

**JOB SATISFACTION AMONG THE MEDICAL REPRESENTATIVES IN BANGLADESH:
A Cross-Sectional Observation****S.M. Yasir Arafat** (Corresponding Author)MBBS, MPH, MBA; CCD & MD student in Psychiatry, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University,
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hafijju@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Job satisfaction is one of the major factors leading towards heightening and expansion of monetary gain, lifestyle, work ethics, and happiness in personal, interpersonal, institutional and national domain. The factors determining the job satisfaction among medical representatives in Bangladesh were categorized into: a) role of person in question, b) accessibility to sufficient materials, c) payment status, d) performance based incentives, e) superior's attitude, f) opportunity for personal development, g) job security, h) adequate welfare facilities, i) leave facility, and j) overall satisfaction in the job. A descriptive, observational, cross-sectional analysis was carried out among subjects (medical representative in Bangladesh) who total to 310. Input and data were collected by means of questionnaire give out by means of convenience sampling. The preliminary questionnaire was based on 5 point Likert scale, and raw data was analyzed in SPSS version 16 & Microsoft Excel software. A collective of 11 months was taken for the collection and analysis of the data. This study conducted in determining multifaceted variables resulting in job satisfaction among medical representative in Bangladesh is supervisor's attitude, job performance associated rewards, job security and personal development. Other factors that need to be improved due to resulting job dissatisfaction among medical representatives are job welfare, leave facility, and job security. As a whole we can conclude the two major factors demanding more attention be to be repaired so that it can help improve job satisfaction among medical representative in Bangladesh are leave facility and job security. Leave facility, job welfare and job security are ranked as one of the least satisfactory facet of being a medical representative in Bangladesh. Pharmaceutical companies have to review certain criteria such as job related-welfare, leave facility and job security to further increase the job satisfaction of their medical representatives. This would not only benefit career satisfaction of medical representative but further improve work quality provided by them.

Keywords: Medical Representative, Job Satisfaction, Pharmaceutical Company, Bangladesh, Descriptive study**INTRODUCTION**

Job satisfaction has been studied extensively in terms of sociology and psychology ^[1-8]. In layman terms it is described as the level of contentment an individual is having with his/her job ^[2]. Locke, 1969 states that the major reason for lack of progress in understanding the concept of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction is 'implicit concept of casualty' accepted by most psychologist ^[1]. Job satisfaction is a very important attribute measured by

organizations mostly by means of rating scale ^[2-3]. 1-5 global rating for job satisfaction are more inclusive measure of job satisfaction than the yes-no single-item global question ^[3].

Pharmaceutical industry is one of the progressive and perspective industries in Bangladesh. It contributes 1% to the country's GDP and is the third largest industry in terms of contribution to government revenue. The current market size is about 10,000 million with having almost persistently double digit growth. The market is almost self-sufficient in meeting local demand as 97% of the drugs are manufactured locally and is exporting to 92 countries ^[18-19].

There are 267 licensed pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh. Among the 49 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Bangladesh has the strongest base to manufacturing pharmaceutical products ^[18].

This large pharma market is principally driven by the prescriptions of doctors. Company personnel try to motivate doctors to prescribe their own company brands by personal selling, clinical meetings, seminars, symposia, etc because in Bangladesh the promotion of pharmaceutical products in the mass media is strictly prohibited. Medical representatives regularly make sales call to doctors by sharing scientific information and competitive advantages of their products over the competitors. During prescription preparation doctors consider such factors and use brand names for treatment and patients buy the prescribed brands ^[18].

Performance and work ethics of medical representative is influenced by their job satisfaction. Studies had shown both qualitative and quantitative increase in job performance with adequate job satisfaction ^[1-7].

Judge *et al.*, 2001 illustrates seven different models for relationship between job satisfaction and job performance ^[7] clearly indicating the direct and indirect link between satisfaction and performance. The complexity of variables in terms of job satisfaction, where a person might be satisfied with one aspect and dissatisfied with another in his/her job, for example a doctor might be satisfied with his designation but dissatisfied with his pay or superior attitude ^[13], is better of determined using various variables.

Company the respondent is working, medical designation, sufficient work related materials, realistic payment, leave facility, rewards for work performance, supervisor attitude, personal development, job security, welfare, job satisfaction and other miscellaneous options are the variables taken into consideration for this research. Most of the researched variables leads to the respondent working in a pharmaceutical company, *Kabir & Parvin, 2011* researched the job satisfaction of employee in pharmaceutical sector in Bangladesh as well, with different variables such as working condition, pay and promotion, fairness, relation with co-workers and supervisors ^[14] and concluding that the overall satisfaction level among pharmaceutical workers as "not too satisfied or too unsatisfied".

Most of the factors were chosen in the study based on previous studies ^[17], Farrell and Rusbult, 1981, concluded that job satisfaction was predicted by reward and cost values of the job in terms of investment models. Effects of organizational climate such as supervisor's attitude influence job performance and satisfaction as well ^[17]. It was also established by Kalleberg, 1977, that work values have independent effects on job satisfaction ^[16]. Kalleberg used 6 dimensions of work, namely, intrinsic, convenience, financial, relations with co-workers, career opportunities and resource adequacy to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and work values.

Analyzing the job satisfaction among medical representatives in terms of various facets as well overall satisfaction provides a clear boundary of where the career satisfaction of a medical representative lies and also what is lacking in the facets causing dissatisfaction in their occupation. These factors might be used as an annual benchmark to determine how far they have moved in terms of contribution leading towards job satisfaction among medical representative in Bangladesh.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive, observational, cross sectional analysis was carried out on selected subjects (medical representative) from pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh. The collected data are then subjected to descriptive and quantitative study to understand trend and pattern of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among medical representative in terms of their job.

Population

The population was chosen for the research are medical representative of various working experience, age, gender, education, working experience (in terms of years), working company and designation.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 310 respondents were acquired, non-probability convenience sampling was used to reach the selected subjects and data was collected by means of questionnaires. The study was descriptive and qualitative data were converted to quantitative data for further dissection. The preliminary questionnaire was created based on 5 point Likert scale where in each variable the respondent is able to choose 2 extremes of strongly agreed and strongly disagreed with three mid- options.

The respondent questionnaire is the primary data and upon completion is collected by field forces from different areas of Bangladesh. The collected data are processed carefully and errors are minimized manually. The raw data was analyzed in SPSS version 16 & Microsoft Excel software. A collective of 11 months was taken for the collection and analysis of the data.

Respondent was asked to supply the following details with the promise of confidentiality: age range, gender, education, working years (experience), company, and designation. Job satisfaction was measured with respect to variables such as medical designation, sufficient work related materials, realistic payment, leave facility, rewards for work performance, supervisor attitude, personal development, job security, welfare and other unrelated options.

Data Correctness

Data for each of the above parameters were collected in a Likert scale and transformed into real values. Statistics is performed on the real values to arrive at some conclusion. The foremost step in the data analysis is to confirm whether the sample data follows a normal distribution or not. For this a Chi-test is performed to check this particular hypothesis. The test is performed by grouping the data into bins, calculating the observed and expected counts for those bins, and computing the chi-square test statistic as

$$X^2 = \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

where O_i are the observed counts and E_i are the expected counts. It is observed from Table-2 that all the data corresponding to each of the satisfaction attribute have $h=1$, indicating that the hypothesis is correct. This means all the sample data (for each attribute) is indeed taken from a normal distribution with a confidence level of 95%.

RESULT

The findings on factors determining job satisfaction among medical representatives is tabulated in the form of mean and percentage in Table 1. Respondents did not vary substantially in terms of age range (with most being in the age range of 25-35), gender (with most being male, except for two females), education (most respondents hold Master Degree), working experience (1-10 years in most of the respondent case), and designation. The widely varying control variable was the pharmaceutical company currently the respondent being employed. Respondents from 34 different pharmaceutical companies took part as a respondent in the survey. In terms of Likert scale, where strongly agreed represents the value 1 and strongly disagreed the other extreme end of 5. The mean of satisfaction for each factor was calculated with standard deviation. The foremost attribute of job satisfaction based on table 1 is supervisor's attitude and rewards based on performance, with each significant mean of 2.43 and 2.70 respectively. The other factors in descending order based on mean are opportunity for personal development, sufficient material, realistic payment, welfare facilities, leave facility and job security.

Graph 1 depicts a more graphic form of Table 1, which shows high response on job satisfaction in terms of supervisor's attitude and job-based rewards. The results are consistent with previously done study ^[16] which had job security as one of the main factors determining job satisfaction among medical representative. The value for other factors such as pay and relationship with supervisors are marginally same in both our study and *Kabir & Parvin, 2011*.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of respondents' job satisfaction factors in terms of responses i.e. strongly agreed, strongly disagreed and other response.

Table 1: Overall response on satisfaction of employees

Descriptive Statistics		
Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisor's attitude	2.43	1.36
Rewards	2.7	1.26
Further job options	2.79	1.32
Personal development	3.01	1.34
Sufficient material	3.2	1.31
Realistic payment	3.46	1.25
Welfare facilities	3.48	1.24
Overall satisfaction	3.52	1.29
Leave facility	3.99	1.23
Job security	4.14	1.07

Responses: 1- Strongly agree 2-Agree 3- Neutral 4- Disagree 5- Strongly disagree

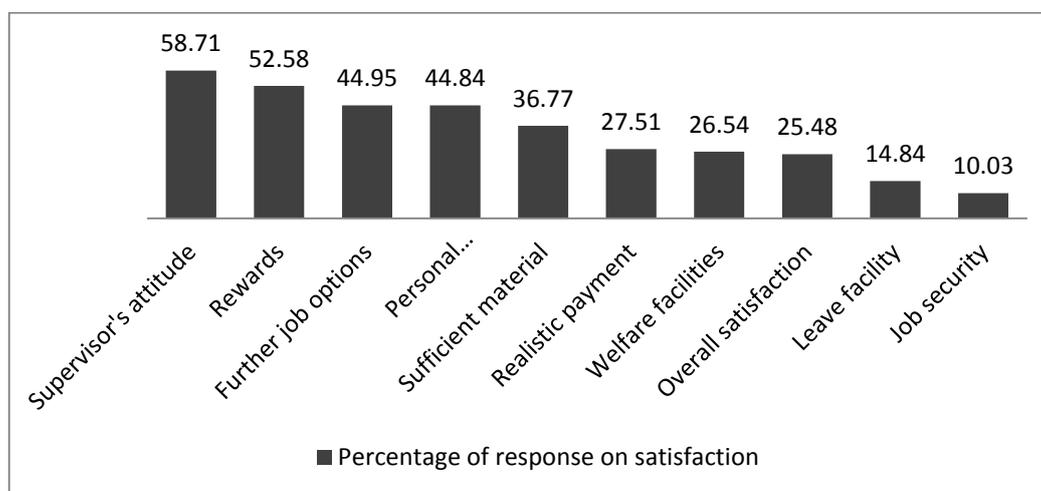


Figure 1: Percentage of responses on job satisfaction determining factors among medical representatives in Bangladesh.

In descending order the factors influencing job satisfaction according to Table 2 are supervisor’s attitude, rewards, personal development, sufficient material, realistic payment, welfare facilities, leave facility and job security. This is open to various interpretations, and thus will be threaded lightly by comparing with finding of other literatures. We can safely say from our finding that respondent job satisfaction is also influenced by feelings of well management and resourcefulness which is in correlation with Visser and co.’s finding. [5] The satisfaction level falls between medical representative when they feel under appreciated by their supervisor and organization. Development of personal attributes [18] and sufficiency of work-related materials provided also influences career satisfaction among medical representative. In overall, those who completely agree on a factor consider the supervisor attitude as the most contributing factor in their success with a percentage of 33%. On the other hand, those who view a factor as of less importance in their satisfaction are concerned about job security as a factor. They feel that they are not secured job wise hence 48.7% of the respondents disagree on the job security as a factor that promotes their satisfaction with their work (Table 2).

We can model a complex relationship between medical representative job satisfaction and other co-relating factors put forward in this study. Supervisor’s attitude and rewards had been excellent in most of pharmaceutical companies, and most respondent strongly agree with this notion.

To name few limitations faced during the research are in terms of available literature on this particular niche, psychographic nature of the research, provided budget limitation and manpower limitation for task execution. The bias and prejudiced natured variable which is satisfaction is not a concrete value thus, hampering a valid conclusion. For example, two different people from the same company might have different opinion and satisfaction in terms of superior’s attitude or the pay. The budget provided in dispersing the questionnaire as a random sample was not possible thus; convenience sampling was required for the research.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of variables on job satisfaction (frequency and percentage)

Likert-scale (Agreeability)	Job satisfaction determining factors																	
	Sufficient material		Realistic payment		Leave facility		Rewards		Supervisor attitude		Personal development		Job security		Welfare		Overall satisfaction	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1 (Strongly agree)	30	9.7	21	6.8	20	6.5	53	17.2	102	33.1	37	12.0	10	3.2	16	5.2	25	8.1
2 (Agree)	83	26.9	64	20.8	25	8.1	110	35.7	79	25.6	101	32.8	20	6.5	65	21.1	53	17.2
3 (Neutral)	53	17.2	53	17.2	39	12.7	57	18.5	61	19.8	53	17.2	35	11.4	65	21.1	55	17.9
4 (Disagree)	76	24.7	92	29.9	74	24.0	54	17.5	26	8.4	53	17.2	91	29.5	77	25.0	82	26.6
5 (Strongly disagree)	66	21.4	79	25.6	149	48.4	36	11.7	40	13.0	64	20.8	150	48.7	85	27.6	92	29.9

DISCUSSION

In terms of available material sufficiency, most medical representative opted to agree with the notion. Looking at the mean value for sufficient material (Table 1) we can see a positive valence indicating satisfaction in that particular area, agreed by the responding medical representative. The total number of respondent 'strongly agree'-ing with the notion that they are provided sufficient material for their job is 30, though this was backed up by majority of vote (83 respondents) from the respondent who 'agreed' with the notion.

Most medical representative respondents were unhappy with their pay, with most of them either 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the notion that they are paid accordingly to their job scope. Though there was some balance in terms of agreeability with the notion, 64 of the respondents agreeing that there are paid accordingly and further 21 strongly agreed that they are paid accordingly to their job as a medical representative. The realistic payment is one of the major job dissatisfaction among medical representative.

Employees those who completely agree on a factor consider the supervisor attitude as the most contributing factor in their success with a percentage of 33%. On the other hand, those who view a factor as of less importance in their satisfaction are concerned about job security as a factor. They feel that they are not secured job wise hence 48.7% of the respondents disagree on the job security as a factor that promotes their satisfaction with their work.

Comparison with previous literature

In our research we have seen various facets of job satisfaction rated as satisfactory among medical representative such as supervisor's attitude, rewards and job security and other factors which lead to dire job dissatisfaction such as leave facility, realistic payment, welfare. Two of the poorest reviewed facets leading towards job dissatisfaction among medical representatives are leave facility and job welfare. Being the main driving force for sales and marketing in a pharmaceutical firm, it will be a financial gain for employer to delve into matters such as poor leave facility and job security among medical representative so that they would be more productive in carrying out their job.

Our result may help future underlings who are interested in undertaking medical representative domains to further their career. This may also provide guideline for pharmaceutical entrepreneur in creating a better environment and work guideline for their medical employees. The analyzed facets come in handy when both party analyzed their job failings and success which may lead to benefits in both sites. Seeing new prospect of medical representative may prosper or fail depending on what may lead him to gain a better satisfaction in terms of his career life just in correlation with another study conducted by Leigh *et al.*, 2014.

Both personality trait and quantitative study can be combined in this study ^[17], especially when it involves a career of sales similar to medical representative. This is also proven by a big margin of standard deviation in supervisor's attitude in the study, where personality trait plays a part in job satisfaction.

In terms of both entrepreneurial and humanitarian grounds, that the policy makers and employers should focus on factors in leading towards better job satisfaction among their employees if they are thinking of boosting and enhancing their valuable pharmaceutical business.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the medical representatives are faced with various challenges in their line of duty. Various factors affect their ability to full discharge their duties but of more concern to these medics are things that concern their remunerations. Many are generally dissatisfied with their job for reasons of lack of welfare approaches, poor leave policy and job insecurity.

Some however are satisfied with their job and wages albeit the few challenges that hinder their efficient discharge of duties like the availability of materials used in the efficiently satisfy the needs of their customers.

This research however would be more efficient if reasons for the various factors were considered for analysis to determine specific reasons for either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the job activities

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