BOOSTING JOB SATISFACTION FOR TALENT MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING INTENTIONAL TURNOVER INTENTION - A LITERATURE REVIEW

Radu MARIN
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration
30 A Expozitiei Blvd., 012104 Bucharest, RO
radu.marin@digitalaccounting.ro

Abstract

Organizations confronted with the challenges of globalization and the development of a global labor market, with an economic environment in a permanent change, in which information and technological knowledge evolve and become obsolete very rapidly, must face these new challenges to maintain competitiveness and efficiency. In the knowledge economy, competitive advantage is based on recruitment, training, retaining talented employees, and maintaining increased job satisfaction, some of the most critical aspects contributing to keeping valuable employees within the organization. Job satisfaction is a key factor contributing to the turnover intention reduction of the most talented workers. Increasing the employee's job satisfaction level also contributes to leveraging their efficiency, supporting the organization to achieve its goals. Job satisfaction (found in the literature also under work satisfaction) is a topic researched for over a century. Research on this concept was developed in the last part of the previous century and this century, given that increasing employee job satisfaction is very important in the knowledge economy. The study proposes to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction (the main concept), turnover intention, and talent management. We've performed a literature review and bibliometric analysis based on job satisfaction and talent management. After performing the literature review and the bibliometric analysis, we've concluded that there are strong relationships between job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and talent management.

Keywords

employes retention; intention-to-leave; job satisfaction; talent management; talent management practices; talent management strategy; turnover intention

Introduction

The literature considers that the first study on job satisfaction was conducted in 1918 by Thorndike. The work studied the link between work and satisfaction (Rowden & Conine, 2005, p. 218). Although multiple studies have been conducted since then, demonstrating the importance of job satisfaction and despite the efforts made by organizations to increase its level, some managers still do not yet understand its significance. This causes job satisfaction to remain at a relatively low level. We can conclude that organizations will need to intensify their efforts to increase job satisfaction and, perhaps, modify their ways of approaching this topic.

Job satisfaction represents the feelings that employee experience in their work. Organizations must focus on developing employees' job satisfaction levels for humanitarian reasons (employees have the right to be well treated, to enjoy emotional well-being and mental health) and for utilitarian reasons (employee behavior reflects the organization's functionality and influences it). Yucel (2012) mentions that the issue of the humanitarian and utilitarian aspects of job satisfaction was studied by Spector (1997) and advocates that job satisfaction can lead to positive organizational behaviors, reflected in increased productivity, while negative organizational effects such as absenteeism and sabotage are caused by employees who feel job dissatisfaction. The author concluded that job satisfaction is a strong predictor of both loyalty to the organization and intention to leave, so organizations need to be especially concerned about employees whose level of job satisfaction fluctuates (Yucel, 2012, p. 55). Regarding the utilitarian aspect of job satisfaction, Lambert et al. (1999) concluded that job satisfaction has strong implications for both employees and organizations and is directly related to organizational attitude and behavior. The authors concluded that satisfied employees are more productive, creative, and motivated. Abdallah et al. (2017) consider that in modern organizations that have shifted their focus from tangible to intangible resources, it is essential to adopt organizational measures to increase job satisfaction. More and more organizations in the knowledge economy are also looking at job satisfaction from a humanitarian perspective. If traditionally organizations considered job satisfaction only under the utilitarian aspect (increased employee performance, retention of employees, and generally of the most valuable employees), more and more organizations are beginning to look at job satisfaction also under the humanitarian aspect. Organizations start to feel responsible for the mental well-being of employees, job satisfaction being one of its components.

Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schriesheim, and Carson (2002) consider job satisfaction a very important variable in organizational studies, being the most researched dependent variable in industrial-organizational psychology. The authors state that job satisfaction is essential for many processes, such as organizational commitment and employee intent to leave the organization. Starting from the idea that job satisfaction has become a very important factor for managers, given the increasing growth of the competitive context, Thiagaraj and Thangaswamy (2017) consider that this is the most important factor that leads to increased employee performance and their attachment to the organization.

Literature review

Ghazzawi (2008, p. 1) noted that job satisfaction is one of the most researched aspects in organizations, a topic that has attracted the attention of many researchers. Over time, job satisfaction has gained a multitude of definitions, many of which have common elements. In this regard, Abdallah et al. (2017) consider that researchers have not reached a conclusion regarding the definition of the term job satisfaction, nor have they managed to have a unanimous opinion on the factors that lead to the measurement of this concept. The authors consider this lack of consensus to be the effect of the multiple factors contributing to a person's satisfaction with his/her work.

In this section, we will try to highlight those definitions that, in our opinion, seemed to be the most relevant. The literature considers as fundamental the definition of job

satisfaction given by Locke (1976) in "The Nature and Causes of Job Satisfaction," respectively "a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of a person's work or experiences related to this work." Lambert et al. (1999) considered that job satisfaction is actually a subjective feeling at the individual level, which is determined by the degree to which the person's needs are or are not found in a particular job. A similar opinion regarding the definition of job satisfaction has Aziri (2011), who considers that job satisfaction represents those feelings that arise when the employee perceives that through work can cover both material and psychological needs. Waqas et al. (2014) define job satisfaction as representing the feelings and attitudes of employees in relation to the components of work, rewards awarded, and the work itself. A similar definition can be found in Kim et al. (2005), who considered that job satisfaction refers to the affective way in which the employees evaluate work.

Trying to link the level of job satisfaction and the work environment within the organization, Persaud (2018) considers that job satisfaction actually refers to how much employees appreciate the work environment, and Pieters (2018) underlines the influence that work environment has on the level of job satisfaction, concluding that "job satisfaction can be viewed as the general evaluation of employees in terms of jobs, characterized by satisfaction and positive feelings about their jobs." Complementing this idea, Khan and Siddiqui (2017) consider that an employee's job satisfaction refers to the feelings felt towards the work done, which can be of satisfaction or frustration and whose duration is determined by the different circumstances in the organizational work environment. The authors also defined job satisfaction as a combination of psychological and environmental factors that lead employees to say they are satisfied with their work.

There are definitions of job satisfaction that are based on organizational results achieved through it. In this sense, Sittisom (2020) considers job satisfaction as one of the most important components that determine employee motivation and satisfaction and represents a complete set of feelings and emotions that determine their performance, and Oravee et al. (2018) consider that job satisfaction is essentially for the degree of satisfaction employees feel with their work and is an important factor determining the overall future performance of the organization. Mallikarjuna (2012) considers job satisfaction to be the extent to which an employee is satisfied with his work, basically representing her/his feelings towards his work. He concludes that reduced job satisfaction can lead to low motivation, stress, absenteeism, and low retention.

Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012) considered job satisfaction to be "an evaluative state expressing contentment and positive feelings about a person's job." The authors point out that the definition includes, on the one hand, the aspect related to perception (contentment) and, on the other hand, a side related to the affective side (positive feelings). It should be noted that several authors have defined job satisfaction based on its components. George and Jones (2012) defined job satisfaction as an attitude towards work, an attitude based on three components: an affective one (feelings related to the current work), a cognitive one (beliefs related to the current work), and a behavioral one (how a person consider that should behave at work). The idea of the existence of components of job satisfaction was also found in Srimarut and Mekhum (2020). Authors consider that job satisfaction has three components: evaluative, cognitive, and behavioral, so it is difficult to establish a unitary definition for job

satisfaction. Sanjeev (2016) considers affective job satisfaction as the totality of emotional feelings towards the work performed, while cognitive job satisfaction represents the satisfaction felt with various work characteristics, such as the salary and attitude of colleagues and supervisors.

Regarding the forms that job satisfaction can take, Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) consider job satisfaction as a positive or affective function of the perceived relationship of an employee between what he expects to get from his work and what he is offered. The authors show that job satisfaction can take two forms: an intrinsic one, which refers to how people feel about the work itself, and an extrinsic one, which refers to how people feel about their situation at work, which is outside of what the actual work represents. In fact, the antecedents of job satisfaction can be divided into factors determined by work and individual factors (personality, previous experiences).

It is very important when a researcher decides to analyze job satisfaction in terms of the factors that lead him to decide whether to analyze overall job satisfaction or to analyze only certain aspects of job satisfaction. In this sense, Wanous and Lawler (1972) considered that this is one of the reasons why there is a wide variety of definitions of job satisfaction, showing that: 1. there are definitions that are based on measuring certain aspects of job satisfaction, subsequently trying to combine them to obtain general job satisfaction; 2. definitions may differ from each other in terms of the aspects of satisfaction they include and what they mean by a particular aspect of job satisfaction; 3. Some definitions refer directly to job satisfaction, while others refer to the causality of job satisfaction.

It is essential to mention that knowledge management strongly influences job satisfaction, which views employees as needing to achieve knowledge to perform their jobs (Setia et al., 2022, p. 752). Employees need the know-how to produce goods or provide services consider Bratianu and Bejinaru (2023) and the permanent enrichment of the knowledge level contributes to increasing job satisfaction. That's why organizations need to be concerned about organizational knowledge creation through socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization (Bratianu, 2023, p. 104).

The literature considers talent management a systemic process through which organizations anticipate and secure the necessary talent for key positions by identifying, attracting, developing, and retaining talented employees. This process ensures, besides the competitive advantage of the organization, finding employees who correspond, through knowledge and skills, to the job they occupy (Alimansyah & Takahashi, 2023, p. 1). Barkhuizen and Gumede (2021), Dzimbiri and Molefi (2022), Setia et al. (2022), Pomaranik and Kludacz-Alessandri (2023), Saleh and Atan (2021), Bethke-Langenegger, Mahler and Staffelbach (2011) and Gül et al. (2022) demonstrated that there is a strong positive relationship between talent management practices and job satisfaction. Goestjahjanti et al. (2020) identified a strong positive link between talent management and job satisfaction, as well as a link mediated by employee engagement. It is important to emphasize that talent management and job satisfaction are in relationships both directly and indirectly, through person-organization fit (Mensah & Bawole, 2017, p. 328), which is why organizations must try, still from the recruitment phase, to find out if this fit exists.

Increasing job satisfaction reduces the intention of talents to leave the organization, leading to streamlining the talent management process. Following their studies, Alferaih, Sarwar and Eid (2018) and Bonneton et al. (2022) concluded that employees with a high level of job satisfaction present reduced intentional turnover. Graham et al. (2023) believe that talent management has a more relevant influence on job satisfaction within the organization if it implements inclusive talent management practices, given that it addresses a more significant number of employees. Some authors argue that organizations, although they should be concerned with achieving a high overall level, will never be able to ensure employee satisfaction (neither from the point of view of how employees perceive satisfaction nor for economic reasons). Therefore, they should favor obtaining high levels of job satisfaction for high-performing employees (Pan, 2015, p. 85). This approach supports exclusive talent management within organizations, which would have the opportunity to focus on key performers.

The positive relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention is not always verified in the case of talented employees. Wei (2022) notes that employees with a high level of knowledge and qualifications, although they have a high level of job satisfaction, may still consider that they are entitled to a better job, especially in cases where job alternatives outside the organization are more numerous. In this situation, the relationship between talent management, job satisfaction and the intention to stay is influenced by personal factors of talents and the external environment in which the organization operates. A positive element to note is that the study conducted by Bonneton et al. (2022) concluded that better jobs offered by other organizations contribute only to a small extent to the intention of talents to leave the current organization.

In a globalized economy, applying the same practices to obtain a high level of job satisfaction is not easy, considering that this employee outcome is influenced by national and cultural differences (Skelton et al., 2020).

Based on the developed theoretic model, Srivastava and Tang (2022) conclude that talent management strategies improve both job and life satisfaction (to a lesser extent). Thus, it can be said that talent management has a double influence on job satisfaction because, as we know, the two types of satisfaction influence each other.

Methodology

We performed a bibliometric analysis to investigate how the authors studied, in the specialized literature, the influence that talent management has on job satisfaction and implicitly on the employees' intention to leave the organization.

The research hypotheses were as follows:
H1 – Between job satisfaction and intentional turnover intention exists a strong negative relationship
H2 – Between talent management and job satisfaction exists a strong positive relationship
We found 37.593 papers indexed in Web of Science and 63.662 papers indexed in Scopus on the topic of job satisfaction. Considering the large number of papers and the fact that Web of Science allows the export of only 1,000 papers at once, we opted to use

the articles indexed in Scopus as a research base, which enables the export of 20,000 papers. On the other hand, Scopus only allows the export of a total of 20,000 works, which is why we opted to limit the time frame in which the papers were written to 2017-2020 (a number of 21,107 works). This has the advantage of analyzing the latest works but also the disadvantage that the analysis is done only for a limited period.

Since job satisfaction was analyzed using the papers indexed in Scopus, we used the same database for the bibliometric analysis of the concept of talent management. A series of 2,668 papers indexed in Scopus were identified for the entire period in which this topic was investigated.

The export for job satisfaction was performed on the 29th of August, 2023, and the export for talent management was performed on the 3rd of September, 2023.

Results and discussion

The following network visualization was achieved using VOSviewer, based on the export of the papers having the keyword job satisfaction. The network visualization shown in Figure 1 was obtained by selecting the two clusters we were interested in for our analysis: the green (job satisfaction) and the blue (turnover Intention).
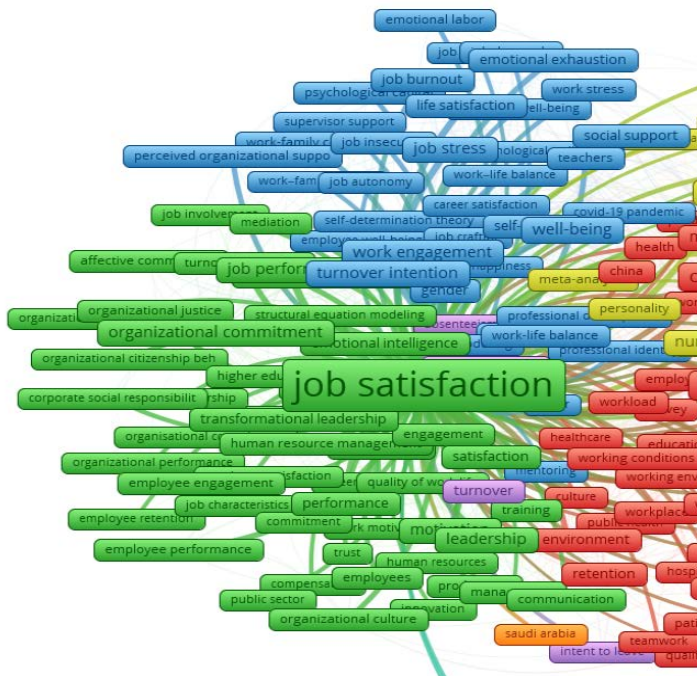

Figure1. Job satisfaction – network visualization– by VOSviewer
(Author's research results)

In the green cluster, along with job satisfaction, we found many other concepts connected to employee turnover intention and organizational performance: affective commitment, employee engagement, job involvement, job performance, organizational

commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. In the same cluster, we also identified turnover intentions and employee retention. We can conclude that there are semantic connections between job satisfaction and all the concepts mentioned above. In the blue cluster, we found the following concepts strongly connected in the specialized literature: work satisfaction (another term utilized in the specialized literature for job satisfaction), life satisfaction (which influences job satisfaction), employee well-being, work engagement, and turnover intention.

Our research found the following link strength and occurrences between the analyzed topics, which demonstrates the large number of authors that analyzed the relationships between them (Table 1):

Table 1. Link strengths and occurrences between job satisfaction and related concepts
(Source: Author's own research results)

Main concept	Related concepts	Cluster	Link strength	Occurrences
job satisfaction	employee retention	2 (green)	29	58
job satisfaction	turnover intentions	2 (green)	83	141
job satisfaction	turnover intention	3 (blue)	134	507

We obtained the following network visualizations, using VOSviewer, based on the export of the papers indexed in Scopus and having as keyword talent management (Figure 2)
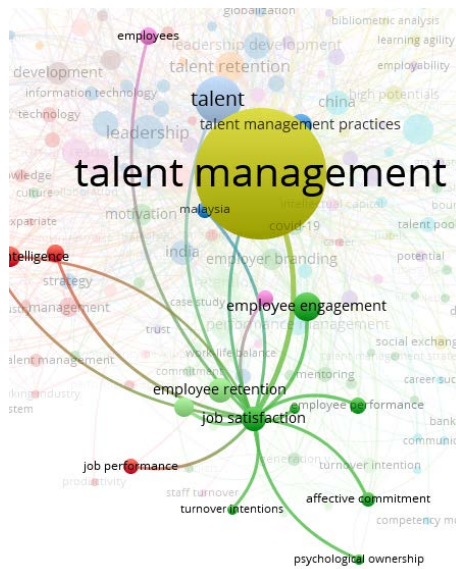

Figure 2. Talent management – network visualization – by VOSviewer
(Author's research results)

We can observe that the authors studied employee retention in relation with talent management and job satisfaction, which means that the three topics are very strongly connected. We found no links between job satisfaction and talent retention.

The bibliometric analysis revealed the existence of semantic connections between job satisfaction and topics closely related to talent management: employer branding, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, mentoring, social capital, talent management strategy, person-organization fit, affective commitment, and employee engagement (dark green cluster). In this cluster, we also found the intention of the topic to quit and turnover intentions, which strengthens the conclusion that job satisfaction is strongly linked to intentional turnover intention.

The following occurrences and link strengths have been identified between talent management and other concepts that have been studied (Table 2).

Table 2. Link strengths and occurrences between talent management and related concepts
(Source: Author's own research results)

Talent management/Related concepts	Link strength	Occurrences
talent	103	138
human resource management	77	138
leadership	47	80
talent development	64	73
human capital	46	65
talent retention	48	61
human resources	37	53
leadership development	30	49
employee engagement	40	48
recruitment	29	47
succession planning	26	46
knowledge management	35	45
innovation	21	37
performance	24	36
development	20	36
job satisfaction	20	36
employee retention	28	35

The information in the above table identifies a relatively low link strength and occurrences between job satisfaction and talent management, even if job satisfaction is one of the strongest concepts linked with talent management. The strongest links are between talent management and employee engagement/knowledge management. We concluded before that these concepts, or some of their phases (knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer), are in a semantic connection with job satisfaction.

Conclusions

Modern organizations have increasingly begun to look at the human resource not only in its aspect as the most important economic resource but also in its human aspect. More and more organizations believe that their employees must benefit from mental well-being, and studies have shown that increasing job satisfaction can determine it.

Although the literature on job satisfaction is very extensive, researchers have not unanimously agreed on the definition of job satisfaction so far. This is due, in our opinion, primarily to how various authors have tried to define job satisfaction. Most authors defined job satisfaction as the general feeling of satisfaction employees feel about their work. Other authors, especially in the more recent literature, have tried to define job satisfaction through the factors that lead to its establishment or in terms of its organizational results.

Achieving job satisfaction must be built from the identification, attraction, and selection of the employees and then consolidated during the period in which they are members of the organization. This is because job satisfaction has two aspects: one individual and one related to the work environment. Therefore, from the moment of employment, the organization must be honest with a potential employee and correctly describe what the expectations of the organization from her/him are, what is the level of qualifications and competencies that are required from the employee so that s/he can decide whether, from the point of view of his personality and abilities, the future job meets his expectations and personality and if it is able, through its competencies, to meet the expectations of the organization. Basically, the future employee must gain an overview that allows him to decide if his expectations converge with the organization's expectations. In fact, a good fit between personal values and competencies and organizational values and expectations can also sustain efficient talent management.

The bibliometric analysis ascertains the existence of a positive relationship between job satisfaction and talent management. Job satisfaction supports talent management by ensuring employee retention and reducing talent gaps, increasing employee performance, facilitating talent management implementation practices, and contributing to talent attraction. Talent management increases job satisfaction by attracting the right persons for the right jobs, developing and training programs, supporting performance management, recognition and rewards, career succession planning, feedback and communication, diversity and inclusion, and a healthy work-life balance. Both talent management and job satisfaction contribute to the reduction of intentional turnover.

This paper contributes to the theoretical clarification of the concept of job satisfaction by performing a literature review based on the evolution of its definitions, components, and relationships over time. The paper identified the relationships between job satisfaction, talent management, and intentional turnover intention and how these concepts influence each other.

A limitation of the research could be the fact that the bibliometric analysis was performed on a limited number of articles.

The bibliometric analysis doesn't identify any connection in the specialized literature between job satisfaction and talent retention. We consider that as a gap of research: research was performed only to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and employee retention without focusing on analyzing the relationship between job satisfaction and talent retention. This could be considered as an opportunity for further research.

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