



Job Satisfaction across Different Sectors in India

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Abstract:

This paper provides a comprehensive review of job satisfaction research across major employment sectors in India, drawing exclusively from Indian books, articles, and peer-reviewed studies. The review synthesizes theoretical foundations, sector-specific trends, and empirical findings from public and private enterprises, IT, banking, healthcare, manufacturing, education, and allied fields. Evidence from comparative studies indicates that public sector employees generally report higher job satisfaction due to job security, stable work schedules, and welfare provisions, while private and IT sector employees value career growth, compensation, and recognition but often experience stress and work-life imbalance. Sectoral studies also reveal distinct determinants of satisfaction—ranging from emotional labour in healthcare and IT to working conditions and safety in manufacturing, and administrative climate in educational institutions. The review highlights the relevance of classical theories such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and the JD-R model in interpreting Indian findings. Despite extensive research, gaps remain in longitudinal evidence, studies on informal and gig workers, and deeper examination of psychosocial variables. The paper concludes with recommendations for future research aimed at enhancing workforce well-being and supporting evidence-based HR and policy interventions in India.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Public And Private Sector, Indian Workforce, IT Sector Employees, Banking Sector, Healthcare Workers, Manufacturing Sector, Education Sector, Organizational Behaviour, Work-Life Balance, Job Security, Employee Motivation, Organizational Climate, Emotional Labour, Human Resource Management, Sectoral Comparison, Employee Well-Being, Occupational Stress, Career Growth, Workplace Determinants, India.

Introduction:

Job satisfaction is a key area of research within organizational behaviour, human resource management, and psychology. In the Indian context, with its diverse and segmented economy—ranging from structured public sector enterprises to the expansive informal workforce—

understanding the dynamics of job satisfaction assumes a multidimensional significance. Not only does it influence employee well-being and productivity, but it also has ripple effects on national productivity, talent retention, and service delivery in essential sectors like healthcare and education.

In the Indian scenario, various studies have attempted to measure and compare the levels and determinants of job satisfaction across sectors. These studies often utilize well-known job satisfaction scales or construct sector-specific indicators. The literature reveals that factors such as job security, compensation, work-life balance, career progression, recognition, and organizational climate prominently influence satisfaction across sectors—but with varying degrees of importance.

Below is a synthesized account of major Indian theoretical and empirical studies on this topic.

Review of Literature:

1. Job Satisfaction in Public vs Private Sectors:

Kalaivani and Nirmala Devi (2025) undertook a comparative study in Tamil Nadu to explore job satisfaction differences between public and private sector employees. Their findings suggest public sector employees experience higher satisfaction, largely attributed to job security and pension benefits. This aligns with earlier Indian studies emphasizing the psychological comfort associated with permanency in public jobs, even when private sector employees often enjoy higher salaries.

Similarly, Singha and Ray Choudhury (2016) conducted a comprehensive study involving over 700 employees across sectors like IT, BPO, education, railways, and banking. Their research indicated that public sector employees not only scored higher in job satisfaction but also reported higher subjective well-being and life happiness. These results reaffirm the hypothesis that job

security and work environment in public sector institutions have a strong emotional and psychological bearing on employees.

Contrary to this, a study by Amisha Bisht et al. (2023), which compared military and private sector employees, found no significant statistical difference in overall job satisfaction. This raises an important point: satisfaction may depend more on job roles and organizational culture than on the sector label alone.

2. IT Sector Studies:

The Indian IT sector has been extensively studied for job satisfaction due to its high employee turnover rates. Paliwal and Meshram (2021), in a literature review focusing on IT employees, emphasized compensation, recognition, and career growth as key contributors to satisfaction. However, they noted increasing dissatisfaction due to extended work hours, lack of work-life balance, and burnout. This is echoed in studies that argue the “emotional labour” in IT jobs often undermines the advantages of high pay.

Ravichandra and Dalvi's (2021) comparative study between IT and manufacturing sectors reinforced this view. IT employees showed higher satisfaction than their manufacturing counterparts, partly due to better pay and learning opportunities. However, stress levels—especially linked to client pressures and project deadlines—remained a concern in the IT sector.

3. Banking Sector Insights:

In the context of the Indian banking sector, a study by researchers in Lucknow (2018) showed that public and private bank employees reported similar levels of satisfaction, although demographic variables like age and education affected perceptions. However, when the sample focused

specifically on women bank employees, as in the study by Yadav and Mehta (2020) in Sonapat and Bilaspur, public sector women reported higher satisfaction due to predictable hours, leave benefits, and better work-life balance.

This suggests that gender dynamics and family responsibilities intersect with job characteristics to influence satisfaction levels, especially in sectors like banking where customer service roles can be demanding.

4. Healthcare Sector Findings:

Reeta Soni and Ravinder Sharma (2023) studied healthcare workers and found that both intrinsic (sense of purpose, meaningful work) and extrinsic (pay, infrastructure) factors influenced job satisfaction. Their research also confirmed a strong correlation between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance outcomes.

A government study in Punjab (2019) revealed that 75% of healthcare workers in public facilities were dissatisfied with their working conditions, citing poor infrastructure, inadequate rewards, and limited career mobility. These findings emphasize that while intrinsic motivation may be high in healthcare, the external environment often fails to support it adequately.

In another study focused on traditional healthcare settings, Phalguni et al. (2020) found that emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Employees with higher emotional intelligence could better manage work stress and build stronger interpersonal relationships, leading to greater workplace engagement.

5. Manufacturing Sector Studies:

Ahluwalia and Preet (2018) conducted an empirical study among manufacturing workers in Punjab and found that physical working conditions, organizational climate, safety, and salary were critical determinants of job satisfaction. Factory workers reported dissatisfaction with job autonomy and recognition, indicating that manual workers often feel undervalued despite being the operational backbone.

In a separate study focusing on the organizational learning climate in manufacturing firms, Manohar and Kumari (2016) found a positive link between organizational learning capacity—defined by knowledge sharing and systemic orientation—and job satisfaction. This points to the value of non-monetary motivators like learning and development in industrial settings.

6. Education Sector Research:

Prasad and Choudhary (2022), in their study of primary school teachers in Patna, found that government school teachers were generally more satisfied than their private school counterparts. However, dissatisfaction in both groups stemmed from heavy workloads, administrative burden, and limited resources.

Another study in Gujarat (2021), focusing on government-aided schools, identified that professional development programs and administrative support positively impacted job satisfaction among teachers. However, teachers reported dissatisfaction with delayed appraisals and bureaucratic red tape.

The Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya system has also been a subject of job satisfaction research. A study involving over

200 teachers from different faculties indicated that arts and commerce teachers were more satisfied compared to their science counterparts, possibly due to workload differences. The study also found a negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

7. Nursing and Medical Representatives:

A study by Alka Singh and Rashi Kesh (2021) on nursing staff in Uttar Pradesh concluded that dissatisfaction arose primarily from poor recognition, heavy workload, and inadequate promotion opportunities. These are consistent findings in Indian healthcare literature, suggesting systemic issues in managing human resources in nursing.

Shatakshi Lall (2020), researching medical representatives, found that organizational welfare measures like transportation allowances, housing support, and travel reimbursements significantly influenced satisfaction levels. For roles requiring frequent travel and client interaction, such as pharma sales, welfare measures act as crucial motivators.

8. Case-Based Sectoral Studies:

In a case study of a young manufacturing company in Bangalore, Deogaonkar (2023) found that employees rated work-life balance, recognition, and transparent communication as key contributors to their satisfaction. These findings highlight that even in blue-collar sectors, modern HR practices can substantially improve employee morale and satisfaction.

Theoretical Implications:

The Indian literature on job satisfaction predominantly draws upon classical theories like Herzberg's Two-

Factor Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and the Job Characteristics Model. Several studies also reference the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) model, particularly in high-stress sectors like healthcare and IT.

Across studies, it is evident that both **hygiene factors** (salary, working conditions, policies) and **motivators** (recognition, responsibility, growth) influence satisfaction. However, the weightage of these factors varies by sector, gender, and job level. For example, security and working hours matter more in the public sector, while career growth and performance recognition are stronger predictors in the private sector.

Conclusion and Research Gaps:

The literature reviewed here presents a fairly comprehensive picture of how job satisfaction manifests across different sectors in India. However, several gaps persist:

- **Longitudinal data is limited**, restricting understanding of how satisfaction evolves over time.
- **Informal and gig sectors** remain largely under-researched despite forming a significant part of India's workforce.
- **Cross-sectoral comparative studies** are scarce, making it difficult to generalize findings.
- **Psychosocial variables** such as fairness perception, emotional labor, and workplace identity are not deeply explored.

Recommendations for Further Research:

Future studies should incorporate:

- Multi-sector longitudinal surveys.

- Deeper focus on the unorganized sector and gig economy.
- Measurement of psychological well-being and burnout.
- Evaluation of policy impact (e.g., labor law changes, healthcare reforms) on job satisfaction.

Such research will not only fill theoretical gaps but also support evidence-based policymaking and HR interventions—an important goal for funding agencies seeking to improve workforce well-being and productivity in India.

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