

Job Satisfaction: An Analysis Based on Expectancy and Equity Theories

† Francisco Javier López Chanez^I,
Alicia Casique Guerrero^{II} y
Julián Ferrer Guerra^{III}

Original article in Spanish published^{IV}: July 2006

Translated into English^V: June 2024

Abstract


This research aimed to study job satisfaction in a scenario characterized by a new labor culture that has modified the rigid vertical organizational structure and proposed new payment methods, flexible production systems, and defined new profiles based on job competencies. This shift is directed towards achieving greater competitiveness, where the new demands of work are reflected in employee satisfaction. Through a descriptive comparative study conducted in three companies located in the Bajío region of Mexico, whose economic activities are in the food, chemical, and metal-mechanical industries, the authors can access to the respective work environments characterizing these companies. This allowed the authors to describe these companies based on their administrative models and the job satisfaction of their employees. The results on job satisfaction are interpreted based on proposals such as the expectancy theory and Stacy Adams' equity theory.

Keywords: Work satisfaction, competitive market, labor culture.

.....

^I Deceased. Full-time Research Professor, at the National Technological Institute of Mexico in Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico.

^{II} PhD in Business Psychology from the American University of Europe, professor at the National Technological Institute of Mexico in Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico. Contact Information: alicia.casique@itcelaya.edu.mx,  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8366-0407>.

^{III} Master of Science with a Specialization in Information Systems, Research Professor in Economic-Administrative Sciences at the National Technological Institute of Mexico in Celaya, Guanajuato, Mexico. Contact Information: julian.fg@celaya.tecnm.mx.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0178-8851>.

^{IV} Original article: <https://rayo.xoc.uam.mx/index.php/Rayo/article/view/249>

^V Translated by: Denise de la O

BACKGROUND

Currently, job satisfaction can be understood as an individual's subjective state, characterized by cognitions (beliefs, opinions, and thoughts) and feelings (emotions) related to various elements of their work. Job satisfaction is also commonly understood as the result of various attitudes that an employee experiences regarding different aspects of their job, such as salary, relationships with the boss and colleagues, opportunities for promotion and advancement, job functions, and safety and hygiene conditions (Blum, 1991).

There are various theories about job satisfaction, some based on the study of the worker's expectations, such as those proposed by Lawler and Porter (1968), Victor Vroom (1979), and Julian Rotter (1954). Despite the fact that these theories have been present in the academic and research fields for a long time, they continue to serve as a sources for various studies in different areas. These theories have been used to validate studies in education (Giesey, Chen, and Hoshower 2004), information systems (Levine 1999), tourism management (Smith 2004), quality (Kini and Hobson 2002), e-commerce (Smith 2004b), and remuneration systems (Durcharme, Singh, and Podolsky 2005).

EXPECTANCY THEORY

Given One of the earliest theoretical formulations of expectations was proposed by Victor Vroom (1979). This theory includes concepts such as valence, expectancy, and instrumentality. Vroom posits that motivational force (F) is a function of Expectancy (E) multiplied by Valence (V), that is, $F = (E)(V)$. Expectancy is a momentary belief about the probability that a specific act will be followed by a specific outcome, meaning it is an association between an action and a result. Expectancy is usually rated on a scale from "zero" -total uncertainty- to "one" - total certainty - with intermediate values such as (0.1, 0.2, 0.3, ..., 0.8, 0.9) depending on the individual's perception.

Valence is the affective response of a worker to a specific outcome, either positive - preference - or negative - aversion. Valence is usually rated on a range between +3 and -3; for example, a high preference would be rated +3, while a slight aversion to the outcome would be rated -1.

In more elaborate models of this same expectancy approach (Stephen 1996), the concept of instrumentality is included. Instrumentality is defined as an association between outcome and outcome. In other words, a first-level outcome is the performance level, which serves as an instrument to obtain second-level outcomes, such as recognition, promotions, and advancements. Expectancy-based models do not limit the issue of employee satisfaction to simply addressing a set of needs and drives. On the contrary, workers are seen as thinking individuals whose ideas, perceptions, and probability estimates strongly influence their behavior.

Furthermore, the application of these theories encourages managers to promote the development of employees' responsibility for their own actions and, at the same time, to pose some questions such as: What rewards do employees value the most? What



consequences will their performance levels have? And, on the other hand, how likely are they to receive the desired rewards?

EQUITY THEORY

Adams' equity theory (1965) is understood as a satisfaction model that explains the reasons why people strive to achieve justice and equity. In this theoretical framework, inputs and outcomes are the two primary components present in the exchange relationship between the employee and the employer.

Inputs can be understood as the set of contributions that an employee makes to their work, such as knowledge, experience, education, skills, and effort, among others. Outcomes can be understood as what the employee receives for performing their job, such as salary, social benefits, recognition, and promotions, among others.

TABLE 1. EXAMPLES OF INPUTS AND OUTCOMES

INPUTS	OUTCOMES
1. Time dedicated to work	1. Salary
2. Training	2. Services and benefits
3. Educational level	3. Safe work
4. Experience	4. Personal development opportunities
5. Skills	5. Recognition
6. Creativity	6. Promotion
7. Seniority	7. Advancements
8. Performance level	8. Incentives

Inputs will depend on the characteristics of the worker. In addition to those mentioned in Table 1, levels of responsibility and motivation, among others, can also be added. Outcomes will depend on the organization, specifically on the characteristics of the human resources management model used in the company, such as the quality of work life.

To establish equity comparisons, three categories are used: others, oneself, and the system.

- **Others:** In this category, the comparisons made by the worker about themselves with other individuals they take as references are included. These individuals can work within or outside the company, in the same or other departments.

- Oneself: This category includes all the self-comparisons made by the worker over time and concerning an ideal self-image.
- The system: In this category, all comparisons made by the worker based on their exchange with the organization are included.

It is always good to keep in mind that, in addition to the previous categories, it should be noted that a group or even multiple groups can be used as a reference point. According to equity theory, people tend to compare themselves with similar individuals rather than dissimilar ones. Equity relationships occur when the perceived ratio of outcomes received to inputs contributed is equal to the ratio between the outcomes and inputs of another worker taken as a reference. Negative equity relationships occur when the person with whom the worker compares themselves receives greater outcomes for similar inputs. Positive inequity relationships occur when the person with whom the worker compares themselves receives fewer outcomes for similar inputs. People show less tolerance for negative equity than for positive equity.

This model, as can be observed, highlights the importance of the worker's perception in the input-output relationship, what they contribute and receive in their job, and the way they always resort to some type of reference. However, one could also create a table to appreciate the company's perception of the performance of its staff, which any author has not addressed to date.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPANIES UNDER STUDY

The timeframe of this research corresponds to the period from August to December 2005, in three companies located in the Bajío region of Mexico, whose economic activities belong to the food, chemical, and metal-mechanical sectors. They were selected based on four criteria:

- a) The willingness shown by their managers to respond to a survey used as a census, which was completed and returned within the specified time frame and duly answered;
- b) The opportunity to interview and apply socioeconomic surveys to groups of workers in conditions of privacy;
- c) The open expression of interest in participating, supporting, and facilitating the conditions required for the study to be conducted properly; and
- d) The possibility of having three companies with different industries and administrative models.

Based on the survey conducted in the companies, complemented by an analysis of their work programs and interviews with managers, differences were identified in the following characteristics of their administrative models:



- The frequency, techniques, and models of recruitment, selection, and induction of personnel (ranging from practically nonexistent to very comprehensive and technology-based).
- The system of classification and categorization of positions, as well as the principles governing job design (ranging from overspecialization to job enrichment and high-performance groups, and the classification of positions into Key, Intermediate, and Basic).
- Salary, incentives, recognition, promotion, and advancement programs (based on productivity, certification, quality, perfect attendance, and punctuality).
- Training and personnel development programs (ranging from a marked absence of courses to training programs associated with competency certification and multi-skills).
- Safety and hygiene programs (ranging from a lack of personal protective equipment to the existence of supervision programs and group responsibility models based on risk maps).
- Labor relations (from models of conflict and negotiation to models of cooperation).
- Exercise of authority (ranging from autocratic to participative).
- Training programs (determined 100% by top management to involving workers in definition of courses and their content).
- Performance evaluation (from indirect and subjective criteria and measures to direct and objective measures associated with incentive programs).
- Complaint, suggestion, and opinion survey systems (from nonexistent to rewarding the best suggestions and conducting semi-annual opinion studies, and the existence of other programs).
- New human resource management programs that affect personnel activities (changes in production lines, reorganization, and reclassification of positions, their functions, and responsibilities).
- In one of the companies, workers were classified into three categories based on the positions they held, identified as Key, Intermediate, and Basic.



METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

RESEARCH DESIGN

The development and design of the research correspond to a study that is descriptive, comparative, ex-post-facto, cross-sectional, and applied research. The research was conducted from August to December 2005 and was carried out in three companies whose productive activities are in the food, chemical, and metal-mechanical sectors. In this work, they are referred to simply as companies “A, B, or C” due to the lack of written authorization to use their trade names.

The selection of the companies where the research was conducted was done by applying a survey to 56 workplaces. This instrument allowed the identification of companies willing to provide information on various aspects related to the company (history, organizational structure, both proprietary and corporate, as well as main plans and programs), personnel (number of staff, executives, employees, and unionized workers; gender, age, and education level), as well as recruitment and personnel management programs (recruitment, selection, induction, training, wages and salaries, motivational programs, safety, and hygiene).

The companies that fully responded to the survey and submitted it within the specified time frame were considered viable for conducting the research. Subsequently, the pre-selected companies were asked for permission to apply a socioeconomic survey to their workers. The purpose of this survey was to gather information that would allow us to develop the socioeconomic profile of the workers at a descriptive level and to determine if we could interview and survey the workers privately. Based on this second criterion, the companies that would participate in the study were selected.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Currently, work and its components—raw materials, tools, production processes, tasks assigned to personnel, and management systems—have undergone substantial changes that have impacted various aspects of workers' professional lives, affecting their job satisfaction. Workers receive new activities and responsibilities and must learn to operate newly acquired machinery. Changes in production processes, new equipment, raw materials, work methods, organizational systems, and cutting-edge plans to achieve or maintain market leadership are introduced at an increasing pace, often without considering the impact these changes have on employee job satisfaction.

In the companies under study, there is a noticeable emphasis on achieving higher productivity rates, lower costs, and developing quality and certification plans and programs. These new scenarios affect attitudes, interests, and job satisfaction. Concurrently, new human resource management models promote actions to make the average operator more aware of costs, losses, waste, rework, productivity, quality, and responsibility. Considering the impact of these changes on worker satisfaction can help the organization enhance work competencies, minimize frustration and discomfort caused by constantly changing job roles, develop training and awareness programs to foster favorable attitudes toward the new work model, and reduce the feeling among staff that they are not adequately prepared to succeed in their assigned tasks.

The culture of change has created a scenario where the strong, traditional structures that defined work—rigidity, experience, seniority, vertical structure, payment systems, low education levels, limited knowledge, and indemnification systems—have been replaced by horizontal organization, flexible production systems, quality culture, change management, competency-based management, new payment systems, high knowledge levels, and multi-skills, among others. This shift profoundly affects workers' subjectivity, where new work demands, quality, and training will define employee attitudes and satisfaction levels (Fernández 2000, Ulrich, Dave, and Losey 2000).

Job satisfaction will continue to be a response that workers use to express their state of well-being or discomfort.

Research Questions

What is the state of job satisfaction among personnel under these working conditions? Do all personnel working under the same conditions experience the same levels of job satisfaction, regardless of their position or category?

The interest in finding answers to these questions led to the formulation of the following research questions:

- Are there differences in job satisfaction among personnel working in companies "A, B, and C," and what are these differences?
- Are there differences in job satisfaction among workers in Key, Intermediate, and basic positions in company "A," and what are these differences?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- H1: There are differences in job satisfaction among personnel working in companies A, B, and C.
- H2: There are differences in job satisfaction among workers in Key, Intermediate, and basic positions in company "A."

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Describe the job satisfaction of personnel working in companies "A, B, and C."

- Describe the job satisfaction of workers in Key, Intermediate, and Basic positions in company "A."
- Describe the differences in job satisfaction found among workers in companies "A, B, and C."
- Describe the differences in job satisfaction found among workers in Key, Intermediate, and Basic positions in company "A."



STUDY UNIVERSE

The population to be studied was defined as all unionized base personnel working in any of the three selected companies. The total number consisted of 1,574 unionized workers distributed as follows: company “A” with 878 workers, company “B” with 73 workers, and company “C” with 623 workers.

SAMPLE DETERMINATION

Given the impossibility of studying the entire population, agreements were made in each company to define a procedure for selecting a study sample that would be respected—in terms of the number and condition of each element—so as not to affect the development of research activities. The study samples obtained were as follows:

- For company "A," the sample consisted of 22 workers in "Key" positions, 55 workers in "Intermediate" positions, and 143 workers in "Basic" positions.
- For company "B," the entire population of 73 workers was studied due to the number of elements and the facilities provided by company authorities.
- In company "C," the sample was restricted to 26 elements due to more limited opportunities.

INSTRUMENTS USED

To collect information, the following instruments were used:

- A survey designed to measure job satisfaction.
- A socioeconomic study.
- A questionnaire to estimate expectations and valences.
- Interviews with workers, complemented by observations made during various visits to the plants.
- Interviews with managers of human resources and production areas, aimed at:
 - a) Obtaining information about the main plans and programs of the company.
 - b) Deepening and verifying the information gathered through other means (census).

RESULTS

RESULTS FOR COMPANY “A”

The personnel were divided into three categories based on their positions: key, intermediate, and basic positions. There were differences in their working conditions, policies, salaries, motivational programs, access to training, and opportunities for their

opinions to be considered, mainly due to the different times when the personnel were integrated into the new administrative programs.

Key Positions

The average tenure and educational level for this type of personnel are five and thirteen years, respectively. Integration between these employees and their respective managers is good. They are given priority in programs for promotion, recognition, and suggestions. One distinguishing feature of this group of workers is their salary, which on average is up to three times higher than that of workers in other categories. Other benefits include certain allowances (e.g., grocery vouchers) and work shifts, as they only rotate between two shifts.

The administrative model applied to them provides special opportunities for their opinions on work and training to be considered. There is a special training program that includes technical and personal development courses. Some employees are preparing (taking the instructor training course) to train personnel from other categories, and for this reason. They participate in identifying their own training needs and suggesting future courses they will teach. Additionally, they have an economic incentive program for their performance and participation as instructors in courses.

Intermediate Positions

The average education level and tenure for this group are nine and fourteen years, respectively. Integration among these workers is lower compared to the Key positions due to their work shifts rotating through all three shifts and working in different areas of the company. Their salaries are more than one minimum wage below the Key positions but above the Basic positions, sharing the same benefits with the latter. They have had fewer opportunities for training than those in Key positions due to their higher average age and lower education level. However, they participate in identifying training needs by responding to questionnaires about courses and content. They are aware that they are part of the next group to be integrated into the new program, which includes training, incentives, and improved working conditions, among other enhancements.

Basic Positions

The average education level and tenure for this group are seven and seventeen years, respectively. Due to their low educational levels and the nature of their task, they are positioned at the bottom of the pay scale. Their work shifts rotate through all three shifts. They receive some benefits above the legal requirements, and their salary is at least sixty percent above the minimum wage on average. This group has had fewer opportunities to be considered in the training programs due to the way the corresponding program has been developed and the priorities set by the company's administration. Their involvement in identifying training needs has been limited to responding to checklists for some technical courses. This group is the largest in number but performs the simplest activities, and it is the most affected by personnel cuts.



RESULTS FOR COMPANY "B"

The average levels of education and tenure are ten and sixteen years, respectively. The working relationships among the staff are superficial and infrequent because the labor personnel are distributed across two plants and the maintenance staff in a third area, rotating shifts and very sporadically participating in group meetings. Regarding their relationships with their superiors, these are very cold and impersonal since several of the supervisors use an autocratic style. Their opinions are not considered in matters related to work or training, which practically does not exist because the production processes and machinery remain the same. Additionally, due to their seniority and experience in performing their tasks, the managers consider staff training unnecessary. The work they perform is filled with physical, mechanical, and physiological risks. The average salary they receive is slightly above two and a half minimum wages.

RESULTS FOR COMPANY "C"

The average levels of education and tenure for the sample studied in this company are eleven and five years, respectively. Relationships between this group of workers and their supervisors are good. Their average salary is slightly below three minimum wages. This type of staff has participated in several training courses, some of which are technical and others of personal interest, selected by the worker based on their preferences. They do not participate in the identification of training needs with their opinions. This staff is considered for promotion and advancement programs. The work they perform is characterized by physical, mechanical, and physiological risks.

RESULTS OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC SURVEY

The information obtained from this instrument was used to develop socioeconomic profiles for each of the samples studied.

Company A

Given the differences in the socioeconomic conditions of the personnel working in this company, it was deemed appropriate to create a profile for each group of workers based on the category of the position they hold.

Socioeconomic Profile of Employees in "Key" Positions

These employees are generally married and support three dependents. They reside in a working-class neighborhood, and their homes have all basic services. Their spouses work in the industry. Their diet includes milk, bread, meat, tortillas, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. They primarily shop at markets and supermarkets, and their salary allows them to meet 100% of their needs.

Socioeconomic Profile of Employees in "Intermediate" Positions

These employees are typically married, living in a suburban area or neighborhood, with homes that have all basic services. They economically support five dependents and often live with their parents or in-laws. Their spouses also employed. Their diet is based on milk, bread, eggs, tortillas, and vegetables, with less frequent consumption of meat and fruits. They shop at markets and stores, and their salary allows them to meet about 75% of their needs.

Socioeconomic Profile of Employees in "Basic" Positions

These employees are generally married and economically support three dependents. They live in rural areas lacking some basic services, often share their homes with close relatives such as parents, in-laws, siblings, or brothers-in-law. Their spouses also work. Their diet is based on milk, vegetables, tortillas, and eggs; three times a week, they consume fruits, meat, and bread. They shop at street markets, small stores, and marketplaces. They often have a small garden or farm at home. They combine their job at the company with other economic activities, and their salary allows them to meet about 65% of their needs.

Socioeconomic Profile of Employees in Company "B"

These employees are typically married, economically supporting five dependents. They live in urban and suburban areas of small municipalities and have homes with all basic services. Other close relatives also live in their houses. The family has additional income besides that of the spouse. Their diet includes milk, bread, vegetables, fruits, tortillas, and less frequently, meat. They shop at markets and grocery stores. Their salary allows them to meet about 70% of their needs.

Socio Economic Profile of Employees in Company "C"

These employees are generally married, economically support four dependents. They live in an apartment located in a neighborhood or working-class area with all basic services. Their spouses also work. Their diet includes milk, bread, vegetables, fruit, tortillas, and meat. They shop at markets, stores, and street markets. Their salary allows them to meet about 80% of their needs.

RESULTS OF JOB SATISFACTION

After administering the instruments to each study sample, the information was organized using identification keys assigned to each interviewee to ensure no questionnaires were missing. The questionnaires were then scored. The data was processed by calculating the mean, as it is the most precise measure of central tendency and useful for calculating measures of dispersion, such as the standard deviation. This was done to determine the average score and the dispersion of each of the measurements. Table 2 shows the means obtained in the descriptive variable job satisfaction for each of the samples studied in companies "A," "B," and "C."

TABLE 2
MEANS OBTAINED IN THE JOB SATISFACTION VARIABLE

STUDIES SAMPLES	SATISFACTION
Company A	
Key Positions	261.59
Intermediate Positions	153.67
Basic Positions	141.35
Company B	
Population	102.48
Company C	
Sample	132.58

In relation to job satisfaction, Table 2 shows that employees in Company "A" achieved the highest averages scores: 261.59 for Key positions, 153.67 for Intermediate positions and 141.35 Basic positions. These scores are notably higher compared to the averages for employees in Company "C" (132.58) and Company "B" (102.48). Marked differences can be observed in the averages obtained in the five studied samples. These results also suggest a higher job satisfaction among employees working in Company "A" compared to those working in companies "B" and "C".

INFORMATION PROCESSING

We calculated the means and standard deviations for each of the scales applied to the studied samples. The calculation of the means indicates that there are differences in the results found among the samples, but it does not indicate whether these are significant. Therefore, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. This statistical test allows for comparisons between three or more independent means.

The analysis of variance was used only as an indicator to validate the differences obtained between the means of the studied variable in the worker samples from companies "A," "B," and "C," as well as among workers in Key, Intermediate, and Basic positions in Company "A." Based on this analysis, we could accept or reject the research hypotheses. Table 3 shows the summary of the analysis of variance performed on the data obtained for job satisfaction among the employees in companies "A," "B," and "C" in each of the studied samples.

TABLE NO. 3

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR COMPANIES "A", "B", AND "C"

INSTRUMENT	SOURCE OF VARIATION	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	SUM OF SQUARES	QUADRATIC MEAN	F
Satisfaction	Between groups	2	162 283.05	81 141.52	60.14
	Within groups	316	426 331.11	1 349.14	*

The results obtained from the analysis of variance for the variable job satisfaction, with $p < 0.5$, support the acceptance of the research hypothesis suggesting that there are indeed differences in job satisfaction among the employees working in companies "A," "B," and "C." The table 4 presents a summary of the analysis of variance conducted on the data obtained for the job satisfaction variable among workers in Key, Intermediate, and Basic positions in company "A."

TABLE NO. 4

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR COMPANY "A"

INSTRUMENT	SOURCE OF VARIATION	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	SUM OF SQUARES	QUADRATIC MEAN	F
Satisfaction	Between groups	2	276 232.60	138 116.3	276.16
	Within groups	217	108 525.94	500.11	*

The results obtained from the analysis of variance of the job satisfaction variable ($p < 0.5$) indicate the acceptance of the research hypothesis, suggesting that there are indeed differences in job satisfaction among the personnel in Key, Intermediate, and Basic positions working in Company "A".

RESULTS OF EXPECTANCY THEORY

Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8 present the results obtained from the workers in each samples. These tables were constructed using the following procedure:

1. For each study sample, typical work behaviors established in their respective administrative models were identified.

2. Each worker was presented with the list of typical work behaviors and asked to choose, for each one, the type of consequence it generally had under natural working conditions. They were also asked to rate the probable relationship between the work behavior and the expected results on a scale from 1 to 10 (expectancy).
3. Finally, they were asked to rate the degree of rejection (-3, -2, or -1), neutrality (0), or acceptance (+3, +2, or +1) that the expected outcome would hold for them (valence).

Tables 5 through 8 exemplify the responses given by some of the workers from each of the samples. These tables aim to illustrate the application of expectancy theory and to facilitate the interpretation of the results.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EXPECTANCY THEORY

The following tables show the interpretation of the results obtained, illustrating the probable role that the new administrative model plays in the satisfaction and perception of workers from the perspective of expectancy theory.

TABLE 5
INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY KEY POSITION WORKERS IN COMPANY “A” ACCORDING TO EXPECTANCY THEORY

WORK BEHAVIORS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	VALENCE (+ 3 A -3)	EXPECTANCY (.00 A 1.00)		VALENCE BY EXPENTANCY
Perfect punctuality and attendance	Reward for punctuality	+2	1		+2.0
Observance of disciplinary norms	Recognition from the boss	+2	4		+0.8
Performance above the standard	Incentives	+3	3		+0.9
Studying to complete secondary education	Obtain secondary school certificate	+2	2		+0.4
				$F = \sum(E)(V) =$	+4.1

TABLE 6.
INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY BASIC POSITION WORKERS IN COMPANY "A" ACCORDING TO EXPECTANCY THEORY

WORK BEHAVIORS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	VALENCE (+ 3 A -3)	EXPECTANCY (.00 A 1.00)		VALENCE BY EXPENTACY
Performance above the standard	Incentives	+3	1		+3.0
Participation in training	Certification	+3	.9		+2.7
Team work	Support from colleagues	+3	1		+3.0
Observance of disciplinary norms and perfect punctuality and attendance	Recognition	+2	1		+2.0
				$F = \sum(E)(V) =$	+10.70

TABLE 7
INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY WORKERS IN COMPANY "B" ACCORDING TO EXPECTANCY THEORY

WORK BEHAVIORS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	VALENCE (+ 3 A -3)	EXPECTANCY (.00 A 1.00)		VALENCE BY EXPENTACY
Maintain good punctuality and attendance	Recognition from the boss	+2	.7		+1.4
Good job performance	Salary increase	+3	.5		+1.5
				$F = \sum(E)(V) =$	+2.9

TABLE 8
INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY WORKERS IN COMPANY "C"
ACCORDING TO EXPECTANCY THEORY

WORK BEHAVIORS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	VALENCE (+3 A -3)	EXPECTANCY (.00 A 1.00)		VALENCE BY EXPENTACY
Perfect punctuality and attendance	Recognition from the boss and punctuality award	+2	1		+2.0
Observance of disciplinary norms	Achieve certification	+3	.5		+1.5
Performance above standard in operational indicators	Incentive	+3	.5		+1.5
				$F = \sum(E)(V) =$	+5.0

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STACY ADAMS' THEORY

According to Adams' Equity Theory, the creation of new working conditions in Company "A" for key positions may have been used as a strategy to increase the benefits employees receive from their work. This was done to create a situation of inequity between their inputs and outcomes, which, through various administrative programs, aimed to guide the worker's actions toward increasing their inputs (greater productivity, quality, responsibility, reduction of waste and costs, among others). This situation might have served as a reference point for workers in intermediate and basic positions, who possibly compared their current situation with a future scenario where a new balance existed between their inputs and the outcomes they would receive, characterized by higher inputs and greater results.

It is highly plausible that workers in intermediate positions, upon observing the benefits awarded to those in key position anticipating their own integration into the new administrative model, would select key position holders as their reference point. Consequently, they began to imitate their behaviors, increasing their inputs and, in turn, obtaining more results. This same process may have occurred among workers in basic positions.

It is important to highlight that both groups of workers might have distorted the input-output relationship and convinced themselves that at least part of their inputs was insufficient to achieve better results. Consequently, they may have shown a more favorable


attitude towards the company's policies and new program, developing a greater willingness to integrate into the new personnel management model when the time came.

For the workers at Company "B," it seems that the current conditions maintain a general situation of equity, based on the worker's comparison with themselves in the past. These conditions, likely due to the passivity, stability, and lack of change in management, remain similar, thereby fostering the workers' inclination to stay within their comfort zone. This does not preclude the emergence of other reference points and situations of inequity. To overcome such inequities, workers might distort their perception between inputs and outcomes. Likely, the workers at Company "C" perceived inequity in the input-output relationship and perhaps saw the conditions of change as a means to improve their inputs.

CONCLUSIONS

There are qualitative differences in the administrative models of each of the companies studied, which define the working conditions under which the personnel must perform their assigned activities and influence job satisfaction. As observed, job satisfaction results from the attitudes that workers experience in relation to various factors of their job, such as salary, relationships with colleagues and superiors, opportunities for advancement and promotion, job functions, and safety and hygiene conditions. Additionally, it is influenced by the expectations that workers have regarding these factors.

The research effort is significant as it benefits both management and employees. Management can integrate new criteria and knowledge into their processes for problem-solving and decision-making related to employee satisfaction. This includes reviewing policies, procedures, programs, organizational systems, job design, and workplace culture, among other actions. Important concepts derived from the theoretical foundations of this study, such as Adams' equity theory and the expectancy theory, were also made available to management.

The authors acknowledge that the region provides suitable conditions for conducting studies that include more companies and greater research rigor. However, the lack of time and resources are critical elements for the successful execution of such studies, and their absence undoubtedly affects the results. There are many problems in the workplace that require solutions, demanding the use of simple research models and a challenging attitude from those interested in topics related to economic and administrative sciences. 



References

- Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. En L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 267-299). Academic Press.
- Blum, M. I., & Naylor, J. C. (1999). *Psicología industrial: Sus fundamentos teóricos y sociales*. Trillas.
- Durchanrme, M. J., Singh, P., & Podolsky, M. (2005). Exploring the links between performance appraisals and pay satisfaction. *Compensation & Benefits Review*, 37(5), 46-52.
- Fernández Caveda, A. (1998). *La función de los recursos humanos en tiempos de cambio*. Gestión 2000.
- Giesey, J., Chen, Y., & Hoshower, L. (2004). Motivation of engineering students to participate in teaching evaluations. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 93(4), 303-310.
- Kini, R. B., & Hobson, C. J. (2002). Motivational theories and successful total quality initiatives. *International Journal of Management*, 19(4), 605-614.
- Levine, K. C. (1999). *The motivation of information systems contract workers to participate on client work teams: An expectancy theory approach* (Tesis doctoral, Nova Southeastern University). ProQuest.
- Peterson, K. D., Puia, M. G., & Suess, R. F. (2003). "Yo tengo la camiseta (I Have the Shirt On)": An exploration of job satisfaction and commitment among workers in Mexico. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 10(2), 22-34.
- Porter, L. W., & Lawler, E. E. (1968). *Managerial attitudes and performance*. Dorsey Press.
- Rosas Barrera, F. (1995). Saber y hacer: Una aproximación a las relaciones entre educación y trabajo. *Educación 2001 (México, D.F.)*, (5), 45-60.
- Rotter, J. B. (1954). *Social learning and clinical psychology*. Prentice-Hall.
- Rotter, J. B. (s.f.). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. Recuperado de <http://psych.fullerton.edu/jmearns/book5.htm>
- Smith, A. (2004). Cybercriminal impacts on online business and consumer confidence. *Online Information Review*, 28(4), 322-332.
- Smith, A. (2004). Information exchanges associated with Internet travel marketplaces. *Online Information Review*, 28(4), 315-321.
- Ulrich, D., & Losey, M. (1998). *El futuro de la dirección de recursos humanos*. Gestión 2000.
- Vroom, V. H. (1979). *Motivación y alta dirección*. Trillas.



How to cite:

López Chanez, F, Casique Guerrero, A & Ferrer Guerra, J (2025). Job Satisfaction: An Analysis Based on Expectancy and Equity Theories. *Administración y Organizaciones*, 27 (Special Issue 2024).

<https://doi.org/10.24275/JDGN2870>

Administración y Organizaciones from the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana - Xochimilco is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.