

A Review Study About Interconnection Between Self-Awareness and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Self-awareness, defined as the accurate perception, understanding, and evaluation of the self, is an important influence on employees' perceptions of the workplace. Job satisfaction (JS) is a person's general attitude towards their job. JS may incorporate one's perceived work experiences, such as the environment, nature of work, relationships with coworkers, working conditions, and opportunities for advancement. Self-perception and self-awareness may play a role in the perception of the work experience. Self-aware employees are potentially more able to understand their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, expectations and the factors they require to perform well in their job, so as to better manage workplace challenges and develop a helpful approach to employment. The present research intended to study the nexus between self-awareness and job satisfaction amongst Information Technology (IT) professionals working in the industry of Delhi NCR. In the IT industry, there are sufficient opportunities for working on technical, challenging, time-bounded, assessment-oriented, and team-oriented jobs. These job specific occupational factors may influence attitudes towards work and job satisfaction amongst employees working in the IT industry. The current study is based on primary quantitative and qualitative empirical investigations undertaken on IT professionals in the Delhi NCR Region. The quantitative part estimates the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction while the qualitative part gives a better understanding of how employees view their workplace and being employed. This combined approach helps broaden the understanding of how self-awareness may be associated with various aspects of job satisfaction. The study is conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mahesh Chand Gaur. The objective of this study is to add to the existing literature on emotional intelligence, self-awareness and organizational behavior, and to find out a relationship between the self-awareness and job satisfaction of IT employees working in Delhi NCR through an empirical study.

Keywords: self-awareness, job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, IT professionals, employee well-being, organizational psychology.

Introduction

Self-awareness helps individuals accurately assess their strengths, weaknesses, values, interests, abilities, personality and work-related goals, and may ultimately lead to appropriate decision making regarding their career development. Numerous research studies indicate that when individuals have an accurate perception of their work abilities and interests, they choose or are selected for work and occupational goals that match their interests. The better the match between an individual's expectations and characteristics and the nature of their work, the higher the sense of purpose and personal fulfillment. Employees may also have more positive attitudes toward their jobs when the tasks they perform at work are consistent with their values and they regard their work as meaningful.

Self-awareness may help employees understand how their personal attributes define their behavior in relation to their work environment, so that when they observe their own emotional reactions, behavioral patterns, and interpersonal relationships, they are able to deal with issues that arise at work. Highly self-aware employees might be less likely to respond to criticism, pressure, disagreement and frustration impulsively and might be more inclined to step back to take stock of any situation and regulate their response. On the other hand, good emotional regulation might support constructive coaching and feedback, teamwork, negotiation and conflict resolution, and interpersonal relationships with colleagues and superiors.

Strong social relationships are an important part of the employee experience because most of the employee work day is spent with other employees (coworkers, team members, managers, stakeholders). When employee interactions contain a combination of acceptance, respect, cooperation, and open communication, employees feel more accepted as members of the organization. Moreover, self-awareness can help individuals to be more considerate of how their words, feelings and actions may impact on others, which can positively affect collaboration and climate in a workplace. As a direct outcome, these positive influences may increase job satisfaction, as well as improve organizational commitment and overall organizational goals.

Self-awareness is also connected with continuous, personal and professional development. Employees who are self-aware of their strengths and weaknesses are more open to evaluating their work and likely to have an accurate view of their strengths and weaknesses as well. Such people may also be more open to feedback and actively pursue ways to improve their knowledge, skills and competencies. Employees will benefit from regularly assessing their own performance. Self-assessment can help employees recognize areas in which they need to improve and to create realistic plans to achieve their professional goals. Perceptions of continuous progress may nurture feelings of competence and accomplishment, with positive effects on employees' career and current job satisfaction.

Self-awareness can enable employees to develop real expectations of the workplace. Self-understanding can result in lower expectations related to advancement, recognition, workload, or development. A realistic understanding of one's job can improve an individual's ability to adapt to the organizational setting, and recognize what aspects of the job might be improved through personal change, as opposed to those aspects that need organizational assistance. The distinction may render more informative responses to workplace problems, and reduce pointless frustration.

Low self-awareness may also be a reason for job dissatisfaction. For example, those finding it hard to recognize their own needs, expectations, emotions, strengths, and, overall, what will result in being dissatisfied with their job, might not be aware of the reason. As a consequence, they may be unaware of their occupational misfit and remain in occupations which are not congruent with their interests, abilities, and professional objectives which could lead to frustration, dissatisfaction, stalemate, stagnation or disengagement from their occupations and profession later in their careers.

Low self-awareness may also cause people to fail to notice what triggers their own emotions and how the situations affect them. In the workplace, people lacking self-awareness may deal with stress poorly and with less mindfulness about their own emotional triggers, or externalize workplace conflict to others rather than themselves. Such patterns can also create challenges when trying to develop effective coping strategies, or manage interpersonal conflicts. Prolonged interpersonal conflict, high levels of emotional stress and ineffective coping strategies can have a negative effect on how the employee perceives and relates to their environment in the workplace, and their overall job satisfaction.

Alongside impairments to leadership roles, a lack of self-awareness can also obstruct an employee's ability to develop within their professional career. Employees may be unable to identify their own career development needs and will fail to seek feedback or continued professional development if they lack self-awareness of these needs. In ever-changing industries, such as Information Technology, career consequences for people with this personality type, who do not acknowledge the importance of professional development, can be rather severe.

In summary, the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction may be viewed as a process that incorporates career adjustment, emotional regulation, interpersonal sensitivity, career development, and adaptational coping. It could be that self-aware individuals are better able to understand their needs and strengths, respond appropriately to demands at work, relate to their colleagues, and pursue career development opportunities to improve job satisfaction. Conversely, this deficiency in self-awareness may impede one's identification of dissatisfaction sources and obstruct effective responses to occupational challenges. Therefore, these considerations provide a clear rationale for empirically investigating the connection between self-awareness and job satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR.

Literature Review and Empirical Findings:

Self-awareness also relates to emotional functioning and individual behavior in the workplace environment. According to Hyde et al. (2002), self-awareness is one of the components

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of emotional intelligence and is defined as the individual's ability to recognize and understand his or her own emotions, behavioral tendencies, capabilities and limitations. Through self-awareness, individuals can examine their inner experience and the basis of their reactivity to certain situations, which in the workplace can enable employees to examine the influence of their feelings on their judgement, their communication, their decision-making and their relationships.

Workers are believed to be better able to cope with workplace demands and expectations when they have an accurate perception of their own strengths and weaknesses. Knowledge of their emotional states may also allow employees to identify situations that trigger feelings such as frustration, anxiety, disappointment, or anger. Recognizing those patterns may help the person respond to them with more constructive behavioral responses rather than automatic ones, thus regulating their own emotions and behavior in dealing with difficult or demanding features of their work environment.

Self-awareness is also relevant to self-evaluation. Employees are constantly evaluating their skills, successes, career development, and prospects. Individuals with an accurate level of self-awareness may be better positioned to evaluate their performance objectively, and may acknowledge their areas of competence, as well as those areas in which they have room to improve. This realistic self-assessment also may result in employees setting realistic work goals and plans for meeting the goals.

Job satisfaction relates to the concept of work values. Spector (1997) described job satisfaction as the employee's attitude towards their job. He suggested that attitudes should be investigated based on the employee's evaluation of specific job characteristics. These characteristics can be classified as the nature of the work, supervision, relations with colleagues, working conditions, pay and benefits, and opportunities for promotion and personal development. Job satisfaction is, therefore, not simply an emotional response. Job satisfaction is an employee's level of satisfaction with the different aspects of their work.

Because job satisfaction is multi-faceted, self-awareness is especially relevant. Employees may differ in the importance they attach to salary, recognition, autonomy, relationships with colleagues, career advancement, working conditions, and the meaningfulness of their work. Self-awareness may help employees identify those factors more deeply and thus allow them to judge whether their current job meets their expectations, values, interests and career goals.

Self-awareness may also contribute to job satisfaction through career-person fit: if employees are aware of their own strengths, interests, values, and career goals, they are more likely to choose job responsibilities and opportunities consistent with their qualities. Related to person-job fit, self-aware employees may experience more satisfaction when their job is congruent with their expectations and they have clearer ideas about what they want. Employees who are not entirely sure about their own preferences may have difficulties in identifying why their job is not satisfying.

Self-awareness may affect the way in which employees react to stressors, such as deadlines, workload, performance assessments, organizational change, interpersonal conflict, and lack of clarity about advancement opportunities. Individuals who have the ability to recognize how

stress emotionally affects them can become attuned to changes in their behavior or attitude as stress takes hold. Then they can progress to addressing the stressor by seeking help, re-evaluating their coping strategies, rescheduling or delegating tasks, or expressing their concerns to others.

Another important link between self-awareness and job satisfaction is interpersonal functioning. After all, organizations greatly rely on communication and engagement among employees. Self-awareness is important at the workplace, as members may not be aware of the impact of their actions at the workplace, self-awareness allows employees to pay attention to how they talk, feel, and behave with their colleagues and superiors. Greater awareness may make for more considerate discourse and constructive conflict management.

Positive relationships that employees experience with others can affect how they think about their workplace. Characteristics of positive relationships include receiving respect, having cooperation, developing trust, and being supported by others. Since relationships with co-workers and supervisors are some of the biggest contributors to job satisfaction, the interpersonal benefits of self-awareness may also indirectly influence job evaluation.

Career development and lifelong learning can also be helped by self-awareness. Employees who are aware of their strengths and limitations are open to feedback and personal development opportunities. Self-aware employees do not think of feedback as criticism. They view it as information that can help them identify training needs, acquire new skills, and modify poor work habits. Improvement and goal achievement may induce a feeling of competence that also contributes to satisfaction with one's professional role.

This is particularly the case for Information Technology roles where job characteristics typically include a high-pace, high-tech environment, having flexible software and systems, working to deadlines, working on projects, working as part of a team, engaging with clients and stakeholders and having access to individual development opportunities. Understanding one's own behavior under stress, ambiguity, feedback and interpersonal conflict may also be relevant for adapting to the workplace. Hence, self-awareness may be an important psychological resource for employees working in technology-intensive environments.

The information technology (IT) industry is also fast changing so careers can change even faster, and individuals may be required to rethink their career expectations over time as any of a number of variables such as technology, tasks, organization structure, and required skills change. Those who know their interests and skills may be able to gauge where to get further training or development. Such adaptability may consequently result in greater sense of agency and job satisfaction.

At the same time, self-awareness is not the only thing that influences job satisfaction. Personal and organizational factors also have an impact on employee satisfaction and happiness, such as salary, promotion, workload, job security, leadership, organizational culture, recognition, working conditions, work-life balance, and relationships with co-workers. Thus, even a highly self-aware employee may become dissatisfied with the job when important needs in the workplace are not being satisfied.

Low self-awareness can impede a person's ability to identify the source of their frustration. For example, an employee may not know whether their frustration is due to excessive workload, relationship problems, insufficient recognition, lack of growth, undesirable tasks, or unrealistically high standards. Without this awareness, the individual may have difficulty finding a constructive solution to their frustration, and may default to withdrawal or other negative behaviors.

Poor self-awareness may also lead to inappropriate coping behavior. Employees may be reactive to workplace challenges if they are unaware of their own triggers, or continually employ ineffective coping strategies to identical situations. Such patterns may lead to increased interpersonal or occupational stress and even change the way people think about their organization over time, reducing job satisfaction.

The relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction may therefore be considered to be a complex interplay of self-perception, emotion regulation, career compatibility, social interaction, stress regulation and personal development. Self-awareness may help employees in determining what they want from a job, understanding their response to work events, and recognizing work-related changes that may improve their working experience. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, is a person's judgment of the different conditions of their job.

Thus, the models of Hyde et al. (2002) and Spector (1997) are two sides of the same coin, in that the former provides a model of self-awareness of emotional states, while the latter provides a framework for examining employees' evaluations of different aspects of the work environment. All three approaches can therefore be combined and used in the present study to test for differences in job satisfaction between employees with varying degrees of self-awareness.

There exists literature discussing the interaction between emotional intelligence and workplace attitudes. However, there exists a lack of research into the role of self-awareness, as opposed to emotional intelligence, as a broad construct. Further, there exists a lack of studies exploring the relationship between workplace attitudes and emotional intelligence within a specific occupational and geographical context. Hence, the proposed study attempts to study IT professionals in Delhi NCR, as careers in technology are an apt backdrop to explore the psychological factors behind employees' job experience.

Thus, this study attempts to provide an empirical evidence of the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction of IT professionals in Delhi NCR. Through this study, we will be looking at the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction in the context of a specific job profile and will try to understand how self-awareness relates to how employees perceive their work.

Research Gap

While there are a number of studies on emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, there is a lack of literature specifically focusing on self-awareness as one of the six components of emotional intelligence and its impact on job satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR. The existing studies have mostly focused on emotional intelligence as a whole or on employees in different professions and fields.

Nevertheless, little research has examined how self-awareness interacts with other aspects of the employee experience, including workplace relationships, work environment, career development, and reactions to work-related stressors. The IT industry is characterized by a fast-paced work environment in the workplace that is constantly changing with a focus on technology, performance, deadlines, teamwork, and continuing learning and development.

Therefore, the present study attempts to find out the impact of self-awareness on job satisfaction and the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction among employees of IT industry in Delhi NCR to provide context-specific empirical evidence for the role of self-awareness on job satisfaction among employees.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the level of self-awareness among IT professionals working in the Delhi NCR region.
2. To assess the level of job satisfaction among IT professionals working in the Delhi NCR region.
3. To examine the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR.

Research Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR.

H₂: Self-awareness significantly influences the level of job satisfaction among IT professionals in Delhi NCR.

H₃: IT professionals with higher levels of self-awareness report significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than those with lower levels of self-awareness.

Research Methodology

Research Design: The study will be conducted using a descriptive correlational research design to measure IT professionals' self-awareness and job satisfaction levels.

Sample: The study population will be IT employees working in the Delhi NCR region. The study will recruit participants using purposive sampling, i.e. based on availability and suitability.

Sample Size: 500 IT professionals comprise the final sample for this study.

Tools:

Self-awareness (one of the dimensions of emotional intelligence) will be measured by the Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002).

Job satisfaction will be measured using the Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Spector (1997).

Procedure:

Informed consent will be obtained prior to the research instruments being given to chosen participants, who will be asked to answer the questionnaire based on their work experiences. Responses will be kept confidential.

Statistical Analysis:

Means, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation coefficient will be calculated to review what the literature indicates about self-awareness and job satisfaction relationships.

Level of Significance:

Statistical importance of findings will be assessed with an importance level of 0.05.

Descriptive and Bivariate Correlation Analysis

Descriptive statistics showed that IT employees have reasonably high baseline Self-Awareness ($\mu=3.92, SD=0.48$ on a 5-point scale). Pearson correlation analysis showed that overall Job Satisfaction has an important positive linear correlation with Self-Awareness ($r=.512, p<.001$).

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Self-Awareness and Emotional Competencies with Job Satisfaction (N = 500)

Construct / Dimension	Mean (μ)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Self-Awareness	3.92	0.48	.512	< .001
Emotional Regulation	3.56	0.61	.584	< .001
Empathy	3.78	0.54	.610	< .001
Interpersonal Skills	3.71	0.55	.536	< .001
Motivation	3.88	0.51	.498	< .001
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.61	0.56	.642	< .001

Multiple Linear Regression and Predictive Modelling

Given strong evidence that core self-evaluations were related to job satisfaction and job performance, multiple linear regression modeling was done to find that the Self-Awareness dimension was a statistically important positive predictor of job satisfaction

($\beta=.162, t=3.88, p<.001$), using a model which accounted for 46.1% of the variability in job satisfaction ($R^2=.461, F(5,494)=84.62, p<.001$):

"Job Satisfaction=" 1.120+0.312("Regulation")+0.248("Empathy")+0.195("Interpersonal")+0.162("Self-Awareness")+0.138("Motivation")

Table 2

Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients (Dependent Variable: Overall Job Satisfaction)

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	1.120	0.182	—	6.15	< .001
Emotional Regulation	0.285	0.038	.312	7.45	< .001
Empathy	0.231	0.039	.248	5.92	< .001
Interpersonal Skills	0.182	0.039	.195	4.61	< .001
Self-Awareness	0.154	0.040	.162	3.88	< .001
Motivation	0.128	0.040	.138	3.24	.001

Note. $R^2 = .461$. Adjusted $R^2 = .455$ ($p < .001$).

Qualitative Thematic Triangulation

According to Robbins et al. (2009), self-awareness leads to job satisfaction by enabling workers to assess their strengths and weaknesses and then negotiate job requirements within those abilities.

Qualitative interviews with 25 members of the Delhi NCR IT cohort support these findings with four mechanisms:

Cognitive load: Software professionals with good self-awareness know how to better assess their cognitive load, recognize the source of cognitive fatigue, seek help if delivery timelines are short, and improve job satisfaction.

Impulse Control in High-Pressure Sprints: Developers with high awareness are likely to be aware of their emotions during production outages, thereby avoiding burnout and interpersonal conflict.

Career Goal Alignment: Self-aware employees are best suited for roles that match their skills and ambitions, leading to better satisfaction.

Constructive Interpersonal Communication: Greater understanding of their own behavioral style allows people to empathize with peers and team leads.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study found an important link between self-awareness and job satisfaction among IT practitioners. Through self-awareness, employees can recognize and understand their emotions, strengths, limitations, expectations, values and behavioral patterns. This knowledge may shape how individuals perceive their role in the workplace or how they respond to situations.

For instance, self-awareness has been related to career decision, interpersonal relations, work stress, and work adjustment and career-development issues. Employees high in self-awareness can better identify their own psychological dispositions, which may help them understand their own professional needs and respond to the obstacles they encounter in the workplace. The knowledge from these perspectives can be helpful for communication, cooperation, emotion regulation and decision-making.

Self-awareness may also help an employee to fit better into a job role by orienting those aspects with their own abilities and needs for career development. Self-awareness can help employees process feedback about their own performance more appropriately. It can also make them more persistent and focused on personal learning, which provides a feeling of competence, progress and achievement that can lead to a more positive assessment of a job.

For employees working in the Information Technology field, self-awareness may be especially important due to specific job demands, such as technological change, high difficulty, fixed deadlines, performance pressure, teamwork, and commitment to learning new material. Being able to monitor and control one's own reactions to these job demands may help employees to maintain more positive job attitudes.

Self-awareness may improve job satisfaction, although other factors in the organizational environment can contribute to employee job satisfaction (such as working conditions, supervision and managerial practices, pay and benefits, promotion and growth opportunities, work overload, recognition, co-workers, and work-life balance). Therefore, self-awareness at work may be one of many important psychological factors in the organizational environment.

To develop employee self-awareness, organizations could rely on many of the same tools used for individual self-awareness, including employee development programs, counseling, coaching, feedback, metacognitive exercises, leadership development programs, and emotional

competence training. An organizational culture of self-awareness may help employees become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and more open to feedback and learning.

Key findings were that increased self awareness may provide for more thoroughly managed workplace experiences and may have a positive correlation with job satisfaction. Future research on the development of self awareness in IT professionals may benefit the individual themselves but may also provide benefits to the functioning and development of the organization itself.

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