

The Effects of Workers Relationship on Job Satisfaction at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation, Ministry of Public Works, Guyana

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Abstract

Lazy attitude, conflict and broken morals are normal behaviour among employees at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation, Ministry of Public Works, Guyana. This study aims to examine the relationship shared among the employees and management at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation, examining the behaviour, attitude and performance to determine the relationship between the employees and work-related factors on job satisfaction of the remaining employees. A total of 100 questionnaires were completed in this survey. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data. The findings reveal that there are factors, namely the coworkers and supervisor relationship significantly contribute to job satisfaction among the employees, highlighting that the relationship shared plays a very important role in their satisfaction within the workplace. The implication of this study is of great importance for the organisation in developing its retention package and recommendations to increase job satisfaction among the recruits of the organisation.

Keywords: Employees, Factors, Job Satisfaction, Performance, Relationship, Workplace.

Introduction

One of the most important assets of a company is its Human Resource, people, its employees and their satisfaction on the job since it is the foundation for increasing productivity, responsiveness, quality, and customer service. Therefore, employee satisfaction in the workplace cannot be underestimated. Hence, the relationships at the workplace significantly impact workers' well-being and performance evaluations, it also influences the working behavior and must be thoroughly examined [1]. As highlighted by [2], sustainable human resource management in organisational practice plays a major role in employees' commitment, employees' satisfaction, and engagement. As such, job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of workplace factors, including compensation packages, opportunities for advancement, the working environments and the relationships

between co-workers and supervisors. Furthermore, the determinant's influence serves as a barometer for job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, as well as its outcome. So, to achieve balance, job dissatisfaction should be considered when addressing job satisfaction issues. Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs may not quit, but their feelings of disappointment may have an impression on them and their co-workers, and the quality of performance and service they provide. Dissatisfied employees are hostile toward their co-workers [3], Contributing to job satisfaction could be a profitable venture for any company [4]. Therefore, organizations urgently need to encourage employees to feel good, and repeated positive emotions frequently to have a positive influence on their social sustainability. By applying this strategy employees will feel a sense of belonging to the company and will understand that any work they do will have an impact on the overall success of the company.

Therefore, a positive relationship among employees has a positive and necessary connection with employee performance, and satisfaction, implying that improving workers' job satisfaction will improve performance and work life balance.

Prioritizing job satisfaction, especially among public service staff, can improve work productivity and increase skills, motivation, and retention while reducing discontented personnel, affecting institutional loyalty and job pursuit [5]. Preventing high worker turnover, which negatively impacts an organisation recruitment budget and productivity [6]. Consequently, as suggested by [7, 8], strong support from co-workers and supervisors improves work environments by relieving employee stress which enhances job satisfaction and performance while [10], reduces absenteeism thus, enhancing work life balance in organizations [9]. Enhancing [10] claims that workplace satisfaction is crucial to increasing productivity among workers. [11] agreeably stated that managing relationships between employers and employees is vibrant to business success, as strong relationships can lead to employee happiness and even increased productivity.

The objective of this study is twofold: to identify the effects of co-workers and supervisors' relationships on the level of job satisfaction among the employees and to highlight strategies to improve job satisfaction among the employees of the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation by understanding the relationship in the workplace, between the employee and employer.

Literature Review

Understanding Workplace Relationships

Workplace relationship matters, since feelings, emotions and performance can affect the productivity of an employee. [14] classified three types of relationships in the workplace: management flexibility, co-workers' relationship, and social relationships.

Management relationships refer to the effort of management to balance work, family and personal life relationships, therefore encouraging work-life balance. While co-worker relationships relate to a harmonious working relationship between employees within the organisation, and the social relationships represent the bonding of groups with similarities. Workplace relationships are interactions between individuals, groups, or organizations to achieve specific goals, including short-term exchanges or ongoing engagement between employers and subordinates and employees, surrounding connections and dynamics within a work context [12, 43]. Over the years the workplace has evolved, encircling attributes, organizational influences, managerial competencies, resources, labor, technology, markets, employees, values, leadership, work methodologies, interpersonal dynamics, and workplace layout [13, 16]. Workplace relationships encompass interactions with customers, professors, clients, and romantic partners [15]. and are crucial for an organisational result, task fulfilment, and human well-being, by providing a framework for work and a thriving work environment [12]. However, it has been observed that the relationship between employees and managers is the primary source of workplace challenges [16].

Several scholarly works reveal that most employees' difficulties in performing their jobs are a product of the working relationship between the employees and supervisors. Subsequently, as suggested by [7, 8], strong support from co-workers and supervisors improves work environments by relieving employee stress, which enhances job satisfaction and performance, while [10] contends it reduces absenteeism, thus enhancing work-life balance in organisations [9, 10] claims that workplace satisfaction is crucial to increasing productivity among workers [11]. agreeably stated that managing

relationships between employers and employees is vital to business success, as strong relationships can lead to employee happiness and increased productivity.

While many researchers have highlighted this, many supervisors are not aware of the impact their working relationship has on the employee's effectiveness; thus, this study confirms the importance of building a good working relationship not only with one employer but also with co-workers, resulting in having job satisfaction.

Employer-Employee relationship

The working relationship starts when an employer hires a new employee, and an employment contract is signed. Employer-employee relationships are formal and informal connections between workers and employers, characterised by efficient communication, harmonious cooperation, and shared understanding, to boost motivation and morale [17, 18] shared the same sentiment of the employer-employee relationship of a shared connection that is characterised by effective communication, friendly cooperation, and shared understanding, which enhances employee motivation and morale. Suggesting that the Employer-employee relations are complex and encompass many different facets of labour relations and interactions between employers, employees and trade unions [18]. This results in a mutually dependent environment, with employers relying on employees for functions and smooth operations, and employees relying on employers for financial compensation and a supportive environment.

Therefore, positive relationships with superiors, peers, and colleagues can enhance employee engagement, performance, motivation, dedication, and trust, ultimately optimising the work environment to achieve organisational objectives, boosting productivity, job satisfaction, and employee performance, while unhealthy relationships can

negatively affect productivity and experience [19, 44]. In contrast, poor workplace relationships can negatively impact employee motivation, performance, job satisfaction, and mental health, leading to high attrition and tension [16, 20]. Therefore, these relationships are crucial for organisational success, motivating employees, and boosting job satisfaction [20], and the employers should focus on nurturing harmonious workplaces, eradicating conflict, and improving corporate culture, communication, and knowledge [23].

Employee- Employee Relationship

References [21, 16], stated that employee relationships are informal interactions between employees and management, promoting job satisfaction and motivation, encompassing fairness, justice, culture, management style, guidelines, complaint arrangements, and conflict management. Therefore, employee-employee relations is the involvement of an individual's perception of their connection with colleagues and the exchanges and bonds between members of the same team or department [22, 43], and relations involve interpersonal interactions, disagreements, collaboration, and group dynamics, promoting job motivation and a sense of ease and self-assurance among workers and employers [12]; [24]. It therefore means that employee relations are crucial for a productive work environment, for building trust, fostering active participation, and improving company results [16]. Having strong relationships with peers and coworkers provides emotional, professional, and instrumental support, thereby positively influencing job satisfaction and employee performance [1].

The goal of the organisation is to achieve harmony and reduce conflict, with rewards playing a moderating role [21]. Thus, maintaining relationships is essential to improve in the organisational performance, growth, and learning. Therefore, managers should prioritise promoting positive employee

relationships and encourage effective communication and teamwork through team activities by conducting regular meetings to boost motivation and cooperation among the employees. It therefore means management intervention can promote social activities and foster positive employee-employee relationships, creating a healthy work environment and improving job satisfaction and performance [12, 16, 25]. Agreeing with [1], [20] statement whereby effective management can promote positive relationships and thereby improves job satisfaction and productivity.

Job Satisfaction

According to [26], employee satisfaction indicates how satisfied an employee is with his or her job and working conditions. Job satisfaction refers to the good feelings and pleasure at work, which are impacted by one's emotional state and disposition [20, 27]. Job satisfaction can be further defined as the degree to which a worker is satisfied with the rewards he or she receives from his or her work, particularly in terms of intrinsic motivation. Therefore, job satisfaction is an employee's favourable or enjoyable emotional state as a consequence of their evaluation of their present employment, taking into account both its excellent and harmful elements [6], and significantly impacts workplace relationships, motivation, productivity, and organisational success.

Much empirical evidence suggests that the purpose of job satisfaction is to evaluate all job characteristics of an employee by creating a positive attitude towards the employee's work. As an important component of an organisation, job satisfaction remains central to successful human resource management [32]; thus, executives and managers should make and enforce policies that will enhance employee satisfaction to avoid negative consequences from dissatisfaction, including organizational performance, lower productivity and employee turnover [28, 29] found that employees' job

satisfaction would significantly impact job performance, absenteeism, turnover and employee relations.

Consequently, job satisfaction is an organisation's unnoticed success, which refers to a collection of positive feelings that employees have about their jobs, and it has a cascade of effects on various aspects of a company [30, 31]. As highlighted by many scholars, job satisfaction is critical to the overall productivity of any industry, which is important for both the employer and the employee. This is because numerous studies have shown that employers greatly benefit from satisfied employees.

Factors Affecting job Satisfaction in the Workplace

References [33], simplifies five factors as presented by [34] into determinant factors of job satisfaction, that affects and organisation; these are occupational variables; job content, considerate leadership, pay and promotional opportunities, and organizational personal variables. Occupational level is the higher the level of the job, that carries the greater satisfaction for the person because it carries prestige and self-control. Followed by job content stating when the job is challenging, there is greater satisfaction. Considerate leadership refers to a leadership style where supervisors treat employees with consideration. Considerate leadership leads to job satisfaction among employees by creating a work-friendly environment defined by policies. Having opportunities for growth within a company and adequate benefits from promotional opportunities can lead to job satisfaction. As [33] explains, good working relationships with co-workers always lead to job satisfaction.

Subsequently [35], contended that the factors which influence job satisfaction are job stress and roles in the company, whereas job dissatisfaction, on the other hand, is a state in which a worker feels discontent and unhappy with his or her job for a variety of reasons, such

as pay, rewards, working environment, coworker attitudes, inadequate management, lack of private life, poor work-life balance, etc. While [36] further contend that the factors that shape job satisfaction are time management, organisational support, leaving the company, work safety, company culture, relationships between managers, work pressure, and employee salaries. Nevertheless, it is difficult to measure job satisfaction because it changes from person to person, due to its dynamic nature, since one of the main reasons for this change is that job satisfaction factors affect employees' behaviour at different levels within the job and life. While it is difficult to measure many scholars have investigated job satisfaction and stated that the factors consist of providing opportunities for advancement, ensuring job security [37], paying attention to employees' salary, improving the management, improving the intrinsic and extrinsic factors, improving working condition, maintaining social aspects, improving communication, and providing work facilities and the attention to the cohesiveness of teamwork.

Many studies have revealed several factors that have affected the level of job satisfaction

for employees within an organisation over the years, these factors concern the environment and workplace relationships shared by the employees. Therefore, job satisfaction is needed and expected by the company so that employees can work at full capacity while managing and improving on the factors that may affect the level of satisfaction derived from work and work-life. Further suggesting that employees who have high levels of job satisfaction tend to be more committed, dedicated and contribute to the company while ultimately having the will to work harder and be more productive.

Stemming from the review of literature and the research questions in understanding the effects of coworkers' relationships in the workplace on Job satisfaction, the theoretical framework will be used for the analysis of data gathered.

Figure 1-A Theoretical framework depicts the structure for the study with dependent variables of job satisfaction in the work environment, relationships between co-workers and employer as the independent variable, with demographic attributes of age and education level as the control variables for the study.

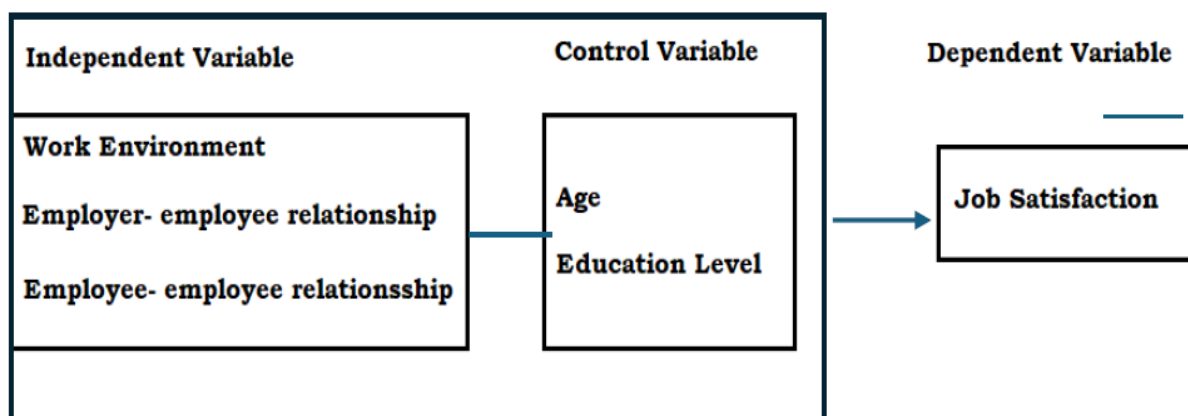


Figure 1. The Proposed Theoretical Framework.

Note: Developed by the author to highlight the theoretical framework for the research.

Methodology

Sample and Procedures

The two most common methods of conducting scientific research are qualitative

and quantitative research. A qualitative approach to research aims to develop an interpretation and find significance in a specific problem. The amount of data gathered is small, resulting in no conclusive findings that can

represent a larger population. In this study, the questionnaire forms were sent to 100 civil servant employees at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation, an agency under the umbrella of the Ministry of Public Works, a government operated service business. A total of 86 replies from 100 responses were used for analysis.

The data collected were analyzed with multiple regression analysis. Regression analysis is a statistical technique used to find and measure the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The independent variable(s) are the variable(s) that are used to predict or explain the dependent variable, whereas the dependent variable is the variable that is being predicted or explained. Regression analysis' objective is to develop a mathematical model that can forecast the value of the dependent variable, based on the values of the independent variable or variables [38] and enables us to predict future outcome based on the predictor variables.

Analysis of the research data was carried out with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software package. To test the correlation between the predictor variables, since higher the degree for the multicollinearity for the beta.

Measuring Instrument

To answer the statement in the survey, a Likert-type scale, with an expression of five intervals, anchored such as "1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree". A measurement used to gather data in a questionnaire format was adapted from questionnaires used in the studies of literature, and work-related variables factors in job satisfaction. 25 closed statement items which are grouped into two dimensions, namely: the identified factors affecting job satisfaction in the workplace (rights and responsibility, career development, teamwork and job security and the internal factors to

measure the relationship shared in the workplace (Roles and tasks, relationship with co-workers, payment, and the work environment, along with demographic factors of; gender, age, relationship status, education level and experience to gather the needed necessary data required to answer the research questions.

Before data analysis, instrumental test was carried out in order to determine whether or not the data collected by the questionnaire was valid. The tests consisted of Pearson product moment correlation.

1. Validity test: the result of the T_{count} done by computing correlation (r) of each question item with its total score, then the result of r_{count} value computed and compared to the r_{table} value at a confidence interval of (α) 5%. The r_{table} value used a correlation value of >0.30 , once the $r_{count} < r_{table}$ is valid.
2. Reliability test: To determine whether or not the instrument was reliable, it was tested using alpha Cronbach method. A reliability coefficient value greater than or equal to 0.6 is considered acceptable.
3. Normality test: to determine whether or not the data followed a normal distribution, it was tested by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov method. With a P-value >0.05 shows that the sample is not normally distributed and vice versa.

Results and Discussion

Characteristics of the Respondents

The general description of the respondents characterizes within the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation was sex, age, educational level, gender, years of service are as follow, with the researcher focusing on age and educational level as the control variable to ascertain job satisfaction among the employees of the organisation.

1. Age- More than three-quarters (78%) of the respondents are above 21 years old, with the highest category (44%) of respondents between the ages of 21 years to 34 years old,

with respondents between 16-24yrs and 35-44years accounting for 24% respectively. It shows that majority of the employees are within the average age for employment which affects both competence and workplace culture.

2. Sex- From a total of 86 respondents, more than half (67%) were female dominating the working environment, with 56% being single within the six departments of the corporation.

3. Educational Level-Out of 100 questionnaires that were distributed, 86% responded to the survey with majority of the respondents having only a secondary education (60%), followed by 35% with a certificate and only 6% with a first degree.

4. Term-the data of year of service with the organisation shows that the majority (72%) of respondents were only 1–3-year experience, followed by 4-8years accounting for 24% with one a 1% with over 8 years with the company.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

	N	Percentage		N	Percentage
Age			Tenure		
16-21	21	24%	1-3 years	62	72%
22-34	38	44%	4-8 years	21	24%
35-44	21	24%	9-12 years	1	1%
45-54	5	6%	12-15 years	1	1%
55+	3	3%	16+	1	1%
Education Level			Gender		
Primary	0	0%	Male	28	33%
Secondary	45	52%	Female	58	67%
Certificate	30	35%			
Bsc Degree	5	6%			
Master's degree	6	7%			

Note: Data collected by the author from a survey of employees from the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation on 13th December 2024

Based on an analysis of validity, reliability and normality test of the instrument of all data on both satisfaction and employee performance using Kolmogorov- Smirnov and Shapiro- Wilk test, Shapiro- Wilk was used since the sample size is below 100 participant as shown in the

table below, the independent variable of Co-workers relationship are normally distributes, while work environment, and job satisfaction is not normally distributed since the P- Value is below the significant level of 0.05($P < 0.05$).

Table 2. Test of Normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
co-workers' relationship	.083	86	.200*	.985	86	.441
work environment	.129	86	.001	.955	86	.005
job satisfaction	.131	86	<.001	.959	86	.008

*. This is a lower bound of true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Note: Data collected from a survey at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation and plotted into IBM SPSS Statistics.myibm.com. for analysis.

To further investigate the relationship between the variables, a regression analysis was conducted. Based on the theoretical framework, work environment, and coworker and supervisor's relationship, independent variables are posited to influence job satisfaction. The dependent variable of job satisfaction was regressed on all the independent variables. Multiple regression analysis is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between one dependent variable and two or more independent variables. It is used to predict the value of a dependent variable based on the values of one or more independent variables [39]. The relationship is modelled through a linear equation that estimates the relationship between the variables. The regression coefficients represent the change in the dependent variable for each unit change in an independent variable, holding all other variables constant. This technique is widely used in various fields such as economics, finance, psychology, and social sciences. This study examined the relationship between the employees' relationships within the work environment on job satisfaction

parameters. For this, the parameters measuring employees' response in consideration of the relationship shared between the employee-employer and employee-employee were considered independent variables, which were affected by the job satisfaction indicators considered as dependent variables. In other words, the developed regression models defined the effect of job satisfaction indicators via the various parameters of employee relationship within the workplace.

Table 3- Internal consistency and factor analysis shows the regression of education level, work environment, teamwork, co-worker relationship, on job satisfaction.

This model, the Pearson correlation coefficient R-value, shows that there is not a strong correlation among the variables with only .321^a. While the R² shows only 10.3%, it depicts a poor fit of the total variation in the dependent variable. While the correlation of the coworker and supervisor's relationship shows significance at a $p \leq 0.05$ at a 0.05 significance level.

Pearson Correlations

Table 3. Internal Consistency and Factor Analysis

Regression Analysis		
Model	Beta	Significance
Education Level	0.71	.278
Age	-0.43	.467
Work environment	-.148	.104
Co-workers and supervisor relationship	.406	.036

Note: Data collected by the author on the 13th of December 2024 from a survey for the Demerara Harbour Bridge corporation Employees

Table 4. Pearson Correlations

Correlations				
		Co-workers' relationship	Job satisfaction	Work environment
co-workers' relationship	Pearson Correlation	1	.230*	.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.033	.964
	N	86	86	86
job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.230*	1	-.158
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033		.145
	N	86	86	86
work environment	Pearson Correlation	.005	-.158	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.964	.145	
	N	86	86	86

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: Data collected by the author on the 13th of December 2024 from a survey for the Demerara Harbour Bridge corporation Employees plotted in IBM SPSS Statistics.myibm.com. for analysis.

■ **Highly Positive:** (None)

■ **Positive:** (co-workers' relationship - job satisfaction), (co-workers' relationship - work environment)

■ **No Linear Correlation:** (None)

■ **Negative:** (job satisfaction -work environment)

■ **Highly Negative:** (None)

The overall model is significant at $p = 0.033$ (less than 0.05), indicating that it is significant. Job satisfaction has a significant impact on many aspects of workplace relationships between the employee and employers, as well as their colleagues. Satisfied employees show better performance as compared to dissatisfied employees and contribute significantly to the uplifting of their organisations [40]. Every organisation is required to make necessary arrangements to motivate its employees, even if there is economic and political instability [41].

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study aimed to examine the correlation between workplace relationships, particularly the relationship between employer and employee, employee and employee, and its effect on job satisfaction. The study found correlation between the two variables. The result shows that overall, the relationship shared among the workers at the Demerara

Harbour Bridge Corporation on the level of job satisfaction among the employees was moderate at (mean 2.56). In terms of its correlation with job satisfaction and showed that a good workplace relationship is significantly correlated to job satisfaction. Managing good workplace relationships is apparently a key contributing factor to increase job satisfaction, and consequently, increasing performance and productivity. Undoubtedly, building good work relationships can have a huge impact on job satisfaction. The study recognizes its limitation in the population as it covered only the employees of the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation. The need for future studies, including many governments operating organisations as well as private business, will provide a vivid picture of workplace relationships and job satisfaction in the Government organisation setting in Guyana.

The study further investigated the factors that contribute to job satisfaction and found that

only two factors, the co-worker and supervisor relationship (p-value =0.036) had a significant relationship with job satisfaction at the Demerara Harbour Bridge Corporation. Within an organisation, social support comes from two sources: co-workers and supervisors [42]. Supervisor's backing is extended to provide encouragement and support to employees within their work teams [45]. It is the degree to which a manager and supervisor reinforce and encourage training in the workplace [46]. Therefore, the attention and relationship shared by subordinates increases job satisfaction by providing leadership to the employees, so that employees will feel they are part of the consideration. It was found that the work environment, the age or the education level did not have any significant effect on the relationship with job satisfaction; several explanations may contribute to these results.

However, overlooking work relationships may affect the performance of the employees. Previous studies such as [1, 47-51] found a correlation between workplace relationships and work performance. Besides affecting performance, it also affects job satisfaction [52-54].

As a conclusion, this study answered the research objective set out at the beginning of the paper; however, future research is needed to

assess the reason for employees leaving the organisation since employers are not able to stop employees leaving the organisation, offering better packages to new employees, fostering a better working relationship may give a better chances of retaining those employees and management needs to pay attention to work relationships, specifically between employer and employees and employees. Since this study was conducted at a single organisation, it is not without limitations and cannot be generalised to other organisations having public service employees working across Guyana.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in gathering and presenting the data from the organisation.

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