

## Job satisfaction among Myanmar working population, a cross-sectional study

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### ABSTRACT

The gap between expectations and reality could lead to low job satisfaction. Although much literature has been described on job satisfaction among different categories of people, more research is needed to acknowledge the judgment of job satisfaction among some of the Myanmar working population. The study aims to find out the satisfaction level of a job and the factors related to it. The cross-sectional study was conducted in January 2019 by calling for face-to-face interviews with 536 respondents selected using a convenient sampling technique using a pre-tested questionnaire. The highest satisfied respondents were >50 years age group (86.11%), females (71.89%), higher officials (90.53%), and more than three years of service (78.35%). In the adjusted analysis, having 41–50 year age group (AOR 2.72; 95% CI: 1.08–6.83), part-time job nature (AOR 2.16; 95% CI: 1.17–3.99), and the higher official (AOR 5.71; 95% CI: 2.48–13.13) were significantly associated with job satisfaction. Relationships with the direct executive and, organization and management were the main determinants of job satisfaction. Moreover, the respondents with higher positions were more likely to have higher job satisfaction in the study.

Keywords: job satisfaction, working population, Myanmar

Abbreviations:

AOR: adjusted odds ratio

95% CI: 95% confidence interval

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### INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is defined as “an emotional reaction of pleasure or resentment with an employee derives from fulfilling given tasks, functions, and roles”.<sup>1,2</sup> After that, the view of research on job satisfaction included the link between job satisfaction and behavior at work.<sup>3</sup> Many work satisfaction theories have explained job satisfaction and its influence, such as the Hierarchy of

Received: April 6, 2022; accepted: August 10, 2022

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Needs by Maslow,<sup>4</sup> the Two-Factor (Motivator-Hygiene) Theory by Herzberg, 1968,<sup>5</sup> Equity Theory by Adam,<sup>6</sup> of Vroom's<sup>7</sup> Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy (VIE) Model which Porter and Lawler modified, Discrepancy Theory by Locke,<sup>8</sup> Range of Affect Theory by Locke,<sup>9</sup> Job Characteristics Model by Hackman and Oldham,<sup>10</sup> Social Learning Theory by Bandura,<sup>11</sup> and Opponent Process Theory by Landy.<sup>12</sup> According to Hoppock, job satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physical, and environmental conditions that make a person truthfully say, "I am satisfied with my job".<sup>13</sup>

Bakotić and Babić mentioned that job satisfaction encompasses several factors, such as the nature of the job, salary, work stress, working environment, colleagues, supervisors, and working hours.<sup>14</sup> Pitaloka & Sofia proposed to measure job satisfaction by the job itself, rewards, relationship with the direct executive, and promotional opportunities.<sup>15</sup> According to Durst and DeSantis, rewards and personal characteristics are the key factors of job satisfaction.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, as mentioned by Wright and Kim,<sup>17</sup> the most significant elements of job satisfaction are participation, task significance, job specificity, career development support, and feedback. Frustrated, neglected, and disappointed employees could lead to absenteeism or low productivity in the working organization. Ellickson and Logsdon claimed that work-related and personal factors contribute to job satisfaction.<sup>18</sup> Human resources development and employee productivity are directly associated with job satisfaction.<sup>14</sup> The productivity has been influenced by involvement or commitment through intrinsic and extrinsic job attributes.<sup>19-23</sup>

Organizations face several challenges due to the dynamic nature of the working and economic environments. To increase the efficiency, effectiveness, job commitment, and loyalty of employees, the organization must satisfy the needs of its employees by providing good working conditions. In Myanmar, there needed to be more reports or papers related to the job satisfaction of Myanmar working people. Many entrepreneurs are saying that it is hard to recruit skillful employees, and on the other side, the people of the working-age group are also saying that it is difficult to get a job. Therefore, it needs to explore the actual situation regarding the problems among employers and employees of their difficulties. As for the first step, the study aims to find the employee's job satisfaction, which might be fundamental data required to show the situation and the problems between employee and employer. We hope to find a possible solution from the obtained data.

In the study, different nature of study sites such as a hospital, private schools, supermarkets, and small and medium-sized factories was included to reveal the general view. The study sites were chosen according to convenience and logistic reasons. Although detailed data obtained at each study site were varied, the overall consensus conclusion was possible to draw from the received data. The finding may only represent some of the working people of Myanmar; however, it has made some information on the job satisfaction of working people in Myanmar. Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of information about Myanmar's working population, and evidence-based further information is needed to recognize the employment satisfaction of some Myanmar employees.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Study area, design, and respondents*

The institutions-based, cross-sectional study was conducted in seven organizations/institutions: a private hospital, two private schools, one private university, one supermarket, and two factories (one small and one big factory) in Yangon in July 2019. The researchers used a convenient sampling technique. Five hundred thirty-six respondents were enrolled in the study to assess job satisfaction in various institutions. After many international literature searches and opinions from

research team members, the researchers developed the data collection tool. The questionnaire developed was mainly based on the Job satisfaction questionnaire of Oswald Neuberger and Mechthild Allerbeck.<sup>23</sup> The job satisfaction questionnaire (Appendix) contains 33 items under five domains: relationship with work colleagues (2 items), relationship with the direct executive (9 items), job content and current position (10 items), organization and management (8 items), and income, incentives and welfare (4 items). The instrument used was a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). The Cronbach's alpha of the tool was 0.82, calculated for 15 subjects using SPSS software. The sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, education level, decision, total working experience, and work pattern) were exposure variables, and the outcome variable was job satisfaction (satisfied/dissatisfied). It was categorized below and above the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile<sup>24</sup> as a dissatisfied and satisfied group.

### *Data collection*

Face-to-face interviews were carried out at the study sites using a pre-tested questionnaire after seeking approval from the concerned authorities of Institutes. The questionnaire was composed of socio-demographic characteristics and five domains about job satisfaction.

The proportion's 95% confidence interval (95% CI) was calculated based on the binomial distribution, and the chi-square test examined categorical variables. Then, multivariable logistic regression analyses were conducted to explore the factors associated with job satisfaction. In the final multivariable logistic regression model, we adjusted all exposure variables, which is supported by the literature and the practical situation in daily life. Moreover, unadjusted odds ratios (UORs), adjusted odds ratios (AORs), and 95% CI were calculated. Pearson's correlation coefficient also did pair-wise correlation among the job satisfaction measures. The p-value was set at <0.05. STATA software version 15 was used for data analysis.

### *Ethical considerations*

After thoroughly explaining the study's objectives, procedures, and the questionnaire contents, written informed consent from the study respondents was collected before the interview. The respondents' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality were attentively considered in every study stage. The full autonomy to withdraw from the study at any time was given.

## RESULTS

The study's findings (Table 1) reveal that most respondents were <30 years old, and the proportion of satisfied people within age groups ranged from 64.12% to 86.11%. Interestingly the older the age group, the more they are satisfied with the job. Female respondents outweighed males, and the portion of pleased people was also the same trend (64.46%, male and 71.89%, female). The majority of the education level was university and above. Among the education levels, the respondents who finished primary and middle school gained job satisfaction in the highest percentage (89.47%); however, respondents who completed the university and above gained the lowest percentage (67.95%) in job satisfaction. Part-time workers showed more satisfaction (81.82%) than full-time workers (67.19%). In terms of satisfaction with the current position, the convinced people fluctuated between 62.22% and 90.53%, while most higher officials were happy with their status (90.53%). Most of the respondents had 1–3 years of service. Nevertheless, the workers who served > 3 years were the highest proportion of satisfaction (78.35%), while the ones who served < 1 year were the lowest proportion (61.11%).

Table 2 shows the proportion of satisfied respondents on overall job satisfaction scores and

each category of job satisfaction measures. The fraction of satisfied respondents on the overall score was 83.89% (95%CI: 82.89–84.88). The lowest satisfied proportion (income, incentives, and welfare) was 70.90% (95%CI: 66.85–74.71). At the same time, most respondents were pleased with the relationship between the direct executive, job content, and current position (89.18% and 90.67%, respectively).

**Table 1** Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (N=536)

Socio-demographic characteristics	n	Satisfied (%)	95% CI <sup>a</sup>
<b>Age (year)</b>			
≤30	340	64.12	58.86–69.05
31-40	114	74.56	65.77–81.72
41-50	46	84.78	71.33–92.58
>50	36	86.11	70.64–94.11
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	166	64.46	56.87–71.38
Female	370	71.89	67.08–76.25
<b>Education</b>			
Primary & middle school	19	89.47	66.19–97.36
High school	77	74.03	63.11–82.6
University and above	440	67.95	63.44–72.16
<b>Current job</b>			
Full time	448	67.19	62.69–71.39
Part-time	88	81.82	72.34–88.56
<b>Current position</b>			
Teacher	84	71.43	60.87–80.07
General worker	132	65.91	57.41–73.5
Office staffs	225	62.22	55.7–68.33
Higher officials	95	90.53	82.76–95
<b>Service year</b>			
<1 year	126	61.11	52.32–69.23
1-3 years	216	66.67	60.1–72.64
>3 years	194	78.35	71.99–83.6

<sup>a</sup> 95% CI: 95% confidence interval

**Table 2** Job satisfaction measures of the participants (N=536)

Job satisfaction measures	Satisfied (%)	95% CI <sup>a</sup>
Overall	83.89	82.89 84.88
Income, incentives and welfare	70.90	66.85 74.71
Relationship with work colleagues	77.99	74.23 81.42
Organization and management	86.38	83.18 89.17
Relationship with the direct executive	89.18	86.24 91.68
Job content and current position	90.67	87.89 93.00

<sup>a</sup> 95% CI: 95% confidence interval

Although it did not reveal statistically significant, a higher job satisfaction level with the increasing age group was seen. The female gender had 51% higher job satisfaction (95%CI: 0.97–2.36) than the counterpart. Respondents with higher education had lower satisfaction levels than those with lower education [(AOR 0.67; 95% CI: 0.13–3.42 in high school level) and (AOR 0.36; 95% CI: 0.07–1.74) in university and above level]. Part-time employees were likely to get more satisfaction than full-time employer. Higher officials had 5.71 odds (95%CI: 2.48–13.13) satisfaction than the teachers. It was also noted that the longer in the work field, the higher the satisfaction level [(AOR 1.03; 95% CI: 0.63–1.67 in 1–3 years of service experience) and (AOR 1.25; 95% CI: 0.69–2.24 in those with >3 years of service experience)]. However, it did

**Table 3** Multivariable logistic regression of job satisfaction and associated factors among the participants (N=536)

Variables	Job Satisfaction	
	UOR <sup>a</sup>	AOR <sup>b</sup>
<b>Age (year)</b>		
≤30	Reference	Reference
31–40	1.64 (1.02–2.64)**	1.08 (0.61–1.91)
41–50	3.12 (1.35–7.18)***	2.72 (1.08–6.83)**
>50	3.47 (1.32–9.15)**	3.28 (0.05–10.24)**
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	Reference	Reference
Female	1.41 (0.95–2.10)	1.51 (0.97–2.36)
<b>Education</b>		
Primary & middle school	Reference	Reference
High school	0.34 (0.71–1.58)	0.67 (0.13–3.42)
University and above	0.25 (0.06–1.10)	0.36 (0.07–1.74)
<b>Current job</b>		
Full time	Reference	Reference
Part-time	2.20 (1.23–3.91)***	2.16 (1.17–3.99)**
<b>Current position</b>		
Teacher	Reference	Reference
General worker	0.77 (0.43–1.4)	0.94 (0.45–1.99)
Office staffs	0.66 (0.38–1.14)	1.15 (0.70–1.88)
Higher officials	3.82 (1.66–8.8)***	5.71 (2.48–13.13)***
<b>Service year</b>		
<1 year	Reference	Reference
1–3 years	1.27 (0.81–2.01)	1.03 (0.63–1.67)
>3 years	2.30 (1.40–3.78)***	1.25 (0.69–2.24)

<sup>a</sup> UOR: unadjusted odds ratio

<sup>b</sup> AOR: adjusted odds ratio

\*\*\* <0.01

\*\* <0.05

Age, gender, education, current job, current position and service year were adjusted in the final model.

not present as statistically significant. Furthermore, having 41–50 year age group (AOR 2.72; 95%CI: 1.08–6.83), 50 years and above age group (AOR 3.28; 95%CI: 0.05–10.24), part-time job nature (AOR 2.16; 95%CI: 1.17–3.99), and the higher official (AOR 5.71; 95%CI: 2.48–13.13) were significantly associated with job satisfaction (Table 3).

Table 4 represents the intercorrelations among the overall level of job satisfaction and the five categories of job satisfaction measures. The significant correlation with the overall level of job satisfaction ranged in magnitude from  $r=0.51$  ( $p<0.001$ ) for work colleagues to a high of  $r=0.87$  ( $p<0.001$ ) for organization and management. Inter-item correlations ranged from  $r=0.3$  ( $p<0.001$ ) for income and co-workers to a high of  $r=0.75$  ( $p<0.001$ ) for income and organization and management. Almost all of the intercorrelations results were statistically significant to each other ( $p<0.001$ ).

**Table 4** Inter-correlation for job satisfaction measures

Job satisfaction measures	1. Job content and current position	2. Relationship with work colleagues	3. Relationship with the direct executive	4. Organization and management	5. Income, incentives and welfare	6. Overall job satisfaction
1. Job content and current position	1.00					
2. Relationship with work colleagues	0.38***	1.00				
3. Relationship with the direct executive	0.70***	0.47***	1.00			
4. Organization and management	0.74***	0.43***	0.71***	1.00		
5. Income, incentives and welfare	0.66***	0.30***	0.65***	0.75***	1.00	
6. Overall job satisfaction	0.82***	0.51***	0.83***	0.87***	0.81***	1.00

\*\*\*  $<0.001$

## DISCUSSION

The main reason for this study was to look at the impact of the workers on work fulfillment. In the working population, job satisfaction is one of the main important factors in reaching organizational goal or success and sustainability of the institution and directly influence employee productivity.<sup>25</sup> This study examined job satisfaction among different categories of working groups, the associated factors of job satisfaction, and inter-correlations among the domains.

This study revealed that two-thirds of the respondents were satisfied with their job. Moreover, the subscales for job scales also had high job satisfaction. This finding was similar to other studies in the adult population.<sup>26,27</sup> Therefore, employees' job satisfaction needs to assess from

time to time.<sup>28</sup> The study's findings suggested that the critical factors for job satisfaction were organization, management, and relationship with the direct executive. Other studies also supported that these factors are positively related to job satisfaction.<sup>28,29</sup>

In this study, job satisfaction measures such as organization and management, working conditions, and communication among staff were significantly inter-correlated, and the findings are similar to other studies.<sup>27,30</sup> The domains which showed a positive relationship suggested that these domains should be included in the assessment of job satisfaction to enhance the success of a business.<sup>28</sup>

The individual factors such as age, current job, and current position were statistically significant with overall job satisfaction.<sup>29,31</sup> On the other hand, Shrestha showed that age and gender were not related to job satisfaction.<sup>32</sup> Although it was not statistically significant, the female gender was more likely to have job satisfaction than their counterpart in the study. That finding contradicted studies of Franek et al<sup>33</sup> and Rahman et al,<sup>34</sup> which might probably be due to different cultural backgrounds, working environments, and study populations. Organizations/Institutions need to be aware of the importance of a good working environment to maximize productivity for the organizations/institutions and employees.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Despite its strengths, the study has several limitations. The study is an initial attempt to understand the job satisfaction of 536 employees from various institutions in Myanmar. It still needs to clarify the results of the survey among subgroups. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, and a convenient sampling technique was used to recruit the respondents. It is also imperative to look at the effect of a multi-dimensional scale of work fulfillment that covers the mental, social, cultural, and financial measurements within the reaction. Future research which utilizes multi-dimensional scales that capture the subjective, situational, broader, and cultural perspectives on job satisfaction is recommended. The long-run research should integrate more mental characteristics such as stress, uneasiness, misery, and social background to evaluate the components contributing to work fulfillment.

## CONCLUSION

The research findings presume that the general occupational fulfillment level in various working groups in Myanmar was satisfactory. The representatives needed most from their employments: salary, motivating forces and welfare, and organization and administration. A positive relationship was found between job position and job satisfaction, while a negative relationship was revealed between education level and job satisfaction.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank all the respondents of this study who voluntarily participated.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: PPS, NHHW.

Methodology: All authors.

Formal analysis: PPS, SYT & ZLH.

Investigation: All authors.

Writing, review, and editing: PPS, SYT.

Supervision: NHHW.

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire for job satisfaction among Myanmar working population

No.	Items	Responses					Code
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	
<b>A. Relationship with work colleagues</b>							
1	I get well co-operation with colleagues in my work.						
2	I do not find the jealousy and competition among colleagues.						
<b>B. Relationship with direct executive</b>							
3	There is good communication from managers to employees.						
4	I am valued by my supervisor.						
5	Overall, my supervisor does a good job.						
6	Supervisor has high competency.						
7	My supervisor promotes an atmosphere of teamwork.						
8	My supervisor provides me with actionable suggestions on what I can do to improve.						
9	When I have questions or concerns, my supervisor is able to address them.						
10	My supervisor usually values the feedback from us.						
11	Are you supervised too much, too little, or just enough?						
<b>C. Job content and current position</b>							
12	The company clearly conveys its mission to its employees.						
13	The amount of work expected of me is reasonable.						
14	The company has a positive image to my friends and family.						
15	Career path of the workers at the company is transparent.						
16	I am happy with my current position.						
17	I find that my work is meaningful.						
18	I have a job that I deserve.						
19	My contributions are valued by the company.						
20	The work is distributed evenly across our team.						
21	I solve customers' problems.						

No.	Items	Responses					Code
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	
<b>D. Organization and management</b>							
22	I have the tools and resources I need to do my job.						
23	Overall, I am satisfied with my job.						
24	My work in this department is improving my skill and knowledge.						
25	When I do a good work, I receive the recognition from the organization that I should receive.						
26	There is the chance for promotion in my work.						
27	I will advise a friend to apply for a job at this company.						
28	I have the training I need to do my job.						
29	I feel I am underutilized in my job.						
<b>E. Income, incentives and welfare</b>							
30	I am happy with my salary.						
31	I am happy the benefits offered by the company.						
32	The company is flexible with respect to your family responsibilities.						
33	I have never been observed or experienced any forms of discrimination or harassment at this company.						