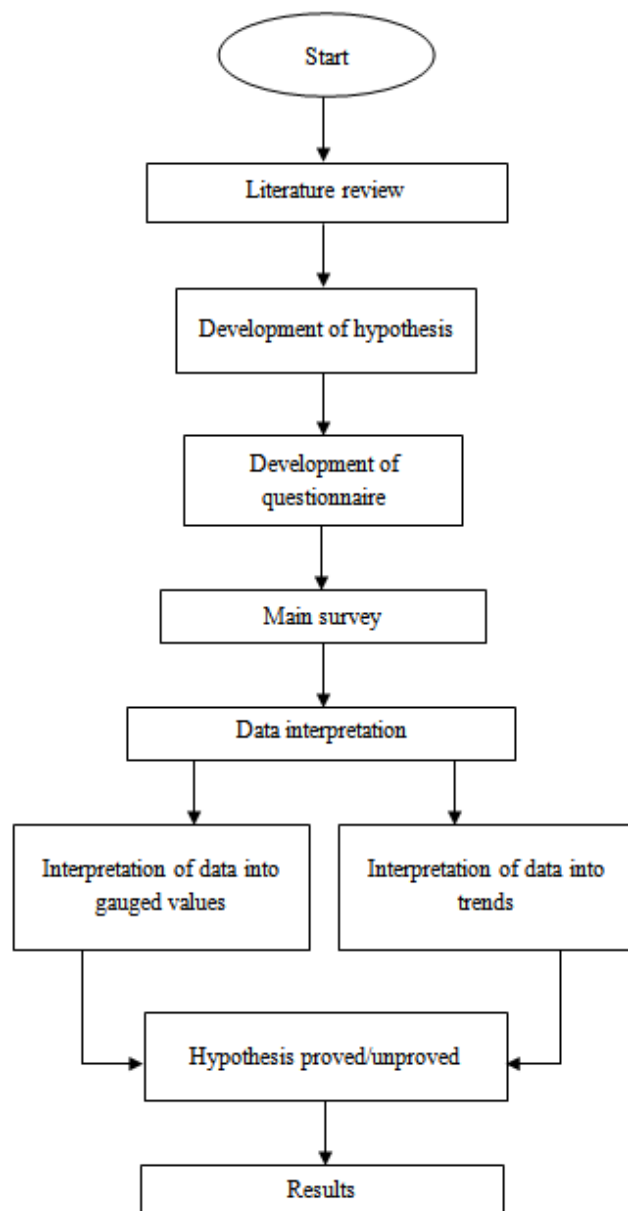
This paper examines the effect of work environment on the satisfaction of employees of the power generation plant of Jamshoro. The paper further analyses that the age and designation of employees play determining role in this level. The methodology adopted for this research was designed to achieve results in numerical values. Obtained results were destined to determine the following correlations:

- i. Satisfaction with work environment as a function of age

- ii. Satisfaction of work environment as a function of designation.
- iii. Overall satisfaction with working environment.

Data trends were plotted with satisfaction and working environment while age and designation were kept independent. Questionnaire was developed to conduct a survey and collect data from the employees of JPCL. This questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part focused on the job satisfaction related to tangible environment *i.e.* lighting, noise, ease of access to tools and equipment, cleanliness and ease of posture. The second part recorded results for the intangible environment including social and political environments of the workplace. Figure 1 shows the flow of method that was adopted.

A total of 388 questionnaires were sent to the employees. Out of these 20 forms were incompletely filled and thus discarded, 38 people turned down the forms while 340 forms came complete and sound for analysis. SPSS software package was used to analyse the patterns. Response against each question was taken on a likert scale with answer ranges between very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Demographic information of employees paved way for validation of hypotheses  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . Responses were grouped according to age and designation sectors and then cross tabulated with working environment.



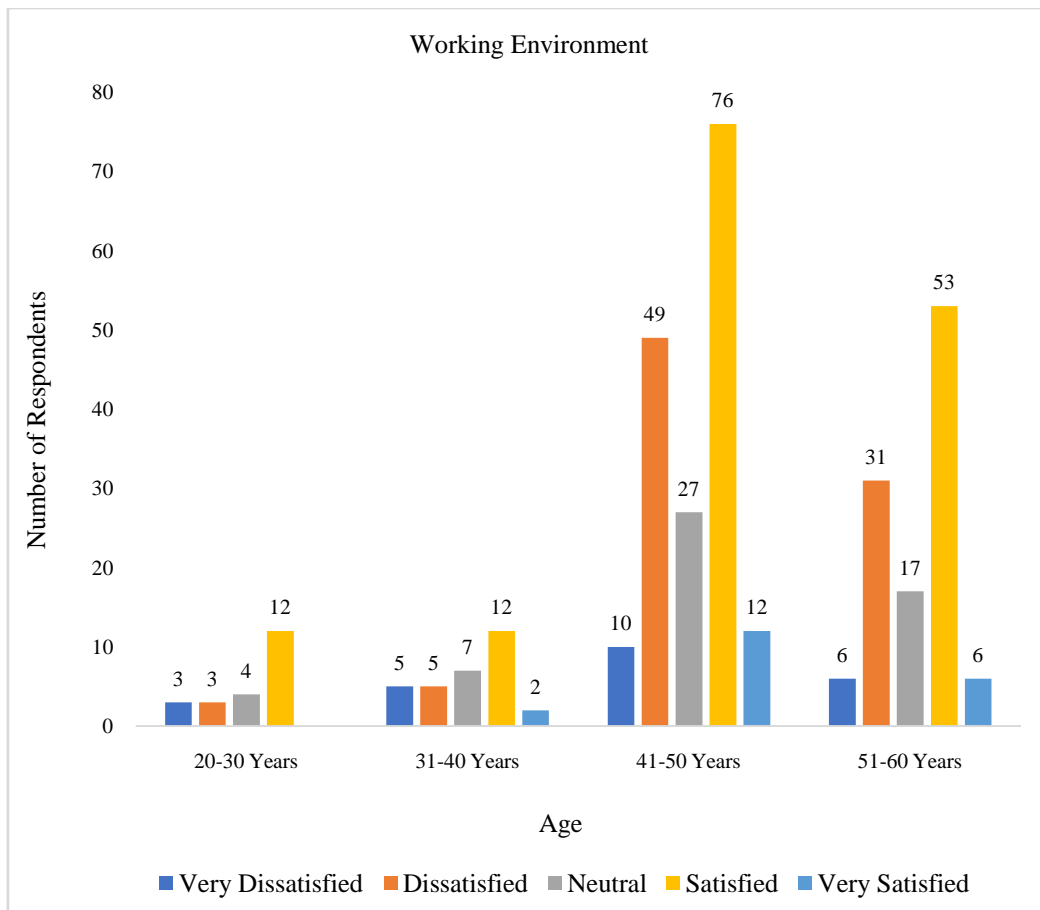
**Figure 1. Research Methodology**

**IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

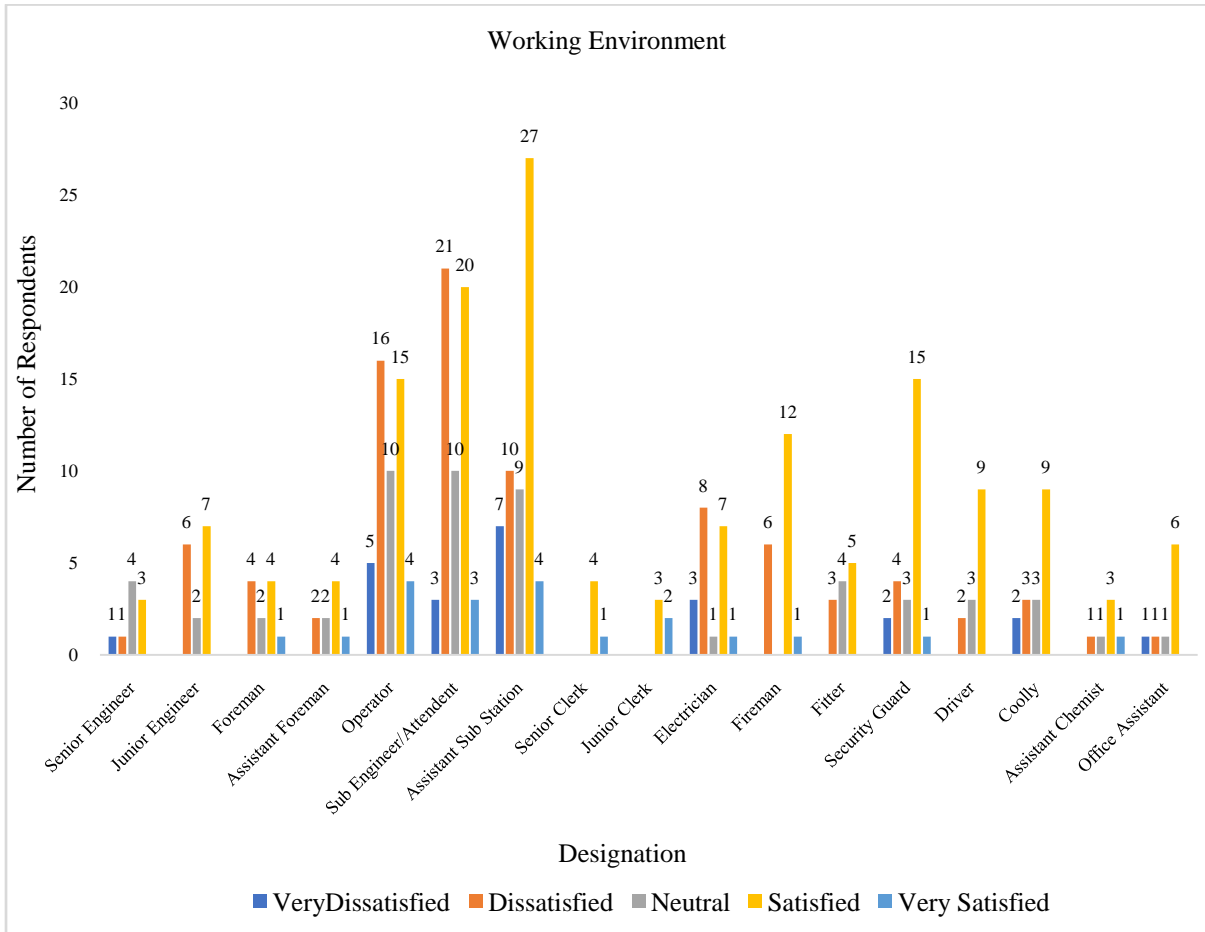
Satisfaction with working environment among these age groups was studied by cross tabulation of the two variables. Figure 2 elucidates the results. Dissatisfaction was most common in the age group of 41-50 years while none of the young employees were very satisfied with their working environment. Since there is a significant variation of responses within all age groups, the difference in response percentages of ‘‘satisfaction’’ and ‘‘dissatisfaction’’ helped reach a conclusion. For the considered age groups, greatest variation was recorded for employees between 41-50 years of age, while it was the least for younger age groups. This in turn shows that younger people are mostly satisfied with the pleasantness of working environment. As the age increases the satisfaction level is also increased. Hence proved Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>.

Figure 3 shows the responses of senior management (senior engineer, junior engineer), middle management ( foreman, assistant foreman, operator, attendant, assistant sub station, senior clerk, junior clerk) and first line management (electrician, fireman, fitter, security guard, driver, coolly, assistant chemist, office assistant) in terms of their satisfaction level with working environment. Clearly, difference between satisfaction and dissatisfaction prevailed the most in first line management. Since first line management has harsher physical tasks to perform and generally have more involvement in political activities, they were expected to be more dissatisfied. Converse results proves converse hypothesis H<sub>2</sub> that designation and satisfaction with working environment are conversely related.

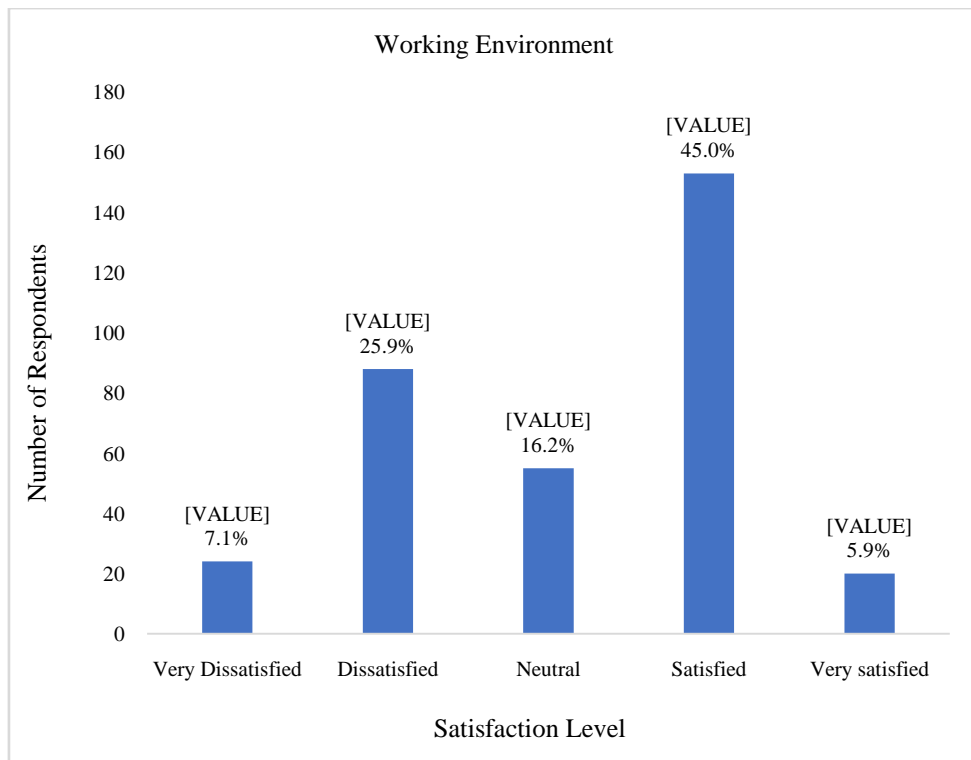
Analysis of overall job satisfaction reveals that 7.1% of the employees were Very Dissatisfied with Working Environment, 25.9% of the employees were Dissatisfied with Working Environment, 16.2% of the employees were Neutral means they couldn’t decide whether they are Dissatisfied or Satisfied with Working Environment, 45% of the employees were Satisfied with Working Environment and 5.9% of the employees were Very Satisfied with Working Environment (Figure 4).



**Figure 2. Employee Satisfaction with Working Environment vs Age**



**Figure 3. Employee Satisfaction with Working Environment vs Designation**



**Figure 4. Employee Overall Satisfaction with Working Environment**

## V. CONCLUSION

There are multiple reasons that may vary the satisfaction level of employees. Motivation is the major influence of job satisfaction and is often affected by the ergonomics of working environment. Results of this research show the same. Satisfaction with working environment is directly related to age but indirectly proportional to the designation being highest for first-line employees and least for the top management.

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