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Job Satisfaction Effects on Employee Performance in Food Manufacturing Firms in Kenya

Samuel Onjolo



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Samuel Onjolo

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and
Technology

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Abstract

Purpose: This research aimed at examining effects of job satisfaction on employee performance in food manufacturing firms in Kenya and decomposed job satisfaction into work, salary, supervision as well as growth and development as investigation constructs.

Methodology: The study adopted post-positivism philosophy and employed explanatory research design with stratified proportionate sampling technique. A sample of 384 respondents from a target population of about 12476 employees was obtained using Fishers (1991) formula from 50 food manufacturing firms and a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire used to collect primary data for hypothesis testing.

Findings: The study findings revealed that job satisfaction had positive strong relationship with significant effect on employee performance as $t_{cal}=24.79 > t_{crit}=1.96$ at $p=0.000$. Therefore, null hypothesis that job satisfaction has no significant effect on employee performance was rejected. The regression outcome of $\beta=0.832$, $p=0.000$ indicate that a unit enhancement in knowledge management infrastructure results in employee performance enhancement by 0.832 units.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The study concluded that job satisfaction affects employee performance. Management of the firms should entrench measures that enhance job satisfaction to support employee performance.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Employee Performance, Manufacturing Firms*

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INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction remains a critical feature that drives employee engagement and commitment to the employment contract. Vroom (1964) viewed job satisfaction as individual affective orientation toward work roles while Locke (1976) conceived job satisfaction as the positive or pleasurable emotional state arising out of appraisal of a job and its experiences. Similarly, Otabil, et al. (2022) expressed that job satisfaction is a set of feelings and emotions - favourable or unfavourable, with which employees perceive their work, as Kara (2020) concluded that job satisfaction relates to affirmative variables such as job motivation, organizational citizenship behaviour, job performance and life satisfaction.

Relatedly, Qureshi and Hamid (2017) perceived job satisfaction as employee positive feeling of psychological, physiological and environmental realms to a given work; depicting it as positive feeling resulting from evaluation of characteristics of one's job; posing it as a significant predictor for employee performance. They affirmed that supervisor support promotes job satisfaction, facilitates employee productivity, enables achievement of strategic objectives and enhances performance. Recently, Dziuba et al. (2019) observed job satisfaction as a sense of employee achievement and success in relation to productivity and overall work performance inclusive of the working conditions.

Oluwaseun (2018) confirmed that job satisfaction is among the factors influencing employee performance, appreciating that it requires training and development for growth and transformation of both employee and organization. However, Judge et al. (2010) observed that people engagement in work is not a choice but compulsion from need to attain sustenance, security and privilege, meaning people work to earn a living - the pecuniary aspect of work that sustains worker life. They concluded that no other motivational technique nor incentive matches salary with respect to its instrumental value – making it an aspect of job satisfaction. These studies have variously demonstrated that job satisfaction is influenced by among others, the work itself, salary, supervisor support, and employee growth and development, all contributing to enhanced employee performance. This study conceives job satisfaction as positive affection arising from employee appraisal of current job and organizational features relating to among others the work itself, supervision, salary as well as growth and development.

The study acknowledged the significance of Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model of Motivation depicting job satisfaction as personal, recognizing high internal work motivation, high quality work performance with low absenteeism and turnover; with emphasis on skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback as the five core job characteristics responsible for experiential judgement on work outcome - knowledge of actual results of work activities, experienced meaningfulness of work done and, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the work. These yield the comprehensive job satisfaction status from well-articulated measurement of employee motivation framework.

Problem Statement

Theories have been advanced concerning motivation and they remain closely knit to employee satisfaction, yet they both merely hold as means to attaining desired employee performance. Job satisfaction influences on performance continue to display a conjecture and it is important that the

gaps be addressed through evidential findings. Recommendations from various researches remain diverse, making this study a necessity for the food manufacturing context. Impacts of technology and globalization on job satisfaction, motivation and performance need be mainstreamed to required productivity. These in cahoots with contemporary issues such as Covid-19 pandemic and their effects, fundamentally influence the constructs at play – work, supervision, salary as well as growth and development. Moreover, emergent effects of knowledge economy and fourth industrial revolution (4IR) phenomena, unless proactively managed, would exacerbate challenges relating to capabilities of human resource managers, ICT managers and production portfolio managers in food industries context. This study sought to highlight potential solutions to success by industry management in embracing job satisfaction for enhancement of employee performance notwithstanding inherent and emergent challenges.

Research Objective: To ascertain effects of job satisfaction on employee performance in food manufacturing firms in Kenya.

Hypothesis: Job satisfaction does not significantly affect employee performance in food manufacturing firms in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This includes both theoretical reviews, conceptual framework and empirical reviews for grounding of the study.

Theoretical Review

The study was hinged on Herzberg Two Factor theory of motivation for job satisfaction and human capital theory for anchoring employee performance.

Herzberg Two Factor Theory

Fredrick Herzberg developed the theory in 1959 upon interviewing 203 engineers and accountants in Pittsburgh area as he sought to answer the question, “What do people want from their jobs?” Answers to the question led to publication of the article, "One More Time: How do You Motivate Employees". The outcome was development of the Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene factors theory, also called the two-factor theory, which holds that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction exist on two different continua, with each having its own set of factors (Herzberg, 1959; Herzberg, 2018).

The theory holds that for peak performance, employees need to experience job satisfaction and motivation, which are achieved through motivator and hygiene factors, which exist on opposite continua; such that presence of motivators such as work itself, responsibility, achievement, recognition, opportunity for growth, and self-development lead to job satisfaction; while deficiency in hygiene factors such as company policies, work conditions, salary, supervision, relationship with managers and peers, stimulate dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 2008). For optimization of satisfaction, the theory envisages that in a mutually exclusive manner, management has to continually promote both continua.

However, studies have challenged aspects of Herzberg theory; hygiene factors like supervision, interpersonal relationship, salary and job security have been demonstrated to play a major role in motivating employees (Kotni & Karumuri, 2018), converse to the auspices of two-factor theory. This may be related to impacts of technology, globalization and demographic emergences like

generation Z dynamics; which appear to overturn some known features like effects of extrinsic and intrinsic factors on Herzberg Two Factor theory of motivation. Though there have been evidence of extrinsic factors conferring motivation effects instead of hygiene behavior, the core relevance of Two Factor theory still holds as both motivation and hygiene effects remain relevant in the modern labour movement. The main assumption of Herzberg theory is that employees adhere to expectations of Maslow hierarchy of needs, which provides a framework for enhancing job satisfaction and motivation for influencing employee performance.

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory posits that education and training promote employee productivity by imparting useful knowledge and skills, thereby raising workers' future income and increasing their lifetime earnings. Schultz and Becker founded the concept of human capital theory, with their respective publications - "Capital Formation by Education" in 1960 and "Investing in Human Capital" in 1962. They viewed human capital as an additional source of income, created on the basis of knowledge, skills and abilities that enables economic growth, separable from institutional environment. Ideologically, the theory advocates for education and training that enhance employee future income, job satisfaction and workforce quality - being prerequisite for economic growth; thus, the theory portends symbiotic benefitting for both the employee and the organization.

Becker (1962) became the greatest contributor through publication, "Investing in Human Capital", contending that education, healthcare, migration and information search remain key ways of investing in a person; and that these confer job satisfaction and performance enhancement. The study outlined three facets - general knowledge, specific knowledge and other types of knowledge, as significant in preparing an employee for appropriate job execution. These impact employee achievement, job satisfaction and desired performance given that knowledge base influences task delivery and employee growth. Human capital theory suitably anchors this study on the strength that it advocates for continuous education and training, which confers continued employee versatility in task execution as well as adaptive performance and contextual fitness. These are pertinent precursors to employee satisfaction and enhanced performance.

The key assumption of human capital theory is that employees have innate and acquired set of skills and abilities that through education and training, enhance their productive capacity (Becker, 2009); thus, education confers marginal productivity of labour and earnings. The theory advocates for development of innate skills and impartation of external skills, which augment existent ability to required new capabilities thereby enhancing job satisfaction and employee performance potential. In purpose, the theory promotes increment of employee productivity through education and skills training, thereby enhancing their intangible economic value. In application, human capital theory supports features adopted as conditions guiding employee recruitment in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences. Thus, pillars of human capital theory can be leveraged for improvement of manpower, with potential twin benefits of improving job satisfaction and employee performance through appropriate training and education.

However, drawbacks have been identified with human capital theory; for instance, it imposes a single linear pathway for assessment of the complex relationship between education heterogeneity and work diversities. Due to which it cannot explain why salaries remain unequal even in same educational sphere or work environment, as other factors are also at play. Other reported

weaknesses relate to its operationalization as a closed system modeling as well as inappropriate application of mathematical tools and multivariate analysis of interdependent variables. It is fundamental to note that despite these pitfalls, human capital theory remains a robust pedestal for modeling human development in the knowledge economy and emergent 4IR sphere of business operations.

Conceptual Framework

Balouch and Hassan (2014) determined that work and work environment suitability is one of the factors influencing job satisfaction with impacts on employee performance and turnover intention. The study concluded that success of any organization is dependent upon extent to which employees enjoy nature of job, suitability of work environment and feel rewarded for their efforts. As Mehrzad and Rostan (2021) opined that appropriate salary levels influence employee turnover, Akinwale and George (2020) averred that salary is among the most fundamental drivers of job satisfaction while Ahmad (2018) declared that satisfaction with pay and promotion policies confer satisfaction with work and commitment to the firm. Thus, appropriate salary levels forestall turn-over, absenteeism and underperformance. Another feature that impacts job satisfaction is supervisory support, which Sungu et al. (2019) emphasized as having intrinsic and extrinsic effects on employee efforts to getting organization outcomes while Ghasemy et al. (2022) observed that obviosity of conflicts arising in workplace compels for presence of effective supervision - to enhance alignment of efforts to productivity and nip in bud any counterproductive work behavior from creating discord and loss of productivity.

Besides these – work, salary and supervision, employee growth and development is another factor influencing job satisfaction. Wau and Purwanto (2021) conceived growth and development as comprising activities that form career planning, to enable employee utilization of career opportunities for fulfillment of both personal and organization development needs. Ng et al. (2024) held that firms with systematic model for career development attain better performance; consistent with Marina et al. (2023) conclusion that career development influence job satisfaction and employee performance and in consonance with Wau (2021) conclusion that career development affects job satisfaction. Moreover, Anthony and Weide (2015) outlined capability factors; commitment or efforts factors; and organization support factors - that include among others training and development, as most fundamental in growth and development that directly affect both motivation and job satisfaction. The study adopted modified version of Dziuba and Ingaldi (2016) and Masa'deh et al. (2019) instruments for investigation data collection. See Figure 1 for the conceptual framework diagram.

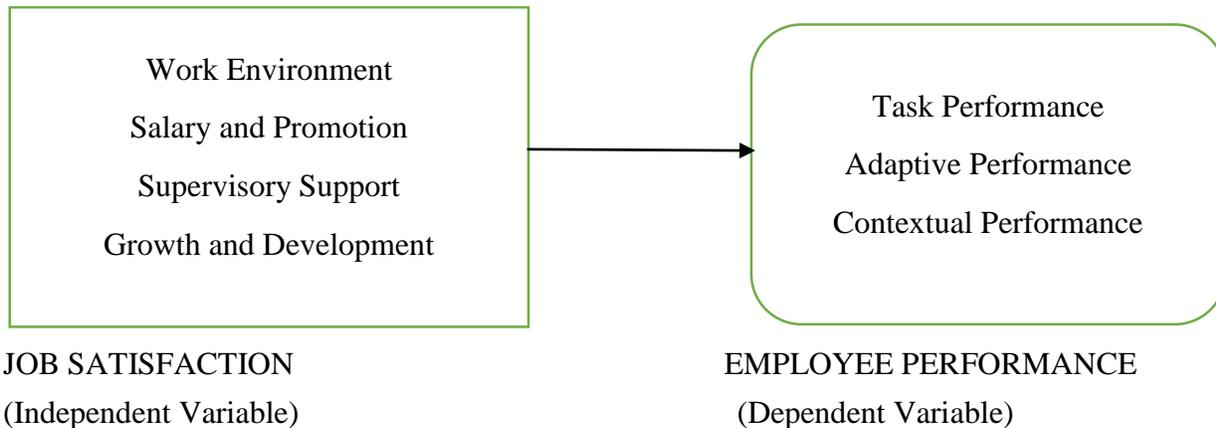


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Tadesse (2020) study found that job satisfaction significantly affects employee performance, concluding that cordial relationship between employee and supervisor is critical, as it enables alignment of employee objectives to organization goals, promoting optimal utilization of resources and enhancing job satisfaction. Rodrigo et al. (2022) investigation on impact of job satisfaction on employee performance in Sri Lanka decomposed job satisfaction into four constructs of pay and benefits, trainings, work condition and nature of the job, found that all predictor variables positively impacted on employee performance, recommending that management aligns the job satisfaction features to performance objectives for synergy and employee motivation. The two studies emphasized the need to ensure alignment of objectives, making it a significant element for pursuits of both job satisfaction and performance. The studies appeared to confirm Obiekwe et al., (2019) position that employees whose work confer high job satisfaction radiate positive job attitude that supports organization performance; concluding that job satisfaction relates negatively with low work drive, absenteeism and turnover, emphasizing that rather high job satisfaction stimulates positive and high staff morale, heightens employee commitment and productivity. This study sought to ascertain the extent of job satisfaction relative to factors such as work environment and pay, in comparison to reported findings in extant literature.

Awan and Asghar (2014) in a Pakistan study confirmed that performance is best when employees are satisfied with pay package, reward system and security of job tenure; and found a significant and positive relationship between these factors and job satisfaction. They buttressed Sanjaya et al. (2023) recommendations that to attain job satisfaction that drives employee performance, firms must: provide effective employee trainings; policy driven suitable culture as per the law; and, adopt leadership that is appropriate to the conditions and characteristics of employees, especially that accords them a sense of security. Both studies highlighted the significance of security in job tenure that closely relates with aspects of work environment envisaged in the current investigation. The involvement of training and culture confer comparability of the previous and current studies much as absence of supervisory support from the previous studies becomes a value—add of the present research.

Relatedly, Platis et al. (2015) investigated job satisfaction effects on employee performance on healthcare services in Greece with administration, work security and manager as constructs and found significant impacts on adaptive and contextual performance dimensions while quantity of work, productivity, self-initiatives, quality improvements and working targets had significant impacts on task performance dimensions. The study richly informs the current study dependent variable component despite variations in antecedents though outcomes can still be compared or contrasted as literature on similar topic. Constructs variation portends conceptual gaps just like inherent contextual gaps owing to differences of healthcare from food industry; these justify need for the current research to build on realized commonalities.

Though with a conceptual gap in constructs, Putra et al. (2023) held that toxic leadership and job stress reduce job satisfaction, while Robbins et al. (2013) averred that absence of job satisfaction triggers absenteeism and turnover intention leading to loss of employee productivity and low performance. These outcomes were, however, worthy of comparison with outcomes of this investigation to the extent leadership is among elements defining work environment thereby impacting satisfaction and performance. In South Africa, Mafini and Pooe (2013) investigated job satisfaction effects on employee performance and decomposed job satisfaction into working conditions, ability utilization, creativity, teamwork and autonomy; findings indicated that all constructs had positive relationship with performance. The study therefore revealed that work conditions have positive relationship with performance and the current investigation outcome becomes comparable despite variation in other independent variable constructs.

From a different context from the Kenyan food industry, Elomami (2015) studied job satisfaction and employee turnover in Libyan oil companies focusing on job characteristics model - autonomy, skill variety, task identity, task significance and feedback; and job satisfaction factors - pay/rewards, supervision, promotion, relationship with co-workers, work conditions and employee turnover; and found that job satisfaction had negative correlation with employee turnover. Though the dependent variables remain divergent, the parity of antecedents – pay, supervision and work environment heightens comparability of study outcomes as potential influences of job satisfaction. Relatedly, Ryan and Deci (2017) observed that contemporary nature of works advocates for commitment, engagement, flexibility and proactivity thereby pitching for more employee autonomy than previously and concluded that fostering autonomy benefits employees with job satisfaction and enhanced performance. The study highlighted the benefits of job autonomy on satisfaction and performance as consequents with antecedents significantly different from those of this study but confirmed the alignment of satisfaction with performance.

Recently, Wan and Duffy (2022) observed that latter day employees – millennials and generation Z demand not only adequate pay for their work but also suitability of other work factors for job satisfaction and optimal commitment for peak performance. This informed the inclusion of work environment as a construct alongside growth and development. This provides a platform for compare and contrast situation in seeking to confirm the reported finding as a matter of enriching extant literature using the current study. Parallel to this, another study, Landa (2018), on influence of training on employee performance in Tanzania, found positive relationship and significant influence between training and employee performance; concluding that training contributes to increase in efficiency, productivity, customer satisfaction and competitiveness. The relevance of the study was in the fact of training being an aspect of growth and development, with effects

beyond those related to pay and promotion. To buttress this, Arulsamy et al. (2023) posited that impartation of necessary skills and abilities confer high job satisfaction and make employees highly likely to stay longer in their jobs; confirming Elomami (2015) findings and concluding that training and development fosters growth, efficiency, productivity, motivation and innovation – being requisites for job satisfaction and performance improvements. This study sought to establish the situation in the Kenyan context leading to the diversity in constructs and variables adopted.

In Kenya, Omuya (2018) study on influence of compensation and rewards on employee performance found that salary is a key determinant for enhanced employee performance, influencing employee decision to stay or quit the organization and that performance-based pay significantly improves job satisfaction and performance. The study recommended that organizations put compensation and reward policies that assure prudent packages, as well as uphold equity in pay and promotions as these enhance job satisfaction and performance. Relatedly, Mmbusa and Kiiru (2019) study on influence of compensation strategies on employee performance established that competitive salaries, incentives, indirect compensation and rewards had positive and significant influence on employee performance; emphasizing that perception of being paid what one is worth positively influences job satisfaction and concluded that a competitive salary package enhances employee motivation, productivity and reduces employee turnover. The two studies illuminated the strong influence of reward and compensation on job satisfaction and employee turnover intention; furthermore, the studies showed concurrence with the motivator extrinsic factors of the Herzberg Two Factor theory that underpinned this study.

Korir and Ndegwa (2020) investigated influence of job satisfaction on employee performance, decomposing job satisfaction into work environment, remuneration, promotion and, training and development; and found positive and significant correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance, concluding that job satisfaction is vital for success of the firm as it influences productivity, customer satisfaction and succession planning. In its display of high similarity in antecedent constructs, the findings significantly informed conceptual understanding of the current study despite variation in decomposition of the dependent variable. On the interlude, Oprong et al. (2018) had established impact of knowledge management practices on job satisfaction, including training and mentorship programs among the constructs; and found that training and mentoring programs had positive and significant impacts on job satisfaction, with potential influence on employee performance through mentoring. Thus, training, mentoring and other aspects of growth and development confer job satisfaction while simultaneously influencing employee performance. These validate the need for the current study in a bid to establish existent trends on the relationships between job satisfaction and employee performance in the food manufacturing context of Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted post-positivism philosophy and employed explanatory research design with stratified proportionate sampling technique, using Fishers (1991) formula to obtain a sample of 384 respondents from a target population of about 12467 employees from 58 food manufacturing firms. From 10 food manufacturing firms were obtained 48 respondents for the pilot study, using a 5-point Likert-type scale questionnaire (Taherdoost, 2019); whereby: 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; to primary data for hypothesis testing. For respondent's trust and privacy, a briefing was conducted to explain the aim of the survey including agreeing to hard or soft copy

questionnaire. Through a drop-and-collect survey technique, data was collected, collated and exposed to SPSS version 23 aided analytics – descriptive and inferential. In total, 302 questionnaires were collected from respondents and upon cleaning, 290 were determined fit for use in analysis achieving a response rate of 75.5%.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The instrument was exposed to three types of validity assessments: content validity, face validity and construct validity. Human resource experts and data analysis experts critiqued the instrument for face and content validity. To ascertain construct validity of the instrument, the study utilized factor analysis or loading approach and adopted Steenkamp and Maydeu-Olivares (2023) threshold for acceptance of items with factor loadings of not less than 0.5 for both independent variable – job satisfaction and dependent variable - employee performance.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability of research instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, α , which according to Vaske (2017) is acceptable at $\alpha \geq 0.7$. Job satisfaction as the independent variable had a reliability coefficient of 0.755 while employee performance the dependent variable had a reliability co-efficient of 0.727, indicating that both variables had items suitable for the study.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Results

The study had job satisfaction as independent variable with employee performance as dependent variable. Respondents indicated their level of agreement with provided statements, using a five-point Likert scale, where: 1=strongly disagree – STD; 2=disagree – DA; 3=neutral – N; 4=agree – AG; and 5=strongly agree - STA. In the table, M = mean; while SD = standard deviation, both of Likert scores. The data was analyzed into percentages - concerning number of respondents for each of the five response options on respective statements, with its mean and standard deviation as shown in Table 1 summary. The descriptive results are presented in two phases, tabulated outcome for the quantitative data and thematic narration for qualitative data.

Job Satisfaction Tabulate Outcome

The quantitative data analysis was presented in tabulation for the illustration of the outcomes as in the sequence of Tables 1, 2 and 3 that follow.

Table 1: Job Satisfaction

Item No	Statement	STD %	DA %	N %	AG %	STA %	M	SD
1.	Work - WK							
WK1	My form of employment – casual, contract or permanent, is satisfying.	1.81	16.67	11.59	22.46	47.46	3.97	1.19
WK2	My work conditions are satisfactory	2.90	13.41	12.32	36.59	34.78	3.87	1.12
WK3	Feedback on my work performance is satisfactory	1.09	15.22	14.86	48.55	20.29	3.72	0.99
	Average	1.93	15.1	12.92	35.87	34.18	3.85	1.10
2.	Salary - SA							
SA1	The current level of salary is satisfying.	1.81	18.48	21.01	33.70	25.00	3.62	1.10
SA2	Reward given for extra-performance is adequate	2.17	17.75	15.58	35.87	28.62	3.71	1.13
SA3	The remunerations are punctually and regularly released	1.45	11.23	11.96	54.71	20.65	3.82	0.94
	Average	1.81	15.82	16.18	41.43	24.76	3.71	1.06
	Supervision - SU							
SU1	My direct supervisor knows my job well	1.81	19.20	18.12	45.29	15.58	3.54	1.03
SU2	My effort and commitment are appreciated by my direct supervisor.	1.09	18.48	11.96	37.32	31.16	3.79	1.11
SU3	I receive appropriate feedback from my supervisor	2.17	20.65	15.58	22.46	39.13	3.76	1.23
	Average	1.69	19.44	15.22	35.02	28.62	3.70	1.12
4.	Growth and Development - GD							
GD1	The coaching and mentorship offered by the employer meet my expectations for career progress.	4.35	19.20	19.57	30.80	26.09	3.55	1.19
GD2	The company helps me build effective networking for career growth and development	1.81	15.58	19.20	36.59	26.81	3.71	1.08
GD3	My growth and development compare favorably with peers in the industry	1.09	18.84	19.93	42.03	18.12	3.57	1.03
	Average	2.42	17.87	19.57	36.47	23.67	3.61	1.1

The outcomes were summarized from statement results to construct and eventual variable performance concerning percentage number of respondents, together with mean and standard deviation of the Likert scores. Table 2 gives a summary of all the constructs and their comparative scores.

Table 2: Job Satisfaction (JS) Construct Summarized Scores

Item No.	Construct	STD %	DA %	N %	AG %	STA %	M	SD
WK	Work	1.93	15.10	12.92	35.87	34.18	3.85	1.10
SA	Salary	1.81	15.82	16.18	41.43	24.76	3.71	1.06
SU	Supervision	1.69	19.44	15.22	35.02	28.62	3.70	1.12
GD	Growth & Development	2.42	17.87	19.57	36.47	23.67	3.61	1.10
	Grand JS Means	1.96	17.06	15.97	37.20	27.81	3.72	1.10

Table 2 was transformed to outcomes of disagreeing and agreeing responses with neutral responses for those not explicit. Thus Table 3 involved summing up STD with DA into a set of disagreeing while AG is lumped up with STA into agreeing. The table supports horizontal analysis for all the constructs and vertically gives variable grand mean.

Table 3: Job Satisfaction Snapshot

Item No.	Construct	Disagreeing %	Neutral %	Agreeing %
WK	Work	17.03	12.92	70.05
SA	Salary	17.63	16.18	66.19
SU	Supervision	21.13	15.22	63.64
GD	Growth & Development	20.29	19.57	60.14
	Mean for Job Satisfaction	19.02	15.97	65.01

Findings in Table 3 show that over 70% agree with prevailing work status in the industry with root-cause analysis determined as necessary for close to 13% neutral and 17% disagreeing respondents. Fonkeng (2018) posited that work aspects not motivating to employees eventually lower their performance and identified potential sources as: relationships at work, role in the organization, factors intrinsic to the job, career development, organizational structure and climate. These become antecedents for diagnostic intervention for corrective actions towards enhancing job satisfaction among the 30% that failed to agree with status of work construct.

Approximately 66% respondents agreed with prevailing salary levels while close to 18% disagreed with about 16% remained neutral, the latter two groups requiring root cause analysis. Stamolampros et al. (2019) confirmed that inadequate monetary reward can be a prime source of lack of satisfaction and is in this case a cue to root cause analysis to enhance salary factor contribution to job satisfaction and employee performance. For supervision construct, about 64% agreed while corrective actions are required to address the other 36% from 21% disagreeing and 15% neutral. Qureshi and Hamid (2017) opined that effective supervisor support positively influences job satisfaction; they argued that making employees happy and contented with their jobs is a key dynamic for the supervisory team, towards building robust workforce that thrives global competition. Relatedly, Tadesse (2020) observed the critical role of cordial relationship between employee and supervisor, declaring that it enables alignment of employee objectives to organization goals thereby promoting optimal utilization of resources and job satisfaction.

For growth and development, about 60% of the respondents agreed with prevailing status while close to 20% remained neutral as 20% disagreed, the latter two sets necessitating diagnostic intervention. This creates necessity for review of growth activities such as employee training,

education, promotion and succession planning among others. Busque-Carrier et al. (2022) advocated for growth-oriented work values such as coaching, mentoring, training and development in addition to focusing on instrumental work values such as salary and promotion, arguing that these interventions potentially improve job satisfaction and employee performance.

With Table 2 giving Likert mean scores of 3.85; 3.71, 3.70 and 3.61 respectively for work, salary, supervision and, training and development, it was discernible that training and development was most limiting construct of job satisfaction variable on employee performance. Though close to 65% of the respondents agree with industry situation of job satisfaction as suitable, about 35% respondents did not experience job satisfaction, requiring corrective actions. To this end, the auspices of Landa (2018) that demonstrated influences of training on employee performance suffices, as the study observed positive relationship and significant influence of training on job satisfaction and employee performance; confirming that training contributes to increased efficiency, productivity, customer satisfaction and competitiveness. Industry management therefore has to address the corresponding hiccups relating to training and development as priority. Opinions of respondents as to how to improve job satisfaction status was captured in qualitative data and is explained in the following part.

Job Satisfaction Narrative Analysis

The two features under qualitative data concerned employee self-rating on job satisfaction and suggestions for improving job satisfaction in the firms.

Job Satisfaction Self Rating

Rating by the respondents were collated and presented by frequency and expressed in percentages as shown in Table 4 summarized.

Table 4: Respondents' Self Rating on Job Satisfaction

S.No.	Rating Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Satisfied	115	41.67
2	Satisfied	99	35.86
3	Somehow satisfied	40	14.49
4	Lowly satisfied	14	5.07
5	Not satisfied at all	8	2.90
Total		276	100

With more than 40% attaining very satisfied status and another 35% confirming being satisfied - making over 75% satisfied, ascertaining factors hindering 25% from experiencing job satisfaction beckoned. Industry managements ought to assess both motivator and hygiene factors to convert the status taken by the 25% not experiencing job satisfaction. Probable areas of intervention as may be aligned to Rodrigo et al. (2022) that demonstrated influences of job satisfaction on employee performance, recommending that management aligns training, pay and benefits to performance objectives as the constructs potentially stimulate employee motivation, satisfaction and performance.

Improving Job Satisfaction in the Company

Respondents further gave suggestions on how job satisfaction can be enhanced in the respective firms and these were collated into themes listed in Table 5, summarized.

Table 5: Improving Job Satisfaction

S. No.	Proposition	Frequency	Percentage
1	Improve remuneration	129	46.73
2	Enhance opportunities for professional growth and career development.	121	43.84
3	Frequent employee training	96	34.78
4	Foster a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.	80	28.99
5	Improve communication channels between management and employees.	79	8.62
6	Provide adequate recognition and appreciation for employees' contributions.	66	23.91
7	Implement flexible work arrangements and promote work-life balance	60	21.74
8	Create clear pathways for advancement and promotion within the organization	51	18.48
9	Enhance workplace amenities and facilities to improve overall working conditions.	43	15.58

The tabulated 9 items can further be aligned to three sub-themes. Firstly, employee compensation and rewards, comprising items 1 and 6 thus, improving remuneration alongside ensuring recognition and appreciation of employee contributions. Poorly remunerated employees show reduced commitment to work much like they depict suboptimal engagement whenever super performers remain unrecognized nor appreciated. This is in tandem with Wan and Duffy (2022) assertion that today's employees, especially the millennials and generation Z, demand not only adequate pay for their work but also express particular concerns with suitability of other factors affecting their job satisfaction. It is therefore incumbent that additional enrichments be emphasized such as recognition for super performance as this has the potential of enhancing employee engagement, commitment and satisfaction for optimized employee performance.

Secondly, sub-theme work and supervision combine items 4, 5, 7 and 9 that include fostering supportive and inclusive workplace culture; improving communication between management and employees; adopting flexible work arrangements; promoting work-life balance; and improving overall working conditions through enhanced workplace amenities and facilities. As indicated hitherto, the emergent workforce has challenged traditional work approach and demand enrichment of work and working conditions; a situation further stirred into new realities by fundamental incidents like mainstreaming of post covid-19 strategies for sustained competitiveness. Dynamics such as inclusive and supportive culture, flexible work-style, work-life balance and amenities enhancement define conditions for employee engagement and commitment pursuant to performance optimization in the firms. This is consistent with Balouch and Hassan (2014) declaration that presence or absence of job satisfaction is dependent upon among others, employee-supervisor relations and work environment suitability, declaring that success of any organization is dependent upon extent to which employees enjoy nature of job, suitability of work environment and feel rewarded for their efforts. These could be intervention antecedents for industry managers in implementing remedies.

Thirdly, sub-theme of employee growth and development for items 2, 3 and 8, which entailed enhancing professional growth and career development opportunities; frequent employee training; and, creating clear pathways for promotions and advancements. These have significant influence on employee attachment to an organization through career planning and succession. Employee empowerment and skills enhancement through training, promotion and career advancements are pertinent contributors to job satisfaction and potentially deepens retention as well as forestalling

turnover. Relatedly, Landa (2018) demonstrated a positive correlation between training and employee performance, observing that the more employees get training the higher their level of performance gets; with confirmation in Arulsamy et al. (2023) assertion that employees with necessary skills and abilities experience high level job satisfaction, which confers high engagement, efficiency and tendency to stay longer in organization.

Inferential Results

The conceptual framework provided for possible direct relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance, with null hypothesis: H_0 : Job satisfaction has no effect on employee performance in food manufacturing firms in Kenya. Towards ascertainment of this, correlation and regression analyses were conducted as per results that follow.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Findings in Table 1 shows that job satisfaction and employee performance have a positive and strong significant relationship ($\rho=0.832$, $p<0.05$). This implies that a change - enhancement or deterioration in job satisfaction constructs would lead to a change in employee performance in the same direction with a magnitude of 0.832. This was consistent with Putra et al. (2023) assertion that toxic leadership and job stress reduce job satisfaction with potential negative impact on employee performance and Rodrigo et al. (2022) position that job satisfaction positively and significantly impacts employee performance.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

		Job satisfaction	Employee performance
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.832**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis

A linear regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis, with findings given in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table 2: Job Satisfaction Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.832a	0.692	0.69	0.21026

a Predictors: (Constant), job satisfaction

From the findings in Table 2, adjusted R square is 0.692 implying that 69% of the variations in employee performance is explained by job satisfaction constructs – work, salary, supervision and growth and development; while 31% of variations in employee performance is explained by factors beyond these constructs. The finding was consistent with Korir and Ndegwa (2020) assertion that job satisfaction is one of the most important factors impacting human resources to the extent it influences customer satisfaction, organization performance, effective succession planning, company success and long-term growth; observing that lack of job satisfaction may lead to employee departures with deleterious effects including phenomenal decline in productivity.

Furthermore, the results buttressed Triwahyuni and Ekowati (2017) declaration that low job satisfaction decreases employee performance by creating sluggishness at work, leading to strikes, absenteeism and employee turnover. Thus, employee productivity and efficiency is affected by a plethora of factors ranging from personal to organizational dynamics – all with job satisfaction as a bi-directional trigger; with its presence stimulating enhancement of while its absence triggers decline in employee performance.

Table 3: ANOVA Table for Job Satisfaction

Model	Item	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.157	1	27.157	614.289	.000b
	Residual	12.113	274	0.044		
	Total	39.27	275			

a Dependent Variable: performance

b Predictors: (Constant), job satisfaction

The ANOVA findings in Table 3 give significant F-statistic ($F=614.289$, $p=0.000$), showing that the regression model has a good fit; depicting that job satisfaction model can significantly predict employee performance for food manufacturing firms in Kenya. This implies that job satisfaction as a construct is satisfactory in statistically predicting employee performance, as inherent in the following regression model.

Table 4: Regression Coefficients for Job Satisfaction

Model	Item	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.758	0.116		6.538	0.000
	Job satisfaction	0.806	0.033	0.832	24.785	0.000

Findings in Table 4 show that t-statistic for regression coefficient of job satisfaction is greater than 1.96 ($t_{cal}=24.785 > t_{crit}=1.96$) and the corresponding p-value is less than 0.05 ($p=0.000$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that job satisfaction has no significant effect on employee performance in food manufacturing firms in Kenya is rejected; because results indicate that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($\beta=0.832$, $p=0.000$). Thus, a unit enhancement in job satisfaction constructs – work, salary, supervision growth and development, results in employee performance enhancement by 0.832 units. Following is the regression model:

$$\text{Employee performance} = 0.758 + 0.832 \text{ job satisfaction} + e$$

In rejecting the null hypothesis, the findings were in concurrence with Buntaran et al. (2019) expression that job satisfaction significantly influenced employee performance; as numerous employee turnovers were associated with lack of job satisfaction. Besides, Efawati (2020) averred that one way of improving employee performance is to ensure enrichment of working conditions alongside providing competent leadership that confers appropriate supervision; these illuminate significance of job satisfaction elements like suitable work conditions and supervision on employee performance. Furthermore, Muthusamy (2018) assertion that human capital development is pivotal to employee productivity and organization growth by increasing skilled workforce in manufacturing industry augments vitality of growth and development for job

satisfaction. This study exposed employee performance as unique to individual abilities yet critical for organization survival, competition and growth, declaring that job satisfaction dynamics significantly influence performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The rejection of null hypothesis meant that job satisfaction had significant influence on employee performance and therefore its constructs – work, salary, supervision, growth and development can be adjusted to yield desired effects on employee performance. Aspects determined as critical for sustained success included improving remuneration alongside ensuring recognition and appreciation of employee contributions; fostering supportive and inclusive workplace culture; improving communication between management and employees; adopting flexible work arrangements; promoting work-life balance; and improving overall working conditions through enhanced workplace amenities and facilities. Together with these were enhancing professional growth and career development opportunities; frequent employee training; and, creating clear pathways for promotions and advancements.

From inadequacies of activities relating to extrinsic features - work environment, salary and supervision, occurred hygiene effects of Herzberg Two Factor theory of motivation, thereby lowering job satisfaction and hampering potential employee performance. The effects of these extrinsic factors remain crucial in achieving satisfaction and improving performance. Similarly, strengthening of growth and development activities remains fundamental in achieving satisfaction and enhanced performance, consistent with human capital theory, which promotes effective skills training to improve employee capabilities for enhanced performance.

Recommendations

Mean scores for job satisfaction constructs – salary, supervision, growth and development, were below industry threshold, indicating prevalence of low satisfaction that potentially retards employee performance. Respondents expression of discontent with salary levels, poor supervision and unclear plans for employee growth and development dictate that industry top management, at firm level, ensure: that salaries are reviewed upwards, retooling of supervisor capabilities and, mainstreaming of clear and comprehensive employee growth and development pathways that instill confidence and satisfaction in employees. Human resource managers should determine appropriate reward and compensation schemes for adoption to lift employee morale and job satisfaction. Portfolio managers in liaison with human resource heads should empower supervisors in all departments with knowledge and skills concerning relevant expertise and leadership to earn the confidence of their subjects and enhance mentorship effectiveness; this would positively impact employee performance. To ameliorate low satisfaction and performance hitches related to lack of clarity in growth and development, human resources managers ought to develop and communicate, comprehensive matrix of growth stages, positions and their requirements to enable employees match their desires, objectives and developments to organizational establishment. This would enable employee career planning alignment with organizational succession pursuits thereby confirming auspices of both Herzberg motivation and human capital theories for attaining high job satisfaction and optimal employee performance.

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