

Chapter 3 – Attitudes and Job Satisfaction

Attitudes

Attitudes: evaluating statements/judgements people make about objects, people or events

- The attitudes people have often determine their behaviour, but there are also instances where one's attitudes are influenced by behaviour
- Attitudes are complex, but can be broken down into 3 main components to help better understand the relationship between attitudes and behaviour

3 main components of attitudes

1. **Cognitive:** opinion or belief a person has behind an attitude eg. My pay is poor
2. **Affective:** emotions or feelings that often result from one's belief eg. I am angry that I'm not getting paid enough
3. **Behavioural:** intention to behave in a certain way eg. I am searching for another job with better pay

Cognitive dissonance

Cognitive dissonance: any incompatibility between 2 or more attitudes or between behaviour & attitudes - discomfort caused by holding **conflicting** ideas simultaneously

- Individuals seek to reduce this uncomfortable gap, or *dissonance*, to reach stability and consistency
- Consistency is achieved by changing the attitudes, modifying the behaviours, or through rationalization

Desire to reduce dissonance depends on:

- Importance of elements
- Degree of individual influence
- Rewards involved in dissonance

Moderating Variables

There are many relationship factors that influence the ability to predict behaviour. The most powerful moderators of the attitude-behaviour relationship are:

- Importance of the attitude - its connection to our core values
- Its correspondence to behaviour
- Its accessibility - attitudes that are frequently expressed
- Presence of social pressures
- If the person has had direct experience with the attitude

These variables impact the ability to predict how a certain attitude will predict behaviour

Major Job attitudes

Job satisfaction

Positive feelings people have about their job – results from an evaluation of the jobs' components

Job involvement

Degree to which people identify with their job and believe that their job is important

- Psychological empowerment: employee's belief in the degree to which they affect their work environment, their competence and perceived autonomy, and the meaningfulness of their job

Organisational commitment

Degree to which an employee identifies with a particular organisation and its goals – therefore wanting to stay with the organisation

3 dimensions:

1. **Affective commitment**: emotional attachment
2. **Continuance**: value of remaining with an organisation
3. **Normative**: obligation to remain with organisation –moral/ethical reasons

Perceived organisational support (POS)

Degree to which employees believe the organisation values their contribution and cares about their wellbeing

Employee engagement

Degree of involvement/satisfaction/enthusiasm for the job –engaged employees are passionate about their work and company

Job satisfaction

Measuring job satisfaction

Single global rating: 1 question, 1 answer – scales from highly satisfied to strongly dissatisfied

Summation score: multiple questions to identify key elements in a job

Causes of job satisfaction:

- Challenging & stimulating work
– not mundane or repetitive
- Realistic workload
- Interpersonal relationships
- Workplace culture
- Effective communication
- Autonomy & independence
- Acknowledgement/recognition
- Flexibility
- Job security
- Opportunities to use skills & abilities
- Career development opportunities
- Networking
- Pay –remuneration & benefits

Responses to job dissatisfaction



Exit: directs behaviour towards leaving the organisation

Voice: involves active & constructive attempts to improve workplace

Loyalty: passively waiting for conditions to improve –includes standing by organisation in the face of external criticism

Neglect: allowing conditions to worsen –includes chronic absenteeism and lateness

Impact of job satisfaction

- **Job performance** – organisations with more satisfied employees tend to be more effective/perform better than those with fewer satisfied employees
- **Organisational citizenship behaviour** – satisfied employees are more likely to engage in OCB
 - More likely to talk positively about the organisation
 - Help others and go beyond the normal job expectations
 - Feel supported by their colleagues
- **Customer satisfaction** – satisfied employees increase customer satisfaction & loyalty
 - Important for frontline employees who have regular customer contact
 - Low employee morale is major factor undermining customer satisfaction
- **Absenteeism** – consistent negative relationship between satisfaction & absenteeism
- **Turnover** – stronger relationship between satisfaction & turnover than absenteeism
 - Also affected by alternative job prospects
 - More likely to translate into turnover when employment opportunities are plentiful
 - Employees with high human capital may be searching for better alternatives if they are dissatisfied
- **Workplace deviance** – if employees don't like their work environment, they will respond in some way to 'get even'
 - Employers should attack the source of the problem (dissatisfaction) rather than trying to control the different responses

Implications for managers

- Managers should be interested in their employees' attitudes because it influences their behaviour, which then indicates potential problems in the workplace
- Satisfied and committed employees have lower rates of turnover, absenteeism and deviant behaviour and also have better job performance
- High pay alone rarely creates a satisfying work environment, so it is important for managers to focus on especially the intrinsic parts of the job such as making the work challenging & interesting
- Ultimately, creating a more satisfied workforce will contribute to improved organisational effectiveness