

A Study on relationship between Workplace Fun culture and Job Satisfaction among IT Professionals

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Abstract

A work environment is made up of a range of factors, including company culture, management styles, hierarchies and human resources policies. Employee satisfaction is the degree to which employees feel personally fulfilled and content in their job roles. Employee turnover is the rate at which employees leave their employers, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. These three distinct concepts are inseparably linked; workplace environments greatly influence employee satisfaction, which in turn directly affects employee turnover rates. Knowing how to use a positive work environment to increase employee satisfaction is a key to developing a high-performance workforce. Company cultures must fit with their employees to increase job satisfaction, or else employees may look elsewhere to find a workplace better suited to their personalities.

Key words: Fun Culture, Job Satisfaction, workplace, professionals

Introduction

Fun in the workplace has long been promoted as a key mechanism for enhancing organizational effectiveness. Deal and Kennedy (1982), who encouraged managers to develop corporate

cultures that promoted play, humour, and fun. In the dot com trend of the 90s new corporate cultures of fun emerged such that business became more associated with play and less related to work (Van Meel & Vos 2001). Recent literature

indicates that employees desire a fun workplace a majority of workers under the age of 30 list having co workers who 'make work fun' as an important factor in their job search (Belkin, 2007). Undoubtedly these new entrants into the workforce may not have a hard time finding an organization that also values a fun work environment. For example, from the omnipresent college campus feel of the Googleplex (Schoeneman 2006) to the free gourmet bistros and cafes onsite (There's always a free lunch, 2007) Google embodies a fun workplace.

Fun Culture and Job satisfaction

The fun culture and enjoyment of an activity, the sense of control generated by being able to handle a particular challenge, and the growth of self from a specific achievement all these were typical flow experiences. The fun culture measures the individual's fun culture in four dimensions, namely fun activities, work engagement, co-worker relationship and experienced fun. A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Job satisfaction or employee satisfaction has been defined in many different ways. Some believe it is simply how content an individual is with his or her job, in other words, whether or not they like the job or individual aspects or facets of jobs, such as nature of work or supervision.

Fun culture is a multi-dimensional construct that has been operationalized differently across studies. Ford, McLaughlin, and Newstrom (2003), Karl et al., (2005), Karl et al. (2008), and Peluchette and Karl (2005) focused on formal fun activities, such as contests, gift exchanges, games,

awards, sharing food and refreshments, and company-wide outings. Karl and Peluchette (2006a), Karl and Peluchette (2006b), Karl et al., (2007), and Peluchette and Karl (2005) focused on experienced fun, which reflects whether individuals actually experience fun on the job. Finally, Fluegge (2008) and McDowell (2004) conceptualized fun as a multi-dimensional construct, encompassing socializing, celebrating, personal freedoms, and global fun. Socializing reflects.

Literature Review

Job satisfaction is defined as 'the extent to which a worker feels positively or negatively about his or her job' (Odom, Boy, & Dunn, 1990). People learn and achieve more when the process is enjoyable. It has been learnt that confidences about the job and experiencing an enjoyable mood during work could both contribute to the forecast of job satisfaction (Fisher, 2000; Ilies & Judge, 2002; 2004; Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1999). Proponents of workplace fun claimed that when people are experiencing fun during work, they are more energized and motivated (Stern & Borcia, 1999), get along with others better (Meyer, 1999), deliver better customer service (Berg, 2001), suffer from less stress (Abramis, 1989a, 1989b; McGhee, 2000; Miller, 1996), and are less probably to be absent or leave the organization (Mariotti, 1999; Zbar, 1999). Also, more and more practitioners urged that establishing a fun workplace environment is important for increasing employee motivation and productivity, lowering stress, and enhancing customer satisfaction

(Lundin et al., 2002; McGhee, 2000; Paulson, 2001; Ramsey, 2001; Weiss, 2002).

A stream of research by Karl and colleagues focuses on the positive impacts of fun culture at work on various job attitudes and outcomes (i.e., Karl et al., 2005, 2007; Karl & Peluchette, 2006; Peluchette & Karl, 2005). In each of these studies, fun at work was positively related to job satisfaction, although other outcomes were also explored. Specifically, Karl et al. (2005) examined three sectors public, non-profit, and private organizations and found no significant differences across the three sectors in attitudes towards fun. However, further exploration revealed that while no significant differences were found for attitudes towards fun, there were significant differences in experienced fun. These findings are consistent with the assertion that significant differences exist in organizations regarding fun culture at work, specifically how cultures facilitate, reward, and tolerate fun (Aldag & Sherony, 2001). In a similar vein, Karl and Peluchette (2006) found that experienced fun leads to greater job satisfaction and the relationship was greater for individuals placing a high value on workplace fun culture. In this study, undergraduate students employed in various service roles who reported greater levels of workplace fun culture were also more likely to have higher job satisfaction. Integrating other outcomes in addition to job satisfaction into their research, Karl et al. (2007) examined fun at work using graduate students employed in a health care setting. Results revealed that individuals with greater levels of experienced workplace fun

reported significantly lower emotional exhaustion and emotional dissonance.

Purpose of the study

This research aims to examine the relationship between workplace fun and employees job satisfaction. Findings from this research will be useful to IT Professionals in taking account of workplace fun. For IT Professionals employees are working under stressful environment, it is more important to introduce more workplace fun to reduce job pressure. Also, companies which are suffering descending employee's job satisfaction, this paper can work as a suggestion on introducing workplace fun to increase job satisfaction.

Methodology: Sample

We had conducted a pilot test with 5 employees to make sure the questions were easy to understand for the respondents. Data was collected using a questionnaire containing measures of workplace fun and job satisfaction. It also covered the demographic characteristics of respondents. In addition to these survey instruments, a cover letter was enclosed in each questionnaire package. It further explained the objectives of the survey and assured respondents of anonymity and the voluntary nature of their participation in the survey.

The target participants are the full-time employees in IT Professionals. Questionnaire Packages were distributed to the voluntary employees individually which they completed inside the company. Questionnaires were collected from late Feb to mid March. Of the total survey packets distributed (n = 150), 110 were completed and returned. Among these 110 received questionnaires, 8 were excluded since they had not

been fully completed, while the remaining 102 questionnaires were all usable, yielding a response rate of 78.5%.

Survey Instrument

The data has been collected by distributing questionnaires to the sample selected for the study. The questionnaire consists of several close-ended questions and designed with two parts, the first part mainly hunted the information about the demographic profile of the respondents. It contains details about gender, age, marital status, designation and qualification. Second part

encompasses with fun culture and job satisfaction of software professionals. A five point summation scale ranging from five to one, 5 is assigned for ‘All the time, 4 for ‘Frequently’, 3 for ‘sometimes, 2 for ‘Rarely’ and 1 for ‘Never was used to collect the fun culture of IT professionals. Job satisfaction scale ranging from five to one, 5 is assigned for ‘Very satisfied’, 4 for ‘satisfied’, 3 for ‘Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 2 for ‘dissatisfied’ and 1 for ‘Very dissatisfied was used to collect the job satisfaction of IT professionals

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Profile

Particulars	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	21-30	87	79.1
	31-40	14	12.7
	41-50	8	7.3
	Above 50	1	0.9
Education	Diploma	10	9.1
	UG(arts and Science)	12	10.9
	PG(arts and Science)	20	18.2
	BE	60	54.5
	ME	8	7.3
Gender	Male	82	74.5
	Female	28	25.5
Marital status	Single	71	64.5
	Married	33	30.0
	Widow	3	2.7
	Separated	3	2.7
	Software Engineer	61	55.5
	Senior Software Engineer	14	12.7

Designation	System Analyst	6	5.5
	Project Leader	7	6.4
	Project Manager	6	5.5
	Others	16	14.5

Table 1 shows that 82% of male respondents and 28% of female respondents. Age of the respondents are bifurcated into four divisions, 79.1% of respondents are less than the age group of 21-30 years, 12.7% of respondents are falling in the age group from 31-40 years, 7.3% of respondents are falling in the age group from 41-50 years and remaining less than 1% of respondents are in the age group of more than 50

years. Marital status of the respondents shows that 30.0% are married and 64.5% are single 2.7% belonging to separated and widow category. The sample consisting of 10.9% respondents are undergraduate arts and science degree holders, post graduate arts and science degree holders to the tune of 18.2%, diploma holders 9.1% ,post graduate engineering 54.5% followed by master of engineering graduate 7.3% from the sample.

Table 2: Correlation between fun culture and job satisfaction

Variable	Fun Activities	Work Engagement	Co-worker Fun	Experienced Fun	Job Satisfaction
Fun activities	1.0	0.434**	0.167**	0.206**	0.013**
Work engagement		1.0	0.478**	0.202**	-0.144**
Co-worker Fun			1.0	0.216**	0.067
Experienced fun				1.0	0.039**

Source: Primary data * -5 percent level ** -1 Percent Level

Table 2 reveals that correlation between the fun Culture and job satisfaction

H0:2:1: There is no relationship between fun Culture and job satisfaction

To test the stated hypothesis Pearson's coefficient correlation is applied. The r-value 0.144 shows that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement and it's significant at 1 percent level. It is also inferred

from the relationship result that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and co-worker relationship. It is revealed that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and fun activities and experienced fun and it's significant at 1 percent level

The findings of this study are in concordance with the early research (Andrews, 1991), indicating that the capacity to have fun is an important component of a quality life. It is argued here that fun may provide a vehicle to elicit positive affect and, therefore, contribute to perceived happiness. Positive affect has been found to be strongly positively correlated with both job satisfactions, organisational commitment (Thorensen et al., 2003)

McDowell (2005) found positive relationships between job satisfaction and affective commitment and the Fun Climate Scale. Negative relationships were established between the Fun Climate Scale and job turnover. Briner & Reynolds (1999) found to the anecdotal claims made in relation to the organisational impact of increasing job satisfaction by having fun. Research has found a consistent, weak relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism, although the relationship is not high - usually less than 0.40.

Conclusion

This research provides more insights for practitioners to adopt a new process to exam the linkage between workplace fun and job satisfaction. In this ever-changing and competitive society, it is important for companies to provide a happy working environment for their employees, as happy employees can help to improve productivity which make the company to survive in the market. It is essential that before developing such a happy workforce, company should make sure their employees are having positive attitudes toward fun. Finally, we hope this study serves as a

stimulus for future research that attempts to exam new research directions and to find out more benefits for companies by developing funny workplace.

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FUN CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are statements given pertaining to fun culture .Please go through each statement carefully and use the numbers given below to indicate your ideas and feelings. Please don't omit any statements

Never 1 Rarely 2 Sometimes 3 Frequently 4 All the time 5

SI NO	Statements	N 1	R 2	S 3	F 4	AT 5
1.	Relax between works(talk to friends, check e mail , take assort break and go out, celebrations at work)					
2.	Food at work(bringing in food to share with others, eating together)					
3.	Games at work(fantasy sports, card games, board games)					
4.	Special Events(holiday parties ,picnics, ice cream socials)					
5.	Social gatherings(company sponsored athletic teams, movie nights)					
6.	I usually don't laugh or joke around much with other people					
7.	If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with fun					
8.	I don't have to work very hard at making other people laugh I seem to be a naturally fun person					
9.	Even when I'm busy myself, I'm often amused by the absurdities of life					
10.	I rarely make other people laugh by telling funny stories about myself					
11	If I am feeling upset or unhappy I usually try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better					
12	My fun outlook on life keeps me from getting overly upset or depressed about things					
13	I usually don't like to tell jokes or amuse people					
14	If I'm busy myself and I'm feeling unhappy, I make an effort to think of something funny to cheer myself up					
	Sometimes I think of something that is so funny that I					

15	can't stop myself from saying it, even if it is not appropriate for the situation					
16	I often go overboard in putting myself down when I am making jokes or trying to be funny					
17	If I am feeling sad or upset, I usually lose my sense of fun					
18	If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it					
19	I let people laugh at me or make fun at my expense more than I should					
20	People are never offended or hurt by my sense of fun					
21	When telling jokes or saying funny things, I am usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it					
22	I laugh and joke a lot with my friends					
23	I do not like it when people use fun as a way of criticizing or putting someone down					
24	I enjoy making people laugh					
25	I never participate in laughing at others even if all my friends are doing it					
26	I don't often joke around with my friends					
27	If I don't like someone, I often use fun or teasing to put them down					
28	If I am having problems or feeling unhappy, I often cover it up by joking around, so that even my closest friends don't know how I really feel					
29	If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it					
30	I will often get carried away in putting myself down if it makes my family or friends laugh					
31	It is my experience that thinking about some amusing aspect of a situation is often a very effective way of coping with problems					
32	When I am with friends or family, I often seem to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about					
33	I usually can't think of witty things to say when I'm with other people					
34	I don't need to be with other people to feel amused. I can usually find things to laugh about even when I'm busy myself					
35	Even if something is really funny to me, I will not laugh or joke about it if someone will be offended					
36	Letting others laugh at me is my way of keeping my friends and family in good spirits					
37	I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults					