

Comparison of Employee Satisfaction along Age and Gender: Study of Public and Private Sector

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Abstract: Organizations understand that employees' job satisfaction, involvement and engagement are important to their business sustainability. Several internal and external factors can influence employees' job satisfaction and engagement, and these factors may change over the time. In the past 10 years, there has been a noticeable fluctuation in employees' overall satisfaction with their jobs. This fluctuation could be attributed to change within the workplace as well as economic and social trends. In today's uncertain economy, the best performing employers know that taking their employees' pulse and linking it in to their business goals will help organizations succeed and put them at a competitive advantage. The present study was aimed to focus on comparison of employee satisfaction in employees of two different types of business communities called public and private sector organizations. For the present study, total sample was taken as 240 employees from public and private sector organizations. Educational level of employees was minimum graduation. Middle managerial level employees were the sample of the study. Incidental sampling technique was used to collect data through three standardized self report inventories namely; Employee Survey Questionnaire (ESQ). The results showed that employees of public and private sectors significantly not found differ in their employee satisfaction. Impact of age and gender was not found on employee satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors as they were not found significantly differ along age groups and gender.

Keywords: Employee Satisfaction, Public Sector, Private Sector.

I. Introduction

Employee satisfaction is a term which refers to an individual's general attitude toward his or her job. A person with a high level of employee satisfaction holds positive attitudes about the job, while a person who is dissatisfied with his or her job holds negative attitude about the job. Employee satisfaction includes satisfaction of an employee towards his organizational atmosphere, relation with superiors and colleagues, and financial and social status.

According to Spector (2003), job satisfaction is an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs overall as well as about various aspects of them. In simple terms, job satisfaction is the extent to which people like their jobs; job dissatisfaction is the extent to which they dislike their jobs. There have been two approaches to the study of job satisfaction- the global approach and the facet approach. The global approach treats job satisfaction as a single, overall feeling towards the job. The other approach is to focus on job facet, or different aspects of the job, such as reward (pay or fringe benefits), other people on the job (supervisors and co-workers), job conditions and the nature of the work itself.

Job satisfaction is the amount of pleasure or commitment associated with a job. If an individual likes job intensely, he will experience high job satisfaction. If he/she dislikes his/her job intensely, he/she will experience job dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction defined as an individual's general attitude towards his or her job. Job requires interaction with co-workers and bosses, following organizational rules and policies, meeting performance standards, living with working conditions that are often less than ideal. A participative climate created by the supervisor has a more substantial effect on workers' satisfaction than does participation in a specific decision (Kumar &Thakur, 2011).

Job satisfaction is an integral component of work climate. While working in organizations, people develop a set of attitudes about work, supervision, co-workers, working conditions, and so on. This set of attitudes is referred to as job satisfaction. The term satisfaction generally implies the fulfillment acquired by experiencing various job activities.

Job satisfaction is the favorableness or unfavorableness with which employees view their work. It expresses the amount of agreement between one's expectations of the job and the rewards that the job provides. According to Locke, job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience.

Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is related to a number of variables. Some variables that influence on employee attitude and behavior can be grouped into four relatively discrete classes. These four levels are:

1 Organization-Wide Factors: These variables are widely available or applied to most employees. These include following:

Pay System: Pay is a primary determinant of satisfaction. To the extent that employees feel that pay meets their expectations and is fair given their level of effort, they will tend to be satisfied.

Promotional opportunities: Individuals' perceptions of equitable promotions also influence satisfaction at job.

Company Policies and Procedures: These govern employee behavior and may generate positive or negative feelings towards the organization.

Organizational Structure: Researches show that high job satisfaction is often associated with higher levels in hierarchy, and increased decentralization in decision making. Some factors like organization size span of control, or line-staff differences have inverse relationship to job satisfaction.

2 Immediate Work Environment Factors

Supervisory Style: Several studies have shown that more considerate supervision leads to high job satisfaction, but not necessarily to greater productivity. Good supervision creates a conducive climate for satisfaction-productivity relationship.

Participative Decision Making: It leads to increased satisfaction, especially when the decisions are related to employees' job and when employee participation is real.

Work Group Size: Larger work groups lead to low job satisfaction due to greater task specialization, poor interpersonal relation and low group cohesiveness.

Co-Worker Relation: People generally feel more satisfaction with their co-workers when there is a compatibility of interests and views between them.

Working Conditions: General working conditions can also influence employee satisfaction and attitudes because people value to have an orderly work place.

3 Job Content Factors

Job Scope: It refers to certain features of a job such as autonomy, responsibility, feedback provided and the amount of variety. It has been found that wide job scope leads to increased job satisfaction.

Role Clarity and Conflict: Employees feel more secure and satisfied where they have clear task goals and no role ambiguity.

4 Personal Factors:

Age and Tenure: Research has shown that as employees grow older and acquire seniority, they tend to be slightly more satisfied with their jobs. On the other hand, new entrants tend to be less satisfied due to higher expectations.

Personality: Several personality factors such as maturity, self-assurance, decisiveness are related to high job satisfaction. People with high self-esteem tend to be more satisfied with their work.

Occupational Level: People will higher level occupations such as professionals and managers tend to be more satisfied with their jobs (Sudha, 2010).

Many researches proved that satisfaction of an employee is related to his/her performance in his/her organization and employee performance is related to success of any organization. The term 'Employee Satisfaction' focuses on various aspects of an individual's professional life like level of motivation, job involvement, organizational awareness, interpersonal relations, salary, compensation, facilities, and management functioning. Present research was intended to compare the level of employee satisfaction of employees of two different business communities, public and private sectors. The impact of age and gender on employee satisfaction were also focused in the present study.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Studies of Job Satisfaction in Public and Private sector Organizations

Aziz, Tabassum and Farooq (2014) studied the comparison of job satisfaction of public and private university teachers on selected variables in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa. Study showed no significant difference between perception of public and private university teachers and both public and private university teachers were same regarding their job satisfaction. It was also found that there is no significant difference between male and female teachers of public and private university (www.pjpub.org). Devi and Suneja (2013) attempted a study to find out the difference in job satisfaction between public and private sector bank employees. The findings showed that there is no significant difference in the mean score of various aspects of job satisfaction. It showed that employees of both public and private sector banks feel same level of satisfaction in their organization (www.ijmst.org). Similar findings were found in the study by Sehgal (2012). He conducted a comparative study of job satisfaction in two banks of public and private sector in Shimla. He also found no significant difference in job satisfaction in employees of both public and private sector banks. The employees of both sector banks were equally satisfied with their job (www.indianresearchjournals.com). Islam and Saha (2001) attempted study to evaluate job satisfaction of bank officers in Bangladesh. They found the overall job satisfaction of bank officers was at the positive level and private bank officers have higher level of job satisfaction than public sector bank officers. They also concluded that gender and age difference have relatively lower level of impact on job satisfaction (www.journal.au.edu). Joshi (1998) found out that employee of public and private sectors differ in their job satisfaction, job involvement and work involvement. The employees do not differ in their job satisfaction, job involvement and work involvement according to their gender. Paine, Carroll and Lecte (1966) found in their survey that public managers were much less satisfied with their jobs than similar group in the commercial and industrial sector. Solomon (1987) also indicated the same findings in his study that private sector managers reported consistently higher level of job satisfaction than public sector managers (www.innovation.cc).

2.2 Job Satisfaction in relation to Age and Gender

Khan, Ramzan and Butt (2013) conducted a study to find out that is job satisfaction of Islamic banks operational staff determined through organizational climate, occupational stress, age and gender. They found that organizational climate and occupational stress have significant impact on the level of job satisfaction, and there is no significant relationship between age and level of job satisfaction under different organizational climate and occupational stressors. Study also showed that male employees were more satisfied than female employees (www.ibsq.org). Franek and Vecera (2008) attempted to examine the relationships among job satisfaction and selected variables in employees of various occupational areas in Czech Republic managers, accountants, in sales, PR, advertising, health service, teachers, nature conservation as well as manual workers and different kind of skilled workers. The findings revealed no significant difference in job satisfaction in male and female employees (www.ekonomie-management). Hechanova et al. (2006) conducted study to determine the relationship of empowerment with job satisfaction and performance in five different service sectors namely-hotels, food service, banking, call centers and airlines. It was found out that psychological empowerment was positively correlated with both job satisfaction and performance. Although intrinsic motivation was associated with higher level of empowerment and job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivation did not moderate the relationship between empowerment, job satisfaction and performance. It was also found that men reported greater empowerment than women, while job level and performance were controlled for cross industry. Empowerment indicated difference across different type of service sector with employees in call centers reported less empowerment as compared to employees in hotels, airlines, food establishments and banks. Okpara et al. (2005) conducted study on university teachers. He found those female faculties were more satisfied with their work and co-workers, whereas their male colleagues were more satisfied with their pay, promotions, supervision and overall job satisfaction. Sarker et al. (2003) attempted a study on hotel employees of Thailand to find out the relationship of age and length of service with job satisfaction. The results indicated that employee age is not significantly associated with overall job satisfaction level (www.emeraldinsight.com). Wadhwa et al. (2011) carried out study focused on impact of various factors on job satisfaction. It was found in study that environmental, organizational and behavioral factors have a positive impact on job satisfaction. Study revealed that if employees are treated equally and fairly and they are properly supervised, their level of satisfaction can be increased towards job, as well as organizational factors are found the most important aspect for job satisfaction of the employee in a company (www.ijmbs.com). Kumar and Achamamba (1993) found out that with regard to the satisfaction of the administrative staff, a significant difference was found between the public and private sector. The mean satisfaction score of public administrative staff was significantly higher than that of the private administrative staff. The results of the study show that public and private sector employees did not differ in their level of job involvement.

The above review of literature indicated that satisfaction is an important factor of an individual's life and it may influence his/her professional life. There are number of studies focused on job satisfaction and it was found that there are several factors which may affect the satisfaction level of an employee such as salary, workplace environment, colleagues, age, and gender. Contrary to that, some studies indicated that variables like age and gender are not associated to satisfaction level of an employee.

III. Objectives Of The Study

1. To compare whether employees of public and private sector differ in level of employee satisfaction.
2. To compare whether employees of public and private sector differ in level of employee satisfaction along age groups.
3. To compare whether employees of public and private sector differ in level of employee satisfaction along gender.

IV. Method

4.1 Hypotheses In the light of earlier review of literature following hypotheses were framed.

1. There would be significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors.
2. There would be no significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees along age in public and private sectors.
3. There would be no significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees along gender in public and private sectors.

4.2 Sample

The sampling technique used for the study was incidental sampling. In public sector, various government offices, insurance companies were approached. In private sector, IT companies, various production and non-production organizations were approached. The total sample of 240 employees from public and private sector from Pune, Maharashtra, India was selected for the study. The middle managerial level employees were selected for the study. Their minimum educational qualification was graduation. From the total of 240 employees, 120 employees were from public sector and 120 employees from private sector. Out of these 120 employees in each sector, 60 were male and 60 were female employees. Out of these 60 employees of each sector, 30 had age range 22 to 31 years and 30 employees had age range 32 to 41 years.

4.3 Tool

Employee Satisfaction Questionnaire (ESQ) Patwardhan, (2005) For the measurement of variable employee satisfaction, Employee Satisfaction Questionnaire (ESQ) (2005) was used. It is a self-report inventory, which has 157 items they are divided into five components. These five components with their related factors are as follows:

1 Psycho-Energy: Level of motivation, job involvement, organization involvement, extent to which own competencies are utilized.

2 Organizational Awareness: Management functioning.

3 Superiors: Immediate boss.

4 Colleagues: Team working, interpersonal relations.

5 Concrete Gains: Salary, compensations, benefits, facilities.

4.4 Data Collection and Data Analysis

As present research study is based on employees of public and private sector organizations, so initial contact was done in various public and private sector organization like; IT industries, various production and non-production organizations, Insurance companies, and various public sector offices. Their co-operation was solicited and doubts were clarified. The ESQ inventory and answer sheets was presented respectively to the participants. Their scores were kept confidential. Means and SDs values were calculated for the raw scores of ESQ according to sectors, both the age groups and gender. t- Values were calculated to find out the difference in raw scores of employee satisfaction in public and private sectors employees. Comparison of scores of employee satisfaction across the variables, Gender and Age for both public and private sectors was studied by calculating Two-way ANOVA.

V. Results And Discussion

Table 1: Means, SDs, t-value, and ‘p’ value of ESQ of Employees of Public (N=120) and Private Sectors (N=120)

Sectors	Means	SDs	‘t’- Value	‘p’ Value
Public	454.62	54.07	0.30 NS	0.38
Private	452.73	42.78		

NS=Not Significant

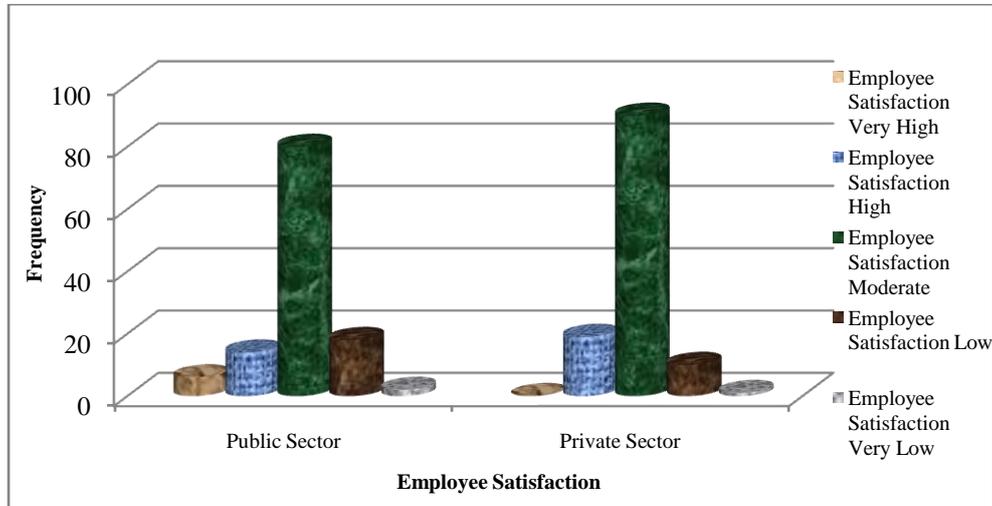


Figure 1: Graphical Presentation of Employee Satisfaction of Employees of Public and Private Sectors

The Fig. 1 shows the detailed classification of number of employees of both public and private sectors divided into five levels namely; very high, high, moderate, low, and very low employee satisfaction (ES).

The Fig. 1 shows that out of 120 employees of each of the public and private sectors, six employees (5%) of public sector shown very high level ES but no employee showed very high level of ES in private sector. Fourteen employees (11.6%) of public sector and 19 employees (15.8%) of private sector showed high level of ES. Eighty employees (66.6%) of public sector and 90 employees (75%) of private sector showed moderate level of ES. Eighteen employees (15%) of public sector and 10 employees (8.3%) of private sector showed low ES. Two employees (1.6%) of public sector and one employee (0.8%) of private sector indicated very low ES.

H1: There would be significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors.

As shown in the Table 1, the mean of the scores on ESQ of employees of public sector (N=120), was 454.62, SD was 54.07. The mean of the scores on ESQ of employees of private sector (N=120), was 452.73, and SD was 42.78. ‘t’ value was found 0.30 (p<0.38 NS). The result indicates that the employees of public and private sectors are moderately satisfied but there is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors.

Considering the above results, the hypothesis number 1 is rejected.

Table 2: Means, SDs, F-ratio, and ‘p’ value of ESQ of Employees of Public (N=120) and Private Sectors (N=120) along Age Groups

Sectors	Age Group	N	Means	SDs	‘F’-ratio	‘p’ Value
Public	A1	60	455.53	52.24	0.005 NS	0.94
	A2	60	453.71	56.26		
Private	A1	60	453.20	45.57		
	A2	60	452.26	40.17		

A1 (Age 22 to 31 years), A2 (Age 32 to 41 years)

NS=Not Significant

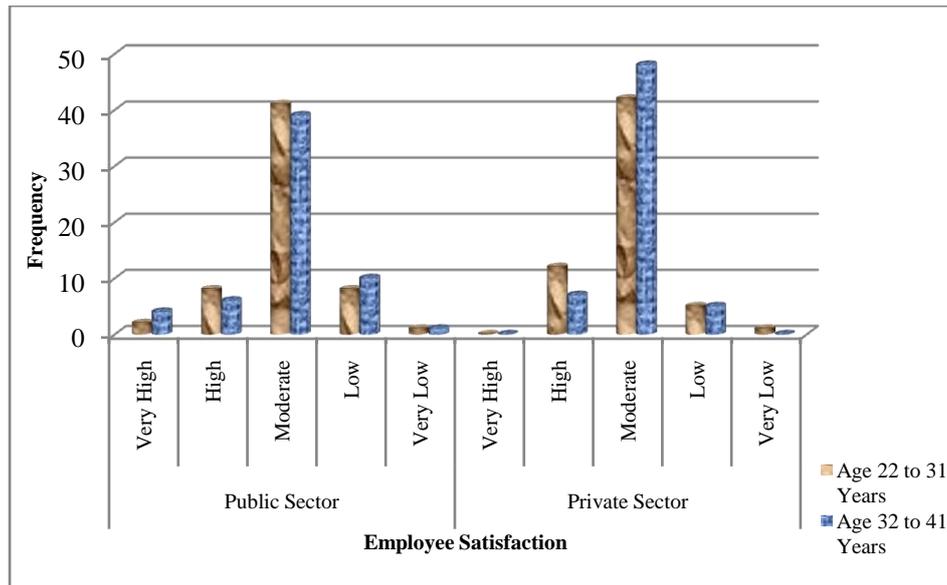


Figure 2: Graphical Presentation of Employee Satisfaction of Employees of Public and Private Sectors along Age Groups

The Fig. 2 shows the detailed classification of number of employees of both the age groups A1 (22-31 years), A2 (32-41 years) of public and private sectors divided in five levels -very high, high, moderate, low, and very low employee satisfaction (ES).

The Fig. 2 shows that out of 60 employees of each of the age groups A1 (22 to 31 Years) and A2 (32 to 41Years) of public sector, two employees (3.3%) of A1 and four employees (6.7%) of A2 indicated very high ES. Eight employees (13.3%) of A1 and six employees (10%) of A2 showed high (ES). Forty one employees (68.3%) of A1 and 39 employees (65%) of A2 showed moderate ES. Eight employees (13.3%) of A1 and 10 employees (16.7%) of A2 shown low ES and one employee (1.7%) of A1 and one employee (1.7%) of A2 of public sector indicated very low level ES.

On the other side, out of 60 employees of each of the age groups A1 (22 to 31 Years) and A2 (32 to 41Years) of private sector, no employees of A1 and A2 indicated very high level ES. Twelve employees (20%) of A1 and seven employees (11.7%) of A2 showed high level of ES. Forty two employees (70%) of A1 and 48 employees (80%) of A2 showed moderate ES. Five employees (8.3%) of A1 and five employees (8.3%) of A2 showed low level ES. Only one employee (1.7%) of A1 indicated very low ES and no employee of group A2 of private sector indicated very low level ES.

H 2: There would be no significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees along age in public and private sectors.

As shown in the Table 2, scores of ESQ of employees of public sector, age group 1 (22 to 31 Years), mean of the scores was 455.53, and SD was 52.24. Scores of employees of private sector, age group 1, mean of the scores was 453.20, and SD was 45.57. The scores of employees of public sector, age group 2 (32 to 41 Years), mean of the scores was 453.71, and SD was 56.26. The scores of employees of private sector, age group 2, mean of the scores were 452.26, and SD was 40.17. The ‘F’ ratio was found 0.005 (p<0.94 NS). The results indicate that employees of public and private sectors of both age groups are moderately satisfied as an employee and there is no significant difference in the employee satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors along their age group.

Considering the above results, the hypothesis number 2 is retained.

The present study was focused on two age groups of employees; Age group 1 (22-31 Years), this is the age group of employees who just start their job and their expectations are more focused on concrete gains, rather than other components of satisfaction, and this group may change their job very often. On the other side Age group 2 (32- 41 years), is the group of employees who already settled in their job and they have years of work experience and their expectations may be different from younger employees. But overall satisfaction level may not differ in these age groups of employees as job satisfaction is a psychological component and it is a feeling of individual which may not change very often. In the age group of 22 years to 41 years it may not vary. It can be changed in late age of employees like after 50 or 55 years.

Study by Khan, Ramzan and Butt (2013) indicated that no significant relationship between age and job satisfaction. Sarker et al. (2003) also indicated that age is not significantly associated with job satisfaction. These findings supported the present study.

Table 3: Means, SDs, ‘F’ ratio, and ‘p’ value of ESQ of Male and Female Employees of Public and Private Sectors

Sectors	Gender	N	Means	SDs	‘F’-ratio	‘p’ Value
Public	Male	60	457.78	55.34	0.39 NS	0.53
	Female	60	451.46	53.04		
Private	Male	60	459.81	46.63		
	Female	60	445.65	37.61		

NS=Not Significant

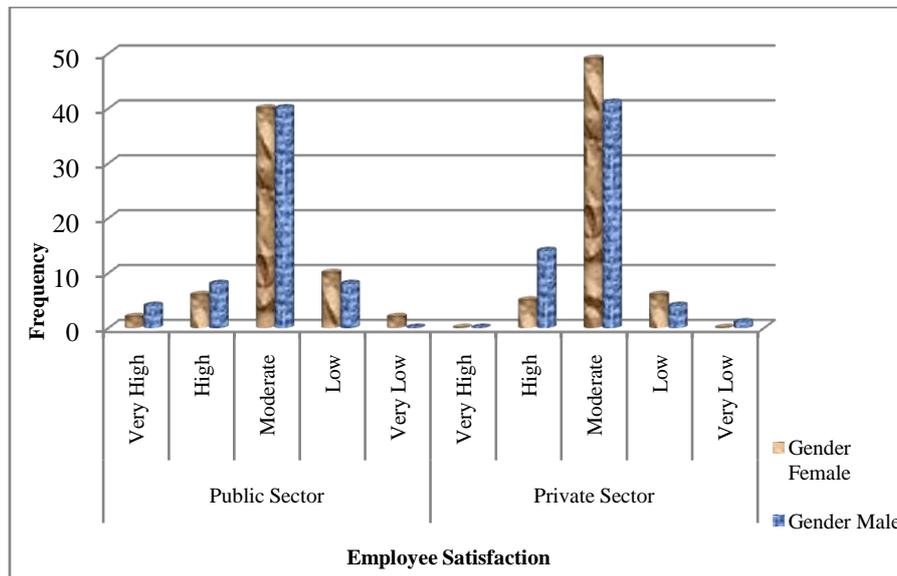


Figure 3: Graphical Presentation of Employee Satisfaction of Male and Female Employees of Public and Private Sectors

The Fig. 3 shows the detailed classification of number of male and female employees of public and private sectors divided into five levels -very high, high, moderate, low, and very low employee satisfaction (ES).

The Fig. 3 shows that out of 60 male employees of each of the sectors, four male employees (6.7%) of public sector indicated very high ES, while in private sector no employee indicated very high ES. Eight employees (13.3%) of public sector and 14 employees (23.3%) of private sector showed high ES. Forty employees (66.7%) of public sector and 41 employees (68.3%) of private sector indicated moderate level ES. Eight employees (13.3%) of public sector and four employees (6.7%) of private sector indicated low ES level. Very low ES level was not found in public sector while only one male employee (1.7%) of private sector indicated very low ES as an employee.

On the other side, out of 60 female employees of each of the sectors, two employees (3.3%) of public sector showed very high ES, and no female employees of private sector indicated very high ES. Six employees (10%) of public sector and five employees (8.3%) of private sector showed high level of ES. Forty employees (66.7%) of public sector and 49 employees (81.7%) of private sector showed moderate ES level. Ten employees (16.7%) of public sector and six employees (10%) of private sector showed low ES. Very low level ES was found only in two female employees (3.3%) of public sector while very low level of ES not found in female employees of private sector.

H 3: There would be no significant difference in level of employee satisfaction in employees along gender in public and private sectors.

As shown in the Table 3, scores on ESQ inventory of public sector male, mean of the scores was 457.78, and SD was 55.34, while scores of private sector male, mean of the scores was 459.81, and SD was 46.63. While scores of public sector female, mean of the scores was 451.46 and SD was 53.04 while scores of private sector female, mean of the scores was 445.65, and SD was 37.61. The ‘F’ ratio was found 0.39 (p<0.53 NS). Thus the result indicates that both male and female employees are moderately satisfied and there is no significant difference in employee satisfaction between male and female employees of public and private sectors.

Considering the above results, the hypothesis number 3 is retained.

In the modern edge, women are getting better career opportunities. In any organization, whether it is public sector or private sector, women are also getting exposure and equal opportunity to utilize their potentials and ability. This is the reason that in last few years, women are also getting same position and respect at their workplace and this lead to increase their satisfaction level. This may be the strong reason that in the present study no difference found in employee satisfaction in male and female employees of public and private sector.

Aziz, Tabassum and Farooq (2014) studied the comparison of job satisfaction in public and private sector university teachers and concluded no significant difference in male and female teachers. Islam and Saha (2001) concluded that gender and age difference have relatively lower impact on job satisfaction. These finding supported the present study.

It is well established today that it is not just financial and technological capital that provide companies with the competitive edge, but people, or human capital. In order to retain and attract the talent pool in to the organization, employees should be satisfied. The present research is undertaken to study comparison of employees of public and private sectors with respect to their employee satisfaction along age groups and gender.

Contrary to previous findings, which indicated significant difference in job satisfaction in public and private sector employees (Kumar & Achamamba, 1993; Paine, Carroll & LECTE, 1966), findings of the present study shown that employees of public and private sector have shown no significant difference in overall level of employee satisfaction ($t=0.30$, $p<0.38$ NS). This finding supports previous researches like comparative study of job satisfaction of public and private sector bank (Sehgal, 2012; Devi & Suneja, 2013). No effect of age on satisfaction was emerged ($F=0.005$, $p<0.94$ NS). These findings are similar to previous findings which indicated no significant relationship between age and job satisfaction (Khan, Ramzan & Butt, 2013; Sarker et al. 2003). Effect of gender was also not found on satisfaction level of employees of public and private sectors ($F=0.39$, $P<0.53$ NS).

VI. Conclusions

There is no significant difference in employee satisfaction in employees of public and private sectors. No significant difference found in employee satisfaction in employees along age, and gender in public and private sectors. The main limitation of the study that it was not based on any one kind of job profile of employees. Employees of various job profile and various departments of were included in the study. Work experience in years of employees was not considered in the study. The present study was based only on one city Pune, Maharashtra, India. Further studies can be undertaken in different cities and other than middle managerial level employees. Work experience in years of employees should be taken into consideration.

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