

CHAPTER 3

Attitudes and Job Satisfaction

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Contrast the three components of an attitude.
2. Summarize the relationship between attitudes and behavior.
3. Compare and contrast the major job attitudes.
4. Define *job satisfaction* and show how it can be measured.
5. Summarize the main causes of job satisfaction.
6. Identify four employee responses to dissatisfaction.

I. ATTITUDES

A. Introduction

- Attitudes are evaluative statements that are either favorable or unfavorable concerning objects, people, or events.
- Attitudes are not the same as values, but the two are interrelated.

B. What Are the Main Components of Attitudes?

- Cognitive component: The opinion or belief segment of an attitude
 - The employee thought he deserved the promotion (cognitive)
- Affective component: The emotional or feeling segment of an attitude
 - The employee strongly dislikes his supervisor (affective)
- Behavioral component: An intention to behave in a certain way toward someone or something
 - The employee is looking for another job (behavioral)

C. How Consistent Are Attitudes?

- When there is an inconsistency, forces are initiated to return the individual to an equilibrium state where attitudes and behavior are again consistent, by altering either the attitudes or the behavior, or by developing a rationalization for the discrepancy.
- Cognitive Dissonance Theory
 - Leon Festinger, in the late 1950s, proposed the theory of cognitive dissonance, seeking to explain the linkage between attitudes and behavior. He argued that any form of inconsistency is uncomfortable and that individuals will attempt to reduce the dissonance.
 - The desire to reduce dissonance would be determined by:
 - The importance of the elements creating the dissonance. Importance: If the elements creating the dissonance are relatively unimportant, the pressure to correct this imbalance will be low.
 - The degree of influence the individual believes he/she has over the elements. Influence: If the dissonance is perceived as an uncontrollable result, they are less likely to be receptive to attitude change. While dissonance exists, it can be rationalized and justified.
 - The rewards that may be involved in dissonance. Rewards: The inherent tension in high dissonance tends to be reduced with high rewards.
 - Moderating factors suggest that individuals will not necessarily move to reduce dissonance.

D. Does Behavior Always Follow from Attitudes?

1. Introduction

- Research has generally concluded that people seek consistency among their attitudes and between their attitudes and their behavior.
- Individuals seek to reconcile divergent attitudes and align their attitudes and behavior so they appear rational and consistent.

- When there is an inconsistency, forces are initiated to return the individual to an equilibrium state where attitudes and behavior are again consistent, by altering either the attitudes or the behavior, or by developing a rationalization for the discrepancy.
2. Moderating Variables
 - Importance of the attitude
 - Specificity of the attitude
 - Accessibility
 - Social Pressures
 - Direct experience with the attitude

E. What Are the Major Job Attitudes?

1. **Job Satisfaction**
 - **Definition:** refers to a collection of feelings that an individual holds toward his or her job.
 - A high level of job satisfaction equals positive attitudes toward the job and vice versa.
2. Job Involvement
 - **Definition:** the measure of the degree to which a person identifies psychologically with his/her job and considers his/her perceived performance level important to self-worth.
 - High levels of job involvement are thought to result in fewer absences and lower resignation rates.
 - Job involvement more **consistently** predicts turnover than absenteeism.
3. **Organizational Commitment**
 - **Definition:** A state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals.
 - **Affective Commitment**—emotional attachment to the organization and belief in its values
 - **Continuance Commitment**—value of remaining with an organization compared to alternatives
 - **Normative Commitment**—obligation to remain with the organization for moral or ethical reasons

5. **Perceived organizational support (POS)**—degree to which employees believe the organization values their contribution and cares about their well being

II. JOB SATISFACTION

A. How Satisfied Are People in Their Jobs?

- Most people are satisfied with their jobs in the developed countries surveyed.
- Workers do seem to be less satisfied with their pay and promotion opportunities.

B. What Causes Job Satisfaction?

- Most people prefer work that is challenging and stimulating.
- Jobs with good compensation have average job satisfaction levels.
- Money may be a motivator, but may not stimulate job satisfaction.
- There is a link between a person's personality and job satisfaction.
 - Negative people are usually not satisfied with their jobs.
 - Those with positive *core self-evaluation* are more satisfied with their jobs.

C. Outcomes of Job Satisfaction

2. Job Satisfaction and Job Performance

- Satisfied workers are more productive AND more productive workers are more satisfied!
- The **causality** may run both ways.

3. Job Satisfaction and OCB

- It seems logical to assume that job satisfaction should be a major determinant of an employee's organizational citizenship behavior. More recent evidence, however, suggests that satisfaction influences OCB, but through perceptions of fairness.

- When you trust your employer, you are more likely to engage in behaviors that go beyond your formal job requirements.
4. Job Satisfaction and Customer Satisfaction
 - Evidence indicates that satisfied employees increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.
 - Customer retention and defection are highly dependent on how front-line employees deal with customers. Satisfied employees are more likely to be friendly, upbeat, and responsive. Customers appreciate that.
 5. Job Satisfaction and Absenteeism
 - We find a consistent negative relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism. The more satisfied you are, the less likely you are to miss work.
 - It makes sense that dissatisfied employees are more likely to miss work, but other factors have an impact on the relationship and reduce the correlation coefficient. For example, you might be a satisfied worker, yet still take a “mental health day” to head for the beach now and again.
 6. Job Satisfaction and Turnover
 - Satisfaction is also negatively related to turnover, but the correlation is stronger than what we found for absenteeism.
 - Other factors such as labor market conditions, expectations about alternative job opportunities, and length of tenure with the organization are important constraints on the actual decision to leave one’s current job.
 - Evidence indicates that an important moderator of the satisfaction-turnover relationship is the employee’s level of performance.
 7. Job Satisfaction and Workplace Deviance
 - If employees don’t like their work environment, they will respond somehow.
 - Job dissatisfaction predicts unionization, substance **abuse**, stealing, and tardiness.

III. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS

- Managers should take a keen interest in employees' attitudes because they often signal approaching problems
- Negative attitudes can lead to withdrawal behaviors
- Focusing on the intrinsic part of the employees' jobs is the most important thing a manager can do
- It is important for managers to always remember that an employee will try to reduce any cognitive dissonance

Shorts Questions

Chapter 3:

1. Discuss the three components of an attitude?

- Cognitive component: The opinion or belief segment of an attitude
- Affective component: The emotional or feeling segment of an attitude
- Behavioral component: An intention to behave in a certain way toward someone or something

2. Does Behavior Always Follow from Attitudes?

- People seek consistency among their attitudes and between their attitudes and their behavior.
- When there is an inconsistency, forces are initiated to return the individual to an equilibrium state.

3. What are the main moderating variables that affect attitude change?

- Importance of the attitude
- Specificity of the attitude
- Accessibility
- Social Pressures
- Direct experience with the attitude

4. Discuss the three components of organizational commitment?

- Affective Commitment—emotional attachment to the organization and belief in its values
- Continuance Commitment—value of remaining with an organization compared to alternatives
- Normative Commitment—obligation to remain with the organization for moral or ethical reasons

5. What are the major causes of job satisfaction?

- Most people prefer work that is challenging and stimulating.
- Good compensation and supervision.
- Promotion opportunities.
- There is a link between a person's personality and job satisfaction.

6. What are the major outcomes of job satisfaction?

- Increase Job Performance
- Increase organizational citizenship behavior
- Increase Customer Satisfaction
- Decrease Absenteeism
- Decrease Turnover
- Decrease Workplace Deviance