

Gender Attitude towards the Work Environmental Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction among Dentists

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ABSTRACT

Background: *The productivity of the dental organization depends on the work environment in which the employees are working and on the level of satisfaction of dental practitioners. Business organisations in this competitive era must provide supportive and attractive work environments to attract the human resources. The success of the organization depends on its employees and the environment in which they work.*

Aim: *The objective of this research is to study the demographic characteristics with respect to gender in the work environment and job satisfaction of dentists.*

Methodology: *The major source of data in this research utilized questionnaire as a tool for primary data collection. Twelve private dental college and hospitals in Tamil Nadu, India were taken as the study sample for the study.*

Results: *The attitudes of the participating female dentists were shown to be more Job Satisfied than the male dentists with physical factors, working conditions, opportunities for career growth and control measures followed for occupational risks whereas they expressed lower levels of attitude towards all the stress factors suggesting that the female dentists were experiencing more stress.*

Conclusion: *The evidences of this study supported the proposition that creating empowering work environment through human resource development practices results in higher quality service to the organisation thus leading to enhanced Job Satisfaction. The future academic endeavours might make use of the present study towards a more complete understanding of the attitude towards the factors influencing Job Satisfaction among dentists with respect to gender as a stepping stone for future research.*

Keywords: **Dental practitioners, Gender, Job satisfaction, Occupational risks, Organizations, Sample formula, Stress factors, Work environmental factors, working conditions.**

INTRODUCTION

Satisfied human resources are essential for the healthy operation of all other resources of the organisation. Productivity is at a higher level only when the human resources are satisfied in terms of their jobs. Business organisations in this competitive era must provide supportive and attractive work environments to attract the human resources. Such an environment provides impetus to the employees to make optimum use of their knowledge and skills to perform effectively with the available resources with competence to provide high quality service to the organisation. To maintain social relationships at workplace and to create healthy relationship between supervisor, colleague and the organisation it is vital to have a sound working environment. Efficient maintenance and management of work environment affects not only the employee performance and productivity of the organisation but also effects the development and growth of the entire economy of organisation as a whole. A healthy work environment influences the level of employee job satisfaction. Graft (1964) has stated that environmental factors contribute to quality output, employee productivity, rate of turnover and level of wastage. According to him unsafe, unhealthy and depressing work environment leads to job dissatisfaction and ultimately to low productivity. He has stated further that wastage of resources, absenteeism, disobedience; lateness and negative attitudes are the resultant effects when the office is grossly deficient in

stimulation. The objective of this research is to study the demographic characteristics with respect to gender in the work environment and job satisfaction of dentists.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Defining and identifying the elements in the work environment is vital for the success of an organisation to create job satisfaction among the human resources. It is essential to determine the various factors in the work environment. The service sector must create a motivating environment to enable the human resources to feel connected and to fulfil their responsibilities by going to extreme lengths. It is essential for the management to be aware of the determinants that has an effect on the job satisfaction of the human resources. This will enable to formulate a work environment that focuses on satisfying the employee needs and accomplish the key organisational goals. The success of the organisation depends on its employees and the environment in which they work. The workers must be provided the expertise needed to do their job well, the opportunities for professional development, stress free, safe and healthy work life enabling a perfect fit within the work environment. The human resources feel that they are an essential component in the organisation when changes are made in their work environment like improving the incentives, tools, benefits and working conditions. The several elements associated with work environment are vital factors that affect the levels of satisfaction among the employees and improve their internal motivation and work performance. Management should structure the work environment by recognising and rewarding the human resources for their effective performance. The organisation must create a work environment that will enhance the satisfaction of employees by formulating pay hike and promotion that will optimise effective performance outcomes towards their contribution of desired strategic goals and objectives.

The working environment affects the physical and psychological wellbeing of the human resources and also their attitude, morale, engagement and productivity. It is vital that the organisation has the ability to attract, retain and encourage high performers by providing a motivating work environment. The environment in which the employees work plays an important role in encouraging them to perform their assigned work for maximization of productivity. Work environment can be regarded as an important influence on employees and so the current challenge of the organisation is to establish an environment in which the human resources can perform their work with passion and engagement to produce better outcomes. In today's competitive organisational environment, money is not a significant encouragement to motivate the workplace performance of human resources. The result of better workplace environment boosts the employees and ultimately increases the performance and engagement. The interrelationship between the management and the dental workforce will determine the level of satisfaction amongst the human resources and both the employees and the working environment play a part in the organizational accomplishment. There are several environmental factors that have an influence on the job satisfaction of dental professionals and all these varied environmental factors have direct and indirect bearing on the commitment, performance and efficiency. The dentist's job satisfaction level is highly influenced by the main factors in the work environment.

OBJECTIVE

To study the demographic characteristics with respect to gender in the work environment and job satisfaction of dentists

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is Descriptive in nature as it is a description of the attitude of the dentists working in the private dental college hospitals of Tamil Nadu, India towards the work environment and job satisfaction factors existing in the dental sector organisation. The statistical tools used to analyse the data with reference to the selected objective of this study was Independent sample t test.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The study made use of a well framed questionnaire consisting of closed ended five-point Likert scale items. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A assessed the demographic characteristics of the respondents and Section B comprised of 42 questions on work environment and job satisfaction and was distributed to the respondents from the (Table1) twelve private dental college hospitals in Tamil Nadu, India. The period of data collection was 5 weeks, between 1st of September and 30th of September 2016. The 320 questionnaires were distributed and the 260 questionnaires that were received back giving 80% response within the stipulated time were considered for analysis. The data analysis was done using relevant Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS software version 23) and Microsoft Excel. Alpha value was set at p>0.05 level, p value was interpreted; and the hypothesis was tested. The statistical tools used to analyse the data with reference to the selected objectives of this study were Independent sample t test.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

A small portion of respondents were selected from a population in order to get the required information to draw inferences that will represent the entire population. The sample size was determined by the number of independent variables in the research instrument. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was decided according to the proportion in each dental college for this study.

DETERMINATION OF SAMPLE SIZE AND FORMULA

This study is based on a sample frame of twelve private dental colleges drawn from the population of twenty seven private dental colleges in Tamil Nadu. Each dental college is treated as a stratum and from each stratum the sub sample is calculated with the margin of error of 5% and 95% confidence level.

Where Sample size = $\left[\frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{C^2} \right]$

Z= Standard normal value= 1.645 for 90%, 1.96 for 95% and 2.58 for 99% Confidence level

P= Percentage picking a choice, expressed as decimal 0.5 used for sample size needed

C= Level of Significance = 5% = 0.05

The sample size at 95% confidence level is calculated as 260 for the population size of 800. From each stratum the sub

Sample is calculated using the formula

$$n_h = \left(\frac{n}{N} \right) * N_h$$

The required sample size for group is calculated using the formula

$$n = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n-1}{N}}$$

Source: Israel, G. D. (2009) Determining Sample Size.

Sample size =

$$\frac{1 \cdot 96^2 \times 0 \cdot 5 (1 - 0 \cdot 5)}{\cdot 05^2}$$

$$= \frac{0 \cdot 9604}{0 \cdot 0025} = 385$$

The required sample size =

$$\frac{385}{1 + \frac{385 - 1}{800}}$$

$$\frac{385}{1.48} = 260$$

N= Population size = 800

n= Required sample size = 260

TABLE 1 POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLED DENTAL COLLEGES AND HOSPITALS

Sl. No	Dental College and Hospital	Total Population (N_h)	Sample (n_h)
1	Sri Ramachandra Dental College & Hospital, Chennai	87	28
2	S.R.M Dental College, Chennai	105	34
3	Sri Balaji Dental College & Hospital, Chennai	108	35
4	Tagore Dental College, Chennai	68	22
5	Adhiparasakthi Dental College & Hospital, Melmaruvathur	97	31
6	Sri Ramakrishna Dental College & Hospital, Coimbatore	57	19
7	Vinayaka Missions Shankarachariyar Dental College, Salem	60	20
8	JKK Natrajah Dental College & Hospital, Kumarapalayam	35	11
9	Vivekanandha Dental College for Women, Thiruchengodu	70	23
10	KSR Dental College, Thiruchengodu	51	17
11	Rajas Dental College & Hospital, Thirunalvelli	49	16
12	CSI College of Dental Sciences & Research, Madurai	13	4
	Total	N = 800	n = 260

Source: Researcher

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Over 57% of the respondents were male and 43% were female. Majority of 79% of the respondents were of Master of Dental Surgery (MDS) qualification.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS INVOLVED IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION OF DENTISTS

Attitude with respect to gender by applying Independent Sample t test

H₀: There is no significant difference between respondent categories based on gender in their attitude towards work environmental factors

H₁: There is significant difference between respondent categories based on gender in their attitude towards work environmental factors

PHYSICAL FACTORS

The female respondent's attitude towards physical factors (Table 2) was found to be high towards most of the factors compared to their male counterparts suggesting that they were more satisfied with the physical factors prevailing in the hospitals. The female respondent's

attitude towards physical factors was found to be high with regards to availability of latest dental equipment, lighting, maintenance of dental instruments and ergonomics compared to the male respondents. There was statistically significant difference in their responses with relation to availability of latest equipment and maintenance of noisy vibrating dental instrument usage leading to hearing impairment. Nokhostin *et al* (2016) suggest that the dental curriculum should address issues like ergonomics and there is a need for awareness about preventive care among dentists.

TABLE 2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHYSICAL FACTORS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	Availability of latest dental equipment	3.32	0.84	3.67	0.84	3.31	.001**
2	Work in comfortable posture	2.98	0.90	3.05	1.05	0.53	.59
3	Work hours in frequently changed posture	3.06	0.97	3.09	1.03	0.23	.81
4	Availability of adequate lighting facilities	3.54	0.86	3.68	0.97	1.21	.22
5	Maintenance of noisy vibrating dental instrument usage leading to hearing impairment	3.13	1.15	3.67	1.13	3.69	.0001***
6	Ventilation and good indoor air quality	3.53	0.94	3.71	0.95	1.52	.13
7	Availability of consistent and comfortable temperature	3.35	0.95	3.32	0.95	0.28	.77
8	Availability of ergonomically designed furniture	3.17	1.03	3.16	1.05	0.09	.92

Source: Researcher

**Highly Statistically Significant

***Highly Statistically Significant

SD – Standard deviation

OCCUPATIONAL RISKS

The female respondent’s attitude towards occupational risks (Table 3) was found to be high towards most of the factors compared to their male counterparts suggesting that they were more satisfied with the control measures for occupational risks followed in the hospitals. The male respondents attitude was high towards control of instrument based contagious infection risk and absence of health risk whereas the female respondents attitude was high with regards to control of radiation exposure, control of mercury exposure, absence of latex allergy, practicing regular and proper waste disposal procedure. Nabeel Naeem Baig *et al* (2016) have opined in their study that occupational hazard represents a serious risk and the dentists should give importance to complete protection from occupational risks.

TABLE 3 ATTITUDE TOWARDS OCCUPATIONAL RISKS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	Control of instrument based contagious infection risk	2.70	1.19	2.55	1.23	0.99	.32
2	Control of radiation exposure	3.10	1.08	3.17	1.27	0.50	.61
3	Control of mercury exposure	3.84	1.14	3.91	1.21	0.45	.64
4	Absence of latex allergy	3.92	1.24	3.99	1.16	0.45	.65
5	Practicing regular and proper waste disposal procedure	3.32	1.02	3.34	1.08	0.20	.83
6	Absence of health risk	3.06	1.08	2.83	1.29	1.52	.12

Source: Researcher

No statistical significance revealed

SD – Standard deviation

WORKING CONDITIONS

The female respondent’s expressed higher levels of attitude towards most of the factors with regards to working conditions (Table 4) compared to their male counterparts suggesting that they were satisfied with the prevailing working conditions in the hospitals. The female respondent’s attitude towards working conditions was high towards all the factors except for the opinion given a suitable job for the qualifications. In the study conducted by Suzely Adas Saliba Maimaz *et al* (2014) opine that there is a need to improve the work conditions of dentists.

TABLE 4 ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORKING CONDITIONS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	Regular employees training provided	3.42	0.93	3.64	0.97	1.78	.07
2	Given a suitable job for the qualifications	3.75	0.95	3.74	1.02	0.02	.98
3	Being awarded the right set of duties as per the ability	3.46	0.98	3.63	1.01	1.36	.17
4	Good organisational procedures practiced to identify and control hazards	3.50	0.89	3.54	0.92	0.36	.71
5	Required space and facilities provided by the organisation to do the job efficiently	3.59	0.96	3.74	1.00	1.21	.22
6	Provided flexible work-timings	3.30	1.02	3.40	1.15	0.71	.47
7	Adequate leaves are provided	3.33	1.09	3.45	1.01	0.88	.37
8	Job sharing option is available	3.42	1.03	3.48	0.96	0.42	.67

Source: Researcher

No statistical significance revealed

SD – Standard deviation

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER GROWTH

The female respondent’s attitude was high towards all of the opportunities for career growth factors (Table 5) suggesting that they were satisfied with the opportunities for career growth provided by the hospitals compared to the male respondents. The female respondent’s attitude was high towards all of the opportunities for career growth factors. There was

statistically significant difference with relation to timely promotion for efficiency given. Patrick Mbindyo *et al* (2009) reveals that there was lack of fairness in the salary levels and promotion procedures given to employees that hindered opportunities for career development.

TABLE 5 ATTITUDE TOWARDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER GROWTH WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	Employee is encouraged to improve educational qualifications	3.60	1.01	3.76	1.00	1.22	.22
2	Salary increment given with additional qualifications	2.83	1.18	3.01	1.28	1.18	.23
3	Timely promotion for efficiency given	2.89	1.13	3.26	1.19	2.46	.01**
4	Complementing the efforts and contribution of employee towards achieving goals	3.14	1.04	3.27	1.20	0.87	.38

Source: Researcher

**Highly Statistically Significant

SD – Standard deviation

STRESS FACED BY DENTISTS

In analysing the respondent’s attitude towards stress faced by dentists (Table 6), female respondent’s attitude was low compared to the males regarding all the factors suggesting that the females were experiencing a more stressed work life. There was statistically significant difference with relation to absence of workplace conflicts, adequate pay to meet the essential needs of the family and no change of plans for family activities due to workload with respect to gender. Nabil Muhsen Al-Zubair *et al* (2015) in their study stated that low income, lack of experience, uncooperative patients and musculoskeletal fatigue due to dental procedures were the prevalent factors that contributed to stress.

TABLE 6 ATTITUDE TOWARDS STRESS FACED BY DENTISTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	Employee are not agitated and threatened to perform well to retain the job	2.86	1.03	2.66	1.07	1.49	.13
2	Presence of professional respect among the co workers	3.30	1.07	3.12	1.09	1.29	.19
3	Absence of workplace conflicts	3.27	1.08	3.01	1.11	1.90	.05*
4	Absence of extensive working hours	2.97	1.22	2.83	1.15	0.94	.34
5	Adequate pay to meet the essential needs of the family	2.84	1.10	2.53	1.10	2.23	.02*
6	No change of plans for family activities due to work load	2.63	1.15	2.35	1.16	1.93	.05*

Source: Researcher * Statistically significant SD – Standard deviation

JOB SATISFACTION

The female respondent's expressed higher levels of attitude towards most of the factors with regards to job satisfaction (Table 7) compared to their male counterparts suggesting that they were satisfied with the prevailing conditions in the hospitals. The female respondent's attitude towards the factors in job satisfaction was high towards all the factors except for the statements organization encourages employee to participate in decision making and employee feels fulfilment in the job and opportunities to participate in administration responsibilities provides employee satisfaction. This implies that there was statistically significant difference between respondent categories based on gender in their attitude towards physical factors, opportunities for career growth and stress faced by dentists. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, while alternate hypothesis is accepted. Saroj Rana and Hemal Pandya (2016) reveal that the factors such as nature of job, infrastructure facilities, communication channels and promotion policies are some of the major areas needing improvement to increase the job satisfaction among employees.

TABLE 7 ATTITUDE TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

SL	PARTICULARS	GENDER				T	P
		MALE		FEMALE			
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
1	The employee feel recognized by the organisation as the salary is proportional to the skill and experience	3.06	1.02	3.16	1.09	0.73	.46
2	The employee is provided with adequate freedom to do the job efficiently and feel committed	3.42	0.98	3.45	1.03	0.20	.83
3	When the employee performance is good, the organization encourages with benefits and promotion	2.84	1.04	2.95	1.14	0.83	.40
4	When new technologies or new products are adopted that affect the job, professional training is provided	3.06	1.02	3.07	1.08	0.08	.93
5	The organisation encourages employee to participate in decision making and employee feels fulfilment in the job	3.07	0.96	3.05	1.11	0.13	.88
6	The employee is given increment and benefits equal to the number of hours worked and feel satisfied	2.63	1.07	2.74	1.20	0.79	.42
7	The employee is satisfied as the attitudes toward communication within the organisation is healthy	3.09	0.95	3.21	0.96	0.97	.33
8	Opportunities to participate in administration responsibilities provides employee satisfaction	3.14	0.99	3.05	0.99	0.65	.51
9	Performance based evaluation and appreciation is given for employee	2.94	0.99	3.01	1.04	0.54	.58
10	The organisation gives financial rewards whenever the employee is given work overload	2.52	1.03	2.60	1.20	0.52	.60

Source: Researcher

No statistical significance revealed

SD – Standard deviation

The effects of gender on job satisfaction are not consistent according to many studies. There is no evidence as yet to suggest if men are more satisfied with their jobs than women

considering the factors like job and occupational level. Some of the findings reviewed by Herzberg (1975) suggest that the females were more satisfied with their jobs, while others indicate that the males were more satisfied. Studies conducted by (Jack Shapiro & Louis W. Stern 1975) found that compared to their male counterparts the professional women like social workers, clinical psychologists and medical workers experienced lower levels of job satisfaction. The non-professional women on the other hand experienced higher levels of job satisfaction compared to their male counterparts. Certain studies indicate that females are more satisfied and this could be due to the fact that women have generally lower occupational aspiration, are less ambitious and have less financial needs than men. The impact of gender on job satisfaction is different with the level at which an employee works. In a study conducted by (Philip E. Varca et al., 1983) found that women expressed less satisfaction in terms of opportunities for advancement and pay at higher occupational levels than men. This study supports the differing results among men and women regarding job satisfaction. Mannheim (1983) suggest that among men and women there are no differences in the level of job satisfaction but Martin and Hanson (1985) in their study suggest that the expectations of men in terms of job satisfaction are different from those of working women. Further in a study by Bowen et al., (1994) discovered that male 4-H agents were less satisfied with jobs than female agents and found a relationship between gender and job satisfaction. Charlotte Chio (1998) opined that male lawyers expressed more job satisfaction than women lawyers who feel they have fewer opportunities for promotion compared to men and so the literature is divergent. However the study conducted by Nestor & Leary, (2000) opines that there is no relationship between job satisfaction levels and gender. According to a study done by (Bender K A et al., 2005) women overall have higher job satisfaction specially in workplaces dominated by them when compared to their male counterparts. The results of this study differs from the study done by Tulen Saner and Gunay Sadikoglu (2016) where the male hospitality employees reported a higher overall level of job satisfaction when compared to the female hospitality employees. However this study is similar to the study done by (Yang Miao et al., 2017) where the males felt dissatisfied with the aspects such as workload, chance of promotion and working environment and the female doctors were shown to have better job quality and greater job satisfaction. Further Kobza et al., (2018) states in their study that female dentists reported higher levels of job satisfaction when compared to the male dentists. Further investigation of the reasons for these higher satisfaction rates for females needs to be explored.

The female respondents in the current study were observed to be more satisfied than their male counterparts with regards to all of the physical factors except for the availability of consistent and comfortable temperature. As for control measures followed for occupational risks the female respondents were satisfied with all the factors except control of instrument based contagious infection risk and absence of health risk. Similarly the female respondents were more satisfied with all the factors under working conditions except for the factor given a suitable job for the qualifications. The female respondents in this study were satisfied with all the factors under opportunities for career growth whereas they expressed lower levels of attitude towards all the stress factors suggesting that they were experiencing more stress. This implies that the female dentists in this study felt stressed as they experienced and felt agitated to perform well to retain their job, felt the lack of professional respect among co-workers, experienced workplace conflicts, extensive working hours, lack of adequate pay and had to make changes in plans to meet family activities due to work load. The current study is similar to the study done by Blanca Elizabeth Pozos Radillo et al., (2008) who opined that female dentists were at a greater risk of experiencing high stress than male dentists and in the study done by (Boran A. et al., 2012) reported that female dentists experienced more work related stress associated with extensive working hours and job title. The results of this study differs from the study done by Al-Zubair Nabil et al., (2014) who have concluded that there was no difference in levels of stress experienced by male and female dentists. In a study conducted by Fahad D Alosaimi et al., (2018) the female physicians experienced higher perceived stress than the male physicians. Further studies are required to assess the reasons for excess stress among female dentists and to identify the underlying reasons for the gender differences. There is a need to identify stress

levels to get maximum performance by recognizing the contributions of the dental professionals to keep them motivated to do their best. Further continual education programs on stress management techniques should be made available which in turn will result in higher productivity, commitment and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction is potentially an important predictor of the dental profession and the dental sector organisation plays a vital role in underpinning the economic development of the country. It is vital to assess dentist's job satisfaction in order to encourage the dentists to provide high level of dental care to the patients. The evidences of this study supported the proposition that creating empowering work environment through human resource development practices results in higher quality service to the organisation. The female respondents were more satisfied than their male counterparts with physical factors, working conditions, opportunities for career growth and control measures followed for occupational risks. They expressed lower levels of attitude towards all the stress factors suggesting that the female dentists were experiencing more stress. Certain studies indicate that females are more satisfied with their job and this could be due to the fact that women have generally lower occupational aspiration, are less ambitious and have less financial needs than men. There is a need to identify stress levels to get maximum performance by recognizing the contributions and good work of the dental professionals to keep them motivated to do their best. The impact of gender on job satisfaction is different with the level at which an employee works. The quality of health care provided by the health service sector can be evaluated by studying the job satisfaction levels of its workers. The presence of highly motivated employees is essential for reaching the goals of the organisation. Further study needs to be done in this area and the future academic endeavours might make use of the present study towards a more complete understanding of the work environmental considerations in particular as a stepping stone for future research.

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