

Job satisfaction in a chemical industry production unit

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Abstract

The subject area for the study was that of job satisfaction in a chemical industry production unit and the various dimensions by which it is constituted. The study will focus on the dimensions which are found to have the biggest impact on the job satisfaction of employees at the production unit.

As job satisfaction creates confidence in personnel which ultimately leads to improved quality in the output of the employees, it is a crucial task of management to instil job satisfaction within their employees (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226). The challenge lies therein as to how management should go about to realize the job satisfaction of the staff, as it is “not the simple result of an incentive program” (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226).

Qualitative research by means of structured interviews was implemented in the study. The sample consisted of 8 Production Foremen and 51 Production Process personnel who were interviewed during four focus group sessions, and a former Production Area Manager from the unit who was interviewed separately. Quotations from transcribed tape recordings of the interviews were sorted or categorized according to the themes (or dimensions) they represented before being analysed. As a measure to ensure the validity of the research, the questions of the interviews were structured in such a way that the data of some of the questions had to either correspond, or not, to show the validity thereof.

Current research found that several studies have attempted to identify the determinants for job satisfaction, but there is no agreed consensus as to the exact dimensions (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:170; Vieira, 2005).

The findings of this research showed that job satisfaction is a conglomeration of MANY dimensions, with no absolutes, which need to be present in the correct mix in order for an employee to be happy or satisfied. Thus focusing on only one dimension will provide little success. It is proposed that an integrated strategy with the most common dimensions (in this instance: teamwork, leadership traits, and working conditions) are followed to establish a working environment that is

conducive to satisfied employees, not forgetting that one of the most important dimensions is that of the employees themselves.

Keywords: job satisfaction, chemical industry, production.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - Introduction	1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Problem Statement.....	1
1.3. Research Objectives	3
1.3.1. Primary (General) Objective	3
1.3.2. Secondary (Specific) Objectives.....	3
1.4. Research Methodology	4
1.4.1. Literature and Theoretical Review	4
1.4.2. Empirical Study	5
1.5. Scope of the study.....	6
1.6. Limitations of the study.....	6
1.7. Ethical Considerations.....	7
1.8. Layout of the study	7
1.9. Chapter summary	7
Chapter 2 – Literature Review.....	9
2.1. Introduction.....	9
2.2. Definition of Job Satisfaction.....	9
2.3. Models explaining job satisfaction.....	10
2.4. Causes of job satisfaction	12
2.4.1. Situational (environmental) approach.....	12
2.4.2. Dispositional (personality) approach.....	18
2.4.3. Interactional approach	19
2.5. Effects of job satisfaction.....	20
2.6. Recommendations for enhancing job satisfaction	21
2.7. Chapter summary	23
Chapter 3 – Research Framework and Methodology	24
3.1. Introduction.....	24
3.2. Research approach.....	24
3.2.1. Types (quantitative and qualitative)	24
3.2.2. Type used	25
3.3. Research procedure.....	26
3.3.1. Getting permission	26

3.3.2. Ethical considerations	27
3.4. Sampling.....	28
3.4.1. Population	28
3.4.2. Sampling method	28
3.5. Measuring instrument.....	28
3.5.1. Data gathering method	28
3.5.2. Questions posed during the interviews.....	29
3.6. Data analyses.....	30
3.6.1. Content analyses	30
3.6.2. Steps to ensure reliability and validity	30
3.7. Chapter summary	31
Chapter 4 – Results.....	33
4.1. Introduction.....	33
4.2. Demographic Profile of the Sample	33
4.3. Qualitative Results	37
4.3.1. What do you think is job satisfaction?	38
4.3.2. What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?.....	41
4.3.3. What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization? 45	
4.3.4. What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?	48
4.3.5. What dimensions are currently not present in the department/ organization?.....	49
4.3.6. What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?51	
4.3.7. Graph Summary.....	53
4.4. Chapter summary	54
Chapter 5 - Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations	55
5.1. Introduction.....	55
5.2. Discussion	55
5.3. Conclusion.....	62
5.4. Recommendations	65
5.5. Limitations	67
5.6. Future Directions	67
Appendix A	a

References..... c

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction..... 11

Figure 2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs vs. Herzberg's two-factor 12

Figure 3: A model of organizational culture types..... 17

Figure 4: Demographic parameter – Rank..... 33

Figure 5: Demographic parameter - Age 34

Figure 6: Demographic parameter - Gender..... 35

Figure 7: Demographic parameter - Length of Service (years) 35

Figure 8: Demographic parameter - Ethnic Origin 36

Figure 9: Demographic parameter - Highest Educational Level..... 37

Figure 10: What do you think is job satisfaction? 38

Figure 11: What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?..... 41

Figure 12: What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization?
..... 45

Figure 13: What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?
..... 48

Figure 14: What dimensions are currently not present in the department/
organization?..... 50

Figure 15: What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?
..... 52

Figure 16: Summary of dimension importance and presence 54

Tables

Table 1: Differences between quantitative and qualitative methodologies..... 24

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This mini-dissertation is about job satisfaction, and focusses on the experiences thereof by the employees in a chemical industry production unit. Thus it will provide an understanding of the main dimensions which affect the job satisfaction of the employees in order to enable management to improve the situation.

In this chapter the problem statement is discussed, the objectives of the study are presented, the research methodology, scope and limitations are explained and an overview of the following chapters is presented. Lastly some major concepts are defined.

1.2. Problem Statement

The contribution of employees is most definitely one of the most important assets to any company as it is people who make things happen, make decisions, and guide the company to either being sustainable or to go bust. With the tremendous cost and time involved in recruiting and training the right people, it comes as no surprise that companies would want to do all in its power not only to attract, but also to retain the right employees. "The instilling of satisfaction within workers is a crucial task of management." (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226.) The challenge lies therein as to how management should go about to realize the job satisfaction of the staff, as it is "not the simple result of an incentive program" (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226).

According to Vieira (2005) the way that people feel about their jobs not only impacts their individual well-being but also convey information on dimensions such as job quits, absenteeism, and productivity. This is echoed by Maughan (2002) in the article, "Job satisfaction fuels success" as the best employers in South Africa are learning that the happiness of the personnel makes for better business. Covey (2004) also notes that someone who feels stuck in their job will have low energy levels and low productivity on the job. "The issue of job satisfaction is not only a personal issue for employees, but also a matter of enormous significance to employers." (Covey, 2004.) Lund (2003) says that in order to maintain a competitive

advantage, companies need to nurture a relationships with their workers because satisfied employees tend to be absent less (Hackett & Guion, 1985), less likely to leave (Carsten & Spector, 1987) , and be more satisfied with their lives overall (Judge & Watanabe, 1993). It is therefore clear from Vieira (2005), Maughan (2002), and Lund (2003) that a satisfied worker is a productive worker.

Justification for the need to investigate job satisfaction is exemplified, as both Kreitner and Kinicki (2008:170) and Vieira (2005) noted that several studies have attempted to identify the determinants for job satisfaction, but that there is no agreed consensus as to the exact dimensions. Lund (2003) noted that research have also not come to a conclusion as to the best type of organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, hierarchy or market) for performance (section 2.4.1.5, page 15). Literature confirms there is tremendous uncertainty as to what exactly it is that makes an employee satisfied. It is clear that in some companies different approaches are required to achieve success, as employees' "personal characteristics were significant predictors of job satisfaction" (Okpara, 2004).

Researchers have mainly taken on three approaches to research, define, and explain what it is that makes people satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs. The first approach is where the environment or situation leads employees to be satisfied or dissatisfied (situational approach). Situational features or dimensions include, amongst others, teamwork, leadership traits, recognition, communication, organizational culture, the work itself, working conditions, rank of the employee, and remuneration. According to Arvey *et al.* (1991) situational factors account for 40-60% of the variance in job satisfaction.

The second approach is where the disposition or personality of the employees determines whether or not they will like or dislike the job (dispositional approach). Arvey *et al.* (1991) found that personal dispositions account for only 10-30% of the variance in job satisfaction. This is supported by Soni (2003:13) who found that some personality dimensions (agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, stability, openness) are indeed related to some aspects of job satisfaction, but that overall personality dimensions explained relatively small variances in job satisfaction.

A third approach is that which combines the situational and dispositional approaches (interactional approach). This approach identifies that there needs to be a person-job fit due to different individuals being satisfied with different job conditions (Spector, 2000; Schneider & Dachler, 1978). It can therefore be hypothesized that an organization or its managers can create an environment which is conducive to job satisfaction as it is the work itself that brings fulfilment (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:231), but that it ultimately depends on the individuals to motivate themselves (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xxiv). Arvey *et al.* (1991) suggest that interactional factors account for 10-20% of the variance in job satisfaction.

From literature the following research questions arise:

- How do employees at a chemical industry production unit define job satisfaction?
- Which dimensions are important for the job satisfaction of employees at a chemical industry production unit?

This study aims to combine various aspects from literature with the results from the research to develop a practical generalized guide as to what you - as a manager/ leader - need to do to establish job satisfaction within your employees.

1.3. Research Objectives

The research objectives consist of a primary (general) objective and secondary (specific) objectives.

1.3.1. Primary (General) Objective

The primary objective of this study is to qualitatively investigate and identify those factors or dimensions which have the greatest impact on the job satisfaction of the employees at the chemical industry production unit.

1.3.2. Secondary (Specific) Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- Define job satisfaction from the perspective of employees at a chemical industry production unit.

- Identify the dimensions which are important for job satisfaction from the perspective of employees at a chemical industry production unit.
- Identify the job satisfaction dimensions which are currently present within the department/ organization.
- Identify actions that are required to maintain the job satisfaction dimensions which are currently present.
- Identify the job satisfaction dimensions which are currently not present within the department/ organization.
- Identify actions which are required to bring about change with reference to the dimensions which are not present, because these “areas of dissatisfaction are signals for change” (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xxv).

1.4. Research Methodology

1.4.1. Literature and Theoretical Review

The literature and theoretical review focused on previous research and studies (dissertations and articles) so as to gain knowledge into the various dimensions of job satisfaction. The knowledge gained from the previous research and studies formed the foundation for the proposed study as it was the starting point for the qualitative research.

Various databases such as Science Direct, Emerald, and Harvard Business Review were used to search for relevant journals during the literature and theoretical review.

Below are some examples of the journals which were used:

- Journal of Economic Psychology.
- Journal of Applied Psychology.
- Journal of Managerial Psychology.
- Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing.
- The Journal of American Academy of Business.

1.4.2. Empirical Study

1.4.2.1. Research design

Focus group sessions are used to reach the research objectives. The specific design thereof includes all respondents from the population, i.e. the sample is equal to the population. Information to describe the population is not collected during these sessions as it is readily available from the HR (human relations) practitioner. According to Stainback and Stainback (1984) a qualitative design is ideally suited to gain information in a subjective when small samples of people are studied.

1.4.2.2. Study population

The study population is comprised of employees at a chemical industry production unit within a much larger complex in Mpumalanga, South Africa ($N = 60$). The population consists of personnel who work, i.e. receive remuneration every week/month, within the chemical industry production unit. They are workers directly involved with the operations of the unit. The sample includes the entire population.

1.4.2.3. Measuring instruments

Based on the problem statement and the literature review, the research strategy of this study is to gather information in a two-step process:

1. Have group contact sessions so as to involve all the production personnel to gain an understanding and their view as to which dimensions contribute the most to job satisfaction by asking the following questions:
 - a) What do you think is job satisfaction?
 - b) What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?
 - c) What dimensions are currently present in the department/organization?
 - d) What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?
 - e) What dimensions are currently not present in the department/organization?
 - f) What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?

2. Conduct a personal visit with a peer who previously managed/ led the team to gain insight into what he/she did to ensure a healthy working environment in which employees can prosper, feel valued, and be happy. The interview is based on the same questions as Point 1 with the addition of the following:
 - a) What do you focus on to achieve an environment in which employees are satisfied with their jobs?

The reason why the two-step process would be relevant is that qualitative research is required for the development of my own understanding of the diverse job satisfaction dimensions within the group. This knowledge can then be used during the peer interview as discussion points to ascertain the reasoning for their relevance.

1.5. Scope of the study

The subject area for the study is that of job satisfaction and the various dimensions by which it is constituted. The study will focus on the dimensions which are found to have the biggest impact on the job satisfaction of employees at the specific production unit within a major chemical industry complex.

1.6. Limitations of the study

Firstly, the research was conducted using a specific sample from a South African chemical industry production unit within a major petrochemical complex and the results may therefore not be applicable to other chemical industry production units, whether in the same complex, locally or abroad.

Secondly, due to the qualitative nature of the study it was not possible to measure the influence of personal characteristics/ circumstances such as life events, cultural influences, temperament of the individuals, and union membership on the job satisfaction of the employees and have not been included in this study.

Subsequently this study is performed from a Production Area Manager's perspective on a very specific sample of employees and the results, therefore, should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

1.7. Ethical Considerations

According to Welman *et al.* (2005:201) there are four ethical considerations which need to be thoroughly considered before conducting qualitative research:

- Informed consent: permission from the respondents should be obtained after they have been informed about the purpose of the interview and objective of the study.
- Right of privacy: the respondents need to be assured about their confidentiality and anonymity in the write-up of the results.
- Protection from harm: The study must not contain any intrusive, invasive or potentially harmful procedures, either physical and/ or emotional.
- Involvement of the researcher: the researcher must guard against using manipulative tactics and must at all times treat the respondents as individual human beings. Ethical techniques of conducting the research must be used.

The aim of this study is to - at all times - comply with the above norms, practices, and requirements whilst conducting the research.

1.8. Layout of the study

This mini-dissertation will be divided into four chapters.

- Chapter 1 will serve as an introduction to the study and describe the problem statement in detail.
- Chapter 2 will provide an overview of previous research and studies conducted so as to provide a foundation for Chapter 3.
- Chapter 3 will focus on the research framework and methodology as well as discuss the analysis of the data and provide information as to the data captured.
- Chapter 4 will show the results obtained from the research.
- Chapter 5 will conclude with a discussion and recommendation as to the strategy that should be implemented to sustain and improve job satisfaction in a chemical industry production unit.

1.9. Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the problem statement and the purpose of the study. It also defined the primary and secondary objectives based on the problem statement and

provided a literature and theoretical overview. Consequently the scope, limitations, and layout of the study were identified and presented. Chapter 2 will provide an in-depth definition of relevant terminology, review models which explain job satisfaction, and consider various causes and effects of job satisfaction. It concludes with recommendations from literature as to how job satisfaction can be enhanced.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 focused on the problem statement and why further research into job satisfaction is required at the production unit. The objectives of the study, the research methodology, and limitations were also explained. Chapter 2 will provide an overview of previous research and studies conducted with reference to job satisfaction. It will define job satisfaction and will look at both the causes and effects thereof. Chapter 2 concludes with recommendations from literature as to how the job satisfaction of employees can be enhanced.

2.2. Definition of Job Satisfaction

There are various formal definitions for job satisfaction devised from literature:

- “Formally defined, job satisfaction is an effective or emotional response toward various facets of one’s job.” (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:170.)
- “Job satisfactions are feelings or affective responses to facets of the situation.” (Smith *et al.*, 1969:6.)
- “Employee job satisfaction is an attitude that people have about their jobs and the organizations in which they perform these jobs” (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii.)

In addition, it is also a comparison between that which was hoped for by the employee compared to that which really occurred (Cranny *et al.*, 1992), i.e. did the actual outcomes of the job match or better the desired outcomes?

In layman’s terms, job satisfaction is an individual’s reaction to a job, or rather, how the individual feels about their job. If the reaction is positive, the employee will be satisfied; if negative, the employee will be dissatisfied.

The definition above by Smith *et al.* (1969:6) points to a multi-dimensional perspective where the job satisfaction is determined by the employees’ feelings about various dimensions, or facets, about the job (facet approach).

Job satisfaction has also been conceptualized by Robbins (2000) as a global construct where the overall feeling, or general attitude, of the employee towards the job determines the level of satisfaction (global approach).

2.3. Models explaining job satisfaction

The most dominant model explaining job satisfaction/ dissatisfaction and the development of measures assessing it, is the two-factor theory of job satisfaction (Herzberg *et al.*, 1959) which suggests that there are both intrinsic factors (motivators) and extrinsic factors (hygiene factors) involved. The model describes that the presence of various factors or dimensions can create job satisfaction, but that the absence thereof does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction. Hence, if employees are not satisfied, it should not be assumed that they are dissatisfied; there is simply a lack of satisfaction. Vice versa, if there is no dissatisfaction it does not mean that there is satisfaction; there is simply no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1968). Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are therefore two different concepts which are not linked with one another.

The intrinsic factors determine job satisfaction and are referred to as motivators. These factors are inherent to the nature of the job and are associated with the task being performed, such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:215).

The extrinsic factors determine job dissatisfaction and are referred to as hygiene factors. These factors are associated with the environment in which work is being performed, such as physical working conditions, relations with others, pay, and company policies (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:216). It is important to note that according to Herzberg's theory the presence of these factors will not lead to motivation and job satisfaction, but will merely cause no dissatisfaction.

The Herzberg two-factor theory of job satisfaction is shown graphically in Figure 1, page 11.

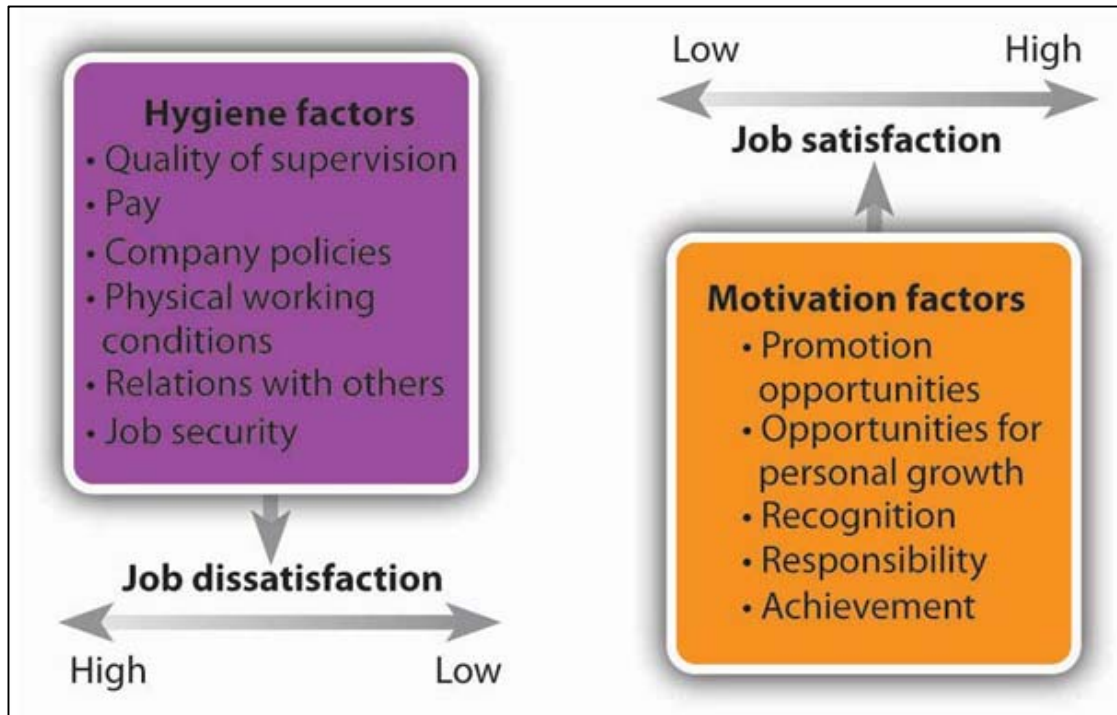


Figure 1: Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction

Source: web-books

The need hierarchy theory of motivation by psychologist Abraham Maslow which was published in 1943 has subsequently been used extensively in defining concepts within organizational behaviour (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:211; Sarwar & Abugre, 2013:24). As motivation of employees and the job satisfaction of employees are linked, it is of interest to see the comparison between the Maslow and Herzberg theories (Figure 2, page 12). It is important for managers to realize that it is crucial to satisfy the needs of self-actualization and self-esteem (Maslow's hierarchy of needs) as their satisfaction is associated with academic achievement and performance (Hertzberg's two-factor) at work (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:212).

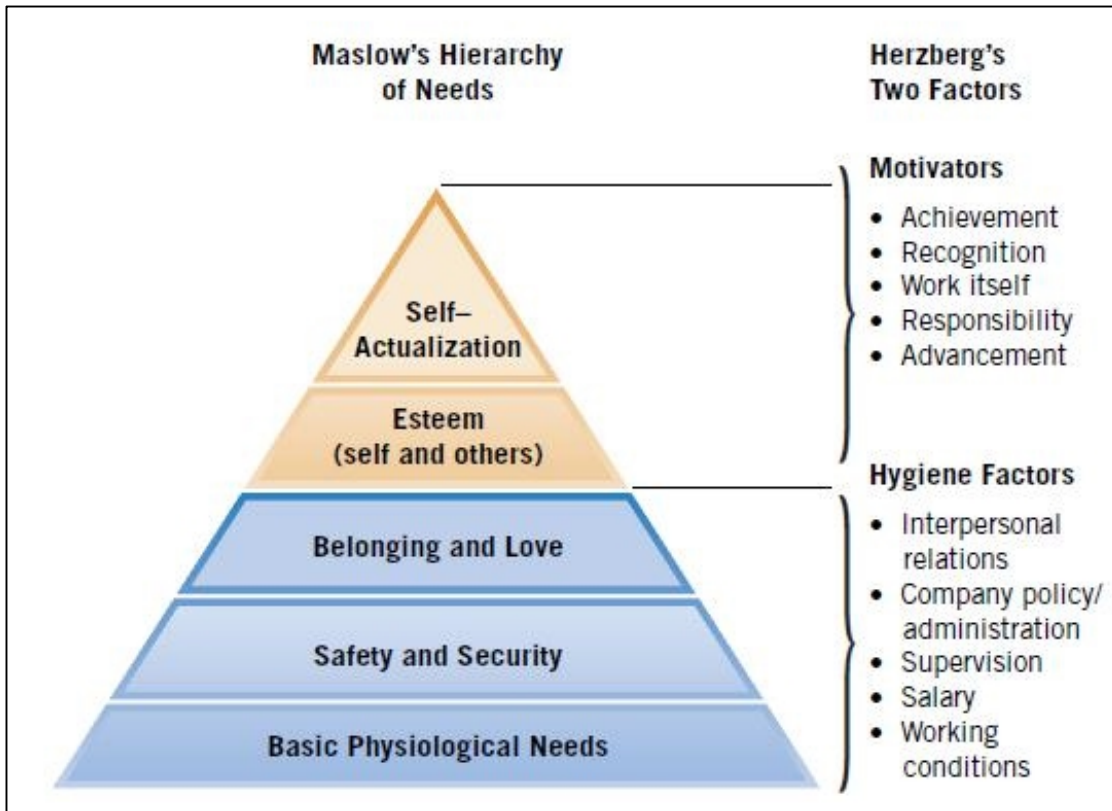


Figure 2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs vs. Herzberg's two-factor

Source: what is human resource

2.4. Causes of job satisfaction

Researchers has mainly taken on three approaches to research, define, and explain what it is that makes people satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs:

- A situational approach where the environment or situation leads employees to be satisfied or dissatisfied.
- A dispositional approach where the disposition or personality of the employees determines whether or not they will like or dislike the job.
- An interactional approach which combines the situational and dispositional approaches in that there needs to be a person-job fit due to different individuals being satisfied with different job conditions (Spector, 2000; Schneider & Dachler, 1978).

2.4.1. Situational (environmental) approach

According to Arvey *et al.* (1991) situational factors account for 40-60% of the variance in job satisfaction. This finding has a positive impact on organizational

interventions to improve the job satisfaction of employees as the management team can influence and change the features of the job environment so as to promote job satisfaction. Situational features or dimensions include, amongst others, teamwork, leadership traits, recognition, communication, organizational culture, the work itself, working conditions, rank of the employee, and remuneration.

2.4.1.1. Teamwork

Teams play a critical role in our lives as they are often required in getting the work done and in solving problems (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:7).

You need a team when you require the input and jointly coordinated action from several people (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:7). It is important to note that disagreement and an emphasis on an individual rather than a collective agenda will impede progress in solving problems (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:14).

The eight characteristics which explain how and why effective teams develop are (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:8):

- A clear, elevating goal.
- A well planned, very clear (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:22) and results-driven structure.
- Competent team members.
- Unified commitment.
- A collaborative climate where trust is the cornerstone.
- Standards of excellence.
- External support and recognition.
- Principled leadership.

2.4.1.2. Leadership traits

The article by Maughan (2005) describes how companies that took part in a survey as to which companies are best to work for, were acknowledged for the respect that their leadership inspired as well as the amount of trust which exists between the staff and management. To trust others and behave in a trustworthy way are qualities of authentic leaders and are associated with leadership traits which are required to achieve success as a leader (Van Staden, 2010).

Leadership traits or leadership qualities are those aspects associated with leaders who are deemed as being Authentic Leaders. Leadership traits within the context of this mini-dissertation therefore refer to qualities that Authentic Leaders possess.

Qualities of Authentic Leaders are (Van Staden, 2010):

- Know themselves and be themselves.
- Recognize strengths, acknowledge and accept weaknesses.
- Empower and respect others.
- Let go and are not threatened.
- Honest.
- Transparent.
- Have courage.
- Listen.
- Have empathy/ be caring.
- Act with integrity.
- Drive for excellence.
- Trust others and behave in a trustworthy way (see below: ways to build trust)
- Demonstrate passion in what they believe in.
- Act consistently/ reliable.

Management professor/ consultant Fernando Bartolomé recommends that trust is built and maintained via (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:319):

- Communication: continuously keep team members informed about the vision, strategy and decision made. Feedback needs to be truthful and honest.
- Support: be supportive by helping, coaching, mentoring, and giving advice. In order to be supportive you need to be welcoming and available.
- Respect: the number one expression of managerial respect is to delegate real decision-making authority. The number two expression is actively listening to the ideas of others.
- Fairness: be quick when giving credit/recognition. Be impartial and objective performing performance appraisals and evaluations.
- Predictability: be constant and keep both expressed and implied promises.

- Competence: by demonstrating technical ability, good business sense, and acting in a professional manner, you will boost your trustworthiness.

2.4.1.3. Recognition

Recognition and the type of recognition given is often an area of debate especially when personnel are asked what would make them satisfied. Soni (2003:14) points out that a salary increase or praise may cause an employee to work harder, but only for a while. Recognition was labelled by Herzberg as a motivator because he found it to be associated with strong effort, good performance, and job satisfaction (quoted by Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:215). It is interesting to note that recognition is not only required to motivate personnel (Herzberg *et al.*, 1959), but also for the development of effective teams (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:8). The link between recognition, teamwork, and job satisfaction is an important occurrence to take note of as it indicates that dimensions which constitute job satisfaction do not necessarily act alone in determining the job satisfaction of employees.

2.4.1.4. Communication

Communication, i.e. to continuously keep team members informed about the vision, strategy and decisions made, is an important way to build and maintain trust according to management professor/ consultant Fernando Bartolomé (quoted by Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:319). Those in management therefore need to communicate often with the required amount of depth so as to align business practices and behaviours (BlessingWhite, 2011). Within organizations that perform extremely well, there is an alignment and commitment between the employees and the company which is constantly reinforced through well-defined and maintained communication channels (Gallup, 2010:5). Communication is not only relevant for organizations that perform well, but also for the job satisfaction of employees (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xi).

2.4.1.5. Organizational Culture

There are four types of organizational cultures, namely clan, adhocracy, hierarchy, and market. It is important to note that each of these cultures has different attributes, leadership styles, bonding mechanisms, and strategic emphasis. Rad & Yarmohammadian (2006:xi) suggest that “managers should select the best

leadership style according to the organizational culture and employees' organizational maturity". The job satisfaction of employees can be positively associated with a clan type of organizational culture (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:76). It should be noted that teamwork is a dominant attribute of a clan culture (Lund, 2003:235) which alludes to the fact that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and teamwork.

The definitions of each of the four organizational cultures are described below and shown graphically in Figure 3, page 17:

- "*Clan* – whose dominant attributes are cohesiveness, participation, teamwork and a sense of family; whose leaders are mentors, facilitators and "parent figures"; whose bonding is achieved through loyalty, tradition and interpersonal cohesion; and whose strategic emphases are developing human resources, commitment and morale." (Lund, 2003:235.)
- "*Adhocracy* – whose dominant attributes are entrepreneurship, creativity and adaptability; whose leaders tend to be entrepreneurs, innovators and risk takers; whose bonding is achieved through entrepreneurship, flexibility and risk; and whose strategic emphases are innovation, growth and new resources." (Lund, 2003:235.)
- "*Hierarchy* – whose dominant attributes are order, uniformity, rules and regulations; whose leaders tend to be coordinators or administrators; whose bonding is achieved through rules, policies and procedures; and whose strategic emphases are stability, predictability and smooth operations." (Lund, 2003:235.)
- "*Market* – whose dominant attributes are competitiveness and goal achievement; whose leaders are decisive and achievement orientated; whose bonding is achieved through goal orientation, production and competition; and whose strategic emphases are competitive advantage and market superiority." (Lund, 2003:235.)

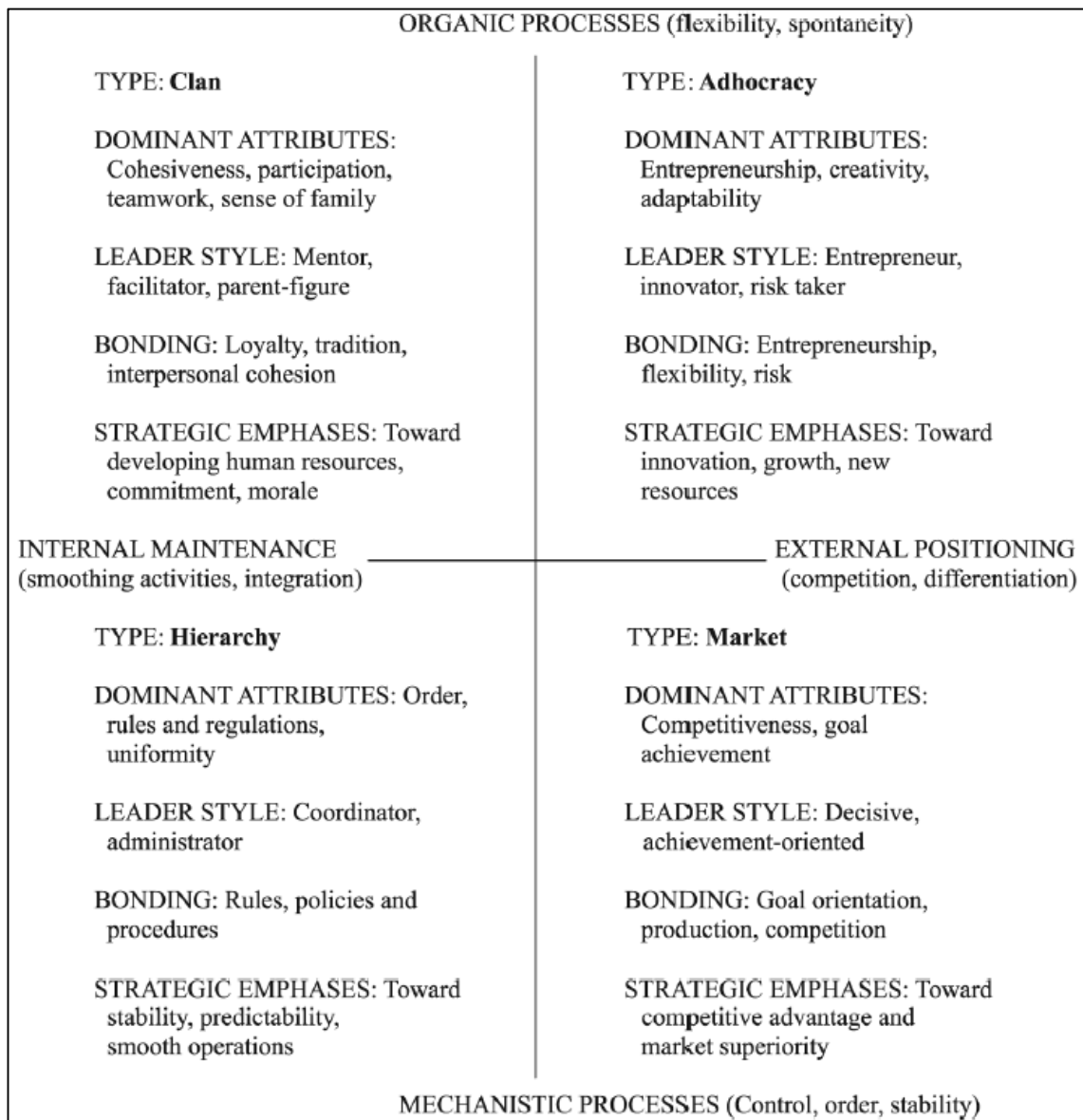


Figure 3: A model of organizational culture types

Source: Emerald

2.4.1.6. The work itself

One of the dimensions constituting job satisfaction that is often overlooked is that of the work itself (Saari & Judge, 2004:396). Much can be done to garner job satisfaction by improving the nature of the work in making it as stimulating, meaningful, interesting, and challenging as possible (Saari & Judge, 2004:397; Spector, 2000:205). The investigation by Soni (2003:13) support previous research findings that job satisfaction is the result of the conditions at work and the nature of the work.

2.4.1.7. Working Conditions

Good working conditions were found to be an important motivator for employees with a significant association to job satisfaction by Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006:xxi). This is echoed by the findings of Sutherland and Canwell (2004:244) in that the working conditions should receive attention from management, as the working environment can in fact influence the performance and productivity of employees.

2.4.1.8. Rank of the employee

Oshagbemi (1997) found that the rank of the employee is a reliable indicator of job satisfaction, with workers at higher ranks being more satisfied, but that there is no clear indication yet as to why this occurs. This is perhaps because “wages are positively associated with job satisfaction” (Barth *et al.*, 2011) with rank and pay having a positive correlation, i.e. the higher the rank, the higher the pay.

2.4.1.9. Remuneration

Barth (2011) noted the effect of how higher co-worker wages provide job satisfaction as this provides a positive outlook for individuals as to possible future earnings.

2.4.2. Dispositional (personality) approach

It is crucial that during the recruitment process you find employees with the correct personal characteristics as they too are significant predictors of job satisfaction (Okpara, 2004). Dunn *et al.* (1995) agree that the second most important characteristic to look for when employing personnel, is that of their emotional stability.

“Even though organizations cannot directly impact employee personality, the use of sound selection methods and a good match between employees and jobs will ensure people are selected and placed into jobs most appropriate for them, which, in turn, will help enhance their job satisfaction.” (Saari & Judge, 2004:397).

Georgellis *et al.* (2012) studied the impact of life events (first marriage and birth of the first child) on job satisfaction. It was found that there is a definite interaction between the work and life domains. The challenge however lies therein as to how

you as a manager should manage the impact of life events on your employees, as you have no control over their life events.

Arvey *et al.* (1991) claim that personal dispositions account for only 10-30% of the variance in job satisfaction. This is supported by Soni (2003:13) who states that some personality dimensions (agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, stability, openness) are indeed related to some aspects of job satisfaction, but that overall personality dimensions explained relatively small variances in job satisfaction.

The big five personality dimensions as studied by Soni (2003) are defined below:

- “*Agreeableness* – The tendency to be courteous, helpful, trusting, good-natured, cooperative, tolerant, and forgiving.” (Soni, 2003:23.)
- “*Extraversion* – The tendency to be sociable, gregarious, talkative, assertive, adventurous, active, energetic, and ambitious.” (Soni, 2003:23.)
- “*Conscientiousness* – The tendency to be hardworking, dependable, efficient, and achievement striving.” (Soni, 2003:23.)
- “*Stability* – The tendency to handle stress, to maintain an even temperament, and to have a high degree of composure and self-confidence across most situations.” (Soni, 2003:23.)
- “*Openness* – The tendency to be imaginative, cultured, curious, polished, original, broadminded, intelligent, and artistically sensitive.” (Soni, 2003:23.)

2.4.3. Interactional approach

Schneider and Dachler (1978) note that when they measured the satisfaction of personnel over a long period of time that the results remained remarkably stable. This led them to hypothesize that the job satisfaction was in part caused by the individual’s personality and in part by the job itself. This was echoed by Baran (1986) by saying that job satisfaction is a result of both internal and external factors. Internal factors include those which a person brings to work such as their personality and prior experiences. External factors to the employee are dimensions such as how they are treated, the job environment, and the job itself (Spector, 1997). It can therefore be hypothesized that an organization or its managers can create an environment which is conducive to job satisfaction as it is the work itself that brings fulfilment (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:231), but that it ultimately depends on the individuals to motivate themselves (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xxiv). As such,

when performance steadily declines, management should first re-evaluate the job of the employee before re-evaluating the other dimensions that can lead to job satisfaction. Arvey *et al.* (1991) suggested that interactional factors account for 10-20% of the variance in job satisfaction.

2.5. Effects of job satisfaction

“Employee engagement” is a modernized term that measures the employees’ involvement with, and commitment to, the organization in addition to their job satisfaction. Gallup Consulting is one the most well-known consultants measuring the engagement of employees worldwide; they do this via questionnaires known as the “Gallup Survey” where they measure 12 core elements with 12 statements which they have shown through their research best indicates employee and workgroup performance. Their research has shown that engaged employees are more productive, “more profitable, more customer- focused, safer, and more likely to withstand temptations to leave the organization” (Gallup, 2010:1).

In order for organizations to meet their objectives, they need managers and employees to achieve the objectives of the firm as they cannot succeed without the efforts and commitments made by their personnel. Job satisfaction is therefore critical as it not only helps to attract the right personnel but also to retain qualified employees (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii). Personnel can be attracted to organizations through various mediums such as by word of mouth of current employees as well as the media. “Best companies to work for” (Maughan, 2002) competitions, for instance, will no doubt have an effect on where well-qualified personnel will apply for vacancies. By being the best company to work for will therefore also help to attract new employees and retain current ones as they too will realize the fortunate position they are in.

Lund (2003) says that in order to maintain a competitive advantage, companies need to nurture their relationships with their employees. Satisfied employees tend to be absent less (Hackett & Guion, 1985), less likely to leave (Carsten & Spector, 1987), and be more satisfied with their lives overall (Judge & Watanabe, 1993). Dissatisfied employees demonstrate behaviours such as absenteeism, lateness, unionization,

grievances, drug abuse, tardiness, and the decision to retire (Saari & Judge, 2004:399; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii).

As companies are also socially responsible, it is perhaps the overall individual well-being of employees which is the most beneficial aspect of job satisfaction in that it has advantages for the community and society at large. In addition, job satisfaction is important for the productivity and future profits of the organization. Companies that fulfil the vision and strategy of their employees, have a better chance at being sustainable as their employees will stay longer with them. This is important, as it takes time for employees to transfer their skills and knowledge to their colleagues and successors (Soni, 2003:15). If an organization has a high turnover of employees, especially in crucial positions, there is a real threat to its sustainability, as it is people who are more often than not the real competitive advantage. By having the right people in the right jobs, companies will be able to be sustainable in today's marketplace. Therefore the issue of job satisfaction is both critical for employees and employers (Covey, 2004). Job satisfaction also creates confidence in personnel which ultimately leads to improved quality in the output of the employees (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226).

2.6. Recommendations for enhancing job satisfaction

The challenge lies therein as to how management should go about to realize the job satisfaction of the staff, as it is "not the simple result of an incentive program" (Tietjen & Myers, 1998). To improve the job satisfaction of employees will require innovative solutions to drive change. It is therefore crucial to address the cause, and not the symptoms, of the behaviour in order to have sustainable change within the organization. Gallup Consulting uses a "combination of measurement, reporting, learning, action planning, and strategic interventions" (Gallup, 2010:4) in order to bring about a change in employee engagement; they also believe that the engaging of employees is a continuous process where there is "year-round focus on changing behaviours, process, and systems" (Gallup, 2010:4) so as to adapt constantly to the needs of the employees.

Herzberg's two-factor theory indicates that managers can create motivation and job satisfaction of employees by incorporating motivators into the jobs. This can for

instance be done by ensuring that the work itself is stimulating, meaningful, and interesting, with possibilities of advancement.

It should therefore be considered that there are no quick or permanent solutions to improving the job satisfaction of employees. It is a continuous process which needs to be reviewed and adapted over time. It can almost be seen as something similar to a company's business strategy where constant small, and perhaps even big, changes need to be made as both the internal and external conditions change. As such there should also be strategic intent to ensure the job satisfaction of employees, as it is people who ultimately determine the success of a company; it is people who drive stability, lower unit cost, increase volumes, and ultimately determine the sustainability of the organization (Pretorius, 2009).

As the improvement of job satisfaction is in many ways dependent on change management, i.e. implementing aspects of a clan culture as it is positively associated with job satisfaction (Lund, 2203:235; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:76), it is crucial that managers who wish to bring about a change in job satisfaction have adequate change management skills with the ability to deal with the resistance to change (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:77).

Rad & Yarmohammadian (2006) suggest that "managers should select the best leadership style according to the organizational culture and employees' organizational maturity". It is therefore worthwhile for any manager to develop a strategy to create job satisfaction within their respective business as even though there are guidelines, it is by no means an exact science.

Within companies there is more often than not a well-developed "grape vine" through which information is filtered and distributed. Within organizations that perform extremely well, there is an alignment and commitment between the employees and the company which is constantly reinforced through well-defined and maintained communication channels (Gallup, 2010:5). Open channels of communication directly contribute to the job satisfaction of employees, as no individual likes it when someone, especially management, talks about them behind their back and hearing about it through the grape vine. It is therefore crucial that the correct information is

given at all times to employees before the grape vine has an opportunity to cause dissatisfaction. The proper use of communication is also linked with the authentic behaviour expected by management. Those in management therefore need to communicate a lot with the required amount of depth so as to align business practices and behaviours (BlessingWhite, 2011).

When an organization/ department/ manager initiate a measurement or survey of employees, it is very important to provide and act on the feedback. If this is not done, it will actually in the long run decrease the job satisfaction of employees. Hence, if employees give their time for a survey, they expect to receive feedback, i.e. they did not give their time to receive nothing in return (BlessingWhite, 2011). This is essential in the prevention and limitation of questionnaire toxicity. Questionnaires are time consuming; if no feedback is received, it was deemed as a waste of time.

“Research has shown that even though there is satisfaction with employee independence and co-worker relations, employees still show the least amount of satisfaction regarding advancement, compensation and recognition” (Soni, 2003:44). Organizations should therefore focus on strategies with regard to advancement, compensation, and recognition in order to create a favourable environment for job satisfaction.

2.7. Chapter summary

Chapter 2 provided an overview of previous research and studies conducted with reference to job satisfaction. Models explaining job satisfaction were looked into and the causes and effects were observed. Lastly some recommendations from literature were discussed. Chapter 3 will focus on the research approach, procedure, and the sample used. It will also provide an explanation of the way in which the data was gathered and analysed.

Chapter 3 – Research Framework and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 2 provided an overview of previous research and studies conducted with reference to job satisfaction. It also defined various concepts and looked at both the causes and effects of job satisfaction in the workplace. This chapter will focus on the research approach, procedure, and the sample used. It will also provide an explanation of the way in which the data was gathered and analysed.

3.2. Research approach

3.2.1. Types (quantitative and qualitative)

Research is conducted by one of two methodologies; quantitative and qualitative. Both methodologies allow the researcher to acquire new data, but in different ways and from different perspectives. There is no absolute to which method should be used (depending on the circumstances), but in literature there are some definite guidelines. A summary of the differences between the two methodologies is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences between quantitative and qualitative methodologies

Quantitative	Qualitative
Makes use of structured methods to evaluate objective data (numbers and statistics)	Makes use of flexible methods to investigate subjective data (language of respondents)
Deals with an abstraction of reality	Deals directly with everyday life
Aims for large numbers of data to be statistically significant	Aims for small samples so that people can be studied in-depth
Has an outsider's perspective based on the facts of the research investigation in an objective way	Has an insider's view by gaining information in a subjective way
Focuses on reliability	Focuses on validity
Uses remote, empirical, and inferential methods, i.e. questionnaires	Uses interviews and observation processes

Source: Stainback and Stainback (1984)

3.2.2. Type used

Babbie (1998) suggests that survey research is the best method available to collect data for a population too large to observe directly. Within the organization of which the production unit forms part, this is how data have been acquired previously for various surveys.

As it was possible to directly observe the participants of the study, it was decided not to use survey research, i.e. specifically self-administered questionnaires. Questionnaires have various advantages in that they provide information on the demographic parameters of the respondents, such as:

- Length of service.
- Gender.
- Age.
- Life events, i.e. the birth of a child and the death of a parent.
- Rank of the employee.
- Union membership.
- Education.
- Experience.
- Marital status.

However, questionnaires also have certain limitations, especially if they are lengthy. In addition, the advantages gained with reference to the demographic parameters of the respondents were negligible as the bulk of the information was, in this case, also available from the HR (human relations) practitioner. As the organization in question has been experiencing questionnaire toxicity (Soni, 2003:44) it was decided against the use of questionnaires to negate a low response rate, especially since the research sample is very small. When response rates are low, it also begs the question as to how relevant and true the research is, e.g. would personnel who do not have job satisfaction even complete the questionnaire? The use of quantitative research by means of self-administered questionnaires therefore leaves many unanswered questions as to their validity in describing the sample population if the response rate were to be low.

In addition it was deemed to be beneficial to have a qualitative study as it would involve the respondents directly, i.e. giving them a voice. This encouragement to be open and honest during the discussions revealed information which would no doubt not have been possible with questionnaires, because they cannot pulse an individual to elaborate or clarify a specific statement. In addition, the respondents reacted extremely positively to the personal nature of the contact sessions. This is no more evident than in the following responses from participants:

- “The good thing that I like is when you sit down with us like this.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)
- “As leaders, you should open the doors for your people to be open with you; if you are harsh, you disrespect them, or you treat them the way they feel they are not treated well, they’re going to do the same to you. You must open the doors for them; if they got a problem, they mustn’t be scared to come and face you and explain their problem to you. We cannot raise our issues to someone who doesn’t listen to us.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “Yes, definitely!” (GD, 5 June 2012) on reply if they liked chatting about soft issues like job satisfaction.

These discussions with the personnel was most definitely one way of opening the doors and listening to the respondents. In order not to neglect or omit comments from individuals who perhaps did not have the confidence or will to take part in the focus group sessions, the agenda (Appendix A) was also distributed at the beginning of each group session, and collected at the end, in order to ensure that every voice is heard. Finally, qualitative research was selected as it involves small samples of people (as is the case with this study, $N = 60$) whereas quantitative research usually aims for larger numbers (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3.3. Research procedure

3.3.1. Getting permission

The subject area for the study was that of job satisfaction and the various dimensions by which it is constituted. As the study aimed to gain insight into the different issues which have an impact on the job satisfaction of employees at the specific production unit, the research was completely in line with that which is expected of an Area Manager within the chemical industry. It involves recognizing

people as one of the key success factors. After all, it draws on the accountability of management to unlock the potential of the employees so as to ensure the success and sustainability of the business.

The results of the research have beneficial value to the business unit because co-managers will also be able to use the results in formulating their own strategies with regards to their personnel. Permission to conduct the research was therefore granted by senior management.

3.3.2. Ethical considerations

The research considered the following ethical issues in the development and execution of the research plan to ensure that there are no ethical implications:

- The subject matter of job satisfaction not being a sensitive topic;
- The participants not being vulnerable or unable to give informed consent, they were at the onset informed about the purpose of the interview and objective of the study before their informed consent was obtained to proceed;
- The study did not require special co-operation from a 3rd party for access to the individuals partaking in the study;
- The participants being fully aware of their participation in the research;
- The study not containing any intrusive, invasive or potentially harmful procedures;
- There being no financial inducements to participants;
- The image of neither the NWU nor the company, which the production unit forms part of, could be negatively affected by the research;
- The research objectives being in line with the normal duties of management, i.e. determining how to go about realizing the job satisfaction of the personnel;
- The respondents having confidentiality and anonymity in the write-up of the results; their right of their privacy was assured at the start of each interview session;
- The voluntary nature of the study, as the respondents were under no obligation to partake in the study, i.e. participation was voluntary.

3.4. Sampling

3.4.1. Population

As this study focused on a specific chemical industry production unit within a much larger complex, it is of value to the reader to have some background with regard to the production unit in order to place some of the findings within context. Of significance is the fact that the production unit is over 30 years old with various Mega projects (projects with an expenditure > R1b) in progress to not only improve the mechanical integrity thereof, but also the physical working conditions. This is because the physical working environment is not only very dirty, but extremely physical with the mandatory use of vapour masks exacerbating every physical action. From a physical environment point of view it surely does not get more challenging at other units within the complex; it truly takes a special type of individual to work and stay positive in the unit.

In this study, the population consisted of personnel who worked, i.e. received remuneration every week/month, within the chemical industry production unit. They were workers directly involved with the operations of the unit. The sample included the entire population.

3.4.2. Sampling method

Due to the small population size ($N = 59$, excluding the former Area Manager) of the production unit, all the production personnel within the unit were part of the study.

The sample consisted of eight Production Foremen and fifty one Production Process personnel who were interviewed during four focus group sessions, and a former Production Area Manager from the unit who was interviewed separately.

3.5. Measuring instrument

3.5.1. Data gathering method

Five interviews were administered to obtain data. During these interviews the data was recorded at a high audio sampling rate to ensure the clarity of the conversations; before each recording the consent of the respondents was obtained.

Four of the interviews were conducted using focus groups consisting of two Production Foremen and approximately twelve to fourteen Production Process personnel (the sample consisted of eight Production Foremen and fifty one Production Process personnel). The interviews were conducted in a structured way using the “Job Satisfaction Questionnaire” (Appendix A). The questionnaire was distributed to all participants at the beginning of the interview process and they were able to submit it immediately afterwards (in the case of not wanting to openly voice their opinion). The fifth interview was conducted last with one of the production units’ previous Area Managers to not only get insight from a peer but also to compare the findings from the interviews with the previous managers’ observations during his tenure at the specific production unit in question.

All data in paper format were converted to PDF format and stored digitally on multiple back-up locations so as to ensure that it would not get lost; digital data such as the recordings were stored in the same manner.

3.5.2. Questions posed during the interviews

Based on the problem statement and the literature review the conceptual framework of this study was to gather information in a two-step process:

1. Have group contact sessions so as to involve all the production personnel to gain an understanding and their view as to which dimensions contribute the most to job satisfaction by asking the following questions:
 - a) What do you think is job satisfaction?
 - b) What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?
 - c) What dimensions are currently present in the department/organization?
 - d) What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?
 - e) What dimensions are currently not present in the department/organization?
 - f) What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?
2. Conduct a personal visit with a peer who previously managed/led the team to gain insight into what he/she did to ensure a healthy working environment in

which employees can prosper, feel valued, and be happy. The interview was based on the same questions as Point 1 with the addition of the following:

- a) What do you focus on to achieve an environment in which employees are satisfied with their jobs?

3.6. Data analyses

3.6.1. Content analyses

Interview recordings were transcribed to text before being used in identifying the feedback of the respondents. The cutting and sorting technique of Welman *et al.* (2005:213) was used to identify the remarks based on each of the six questions of the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Appendix A). The quotations were sorted or categorized according to the themes (or dimensions) they represent. The themes were numerous times redefined and named similar to those found in literature, whilst considering the essence of each theme and whether or not the theme accurately represented the data, e.g. “pay” versus “remuneration” or “personality dimensions” versus “dispositional influences”. If required, the data was moved from one theme to another to ensure the correct representation thereof.

The quotations of the respondents were therefore not edited, even though English was not their mother tongue. This was done so that the authenticity of the data would not be questioned, and also so that the respondents would be able to relate to the results when reading the study, i.e. there is no sense in giving feedback to employees after a study if they themselves cannot relate to the data and subsequent results.

3.6.2. Steps to ensure reliability and validity

Validity refers to whether or not the objective of the study is representative of what the researcher is intending to measure, i.e. is the researcher measuring what he/she hoped to measure, and also what he/she thinks he/she is measuring? (CCNMTL, 2003; Welman *et al.*, 2005:9).

As a measure to ensure the validity of the research, the data obtained from two of the questions had to be comparable. Questions 2 and 3 from the Job Satisfaction

Questionnaire (Appendix A) asked “What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?” and “What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization?” The data obtained from question 3 would need to be similar to some or all of the dimensions from question 2, as the dimensions which are currently present (question 3) should for obvious reasons also be important for job satisfaction (question 2). The data obtained from question 3 did in fact correlate with that of question 2, showing the validity thereof.

As a second measure to determine the validity of the data obtained by the research, two opposing questions were used during the structured focus group interviews; the one being “What dimensions **are** currently present in the department/ organization?” and the other “What dimensions **are** currently **not** present in the department/ organization?”. The validity of the data would be proven if the results of the two opposing questions were different; this was indeed the case.

Both the measures implemented within the questionnaire, on the face of it, showed that the concepts which were intended to be measured, were indeed measured. The measures used therefore satisfy the criteria of face validity.

Reliability refers to whether the measurement of data is consistent and stable, i.e. will the same measurement process yield the same results if it is repeated over time? (CCNMTL, 2003; Welman *et al.*, 2005:9).

Quantitative researchers focus more on reliability as they require consistent and stable measurement, whereas qualitative researchers focus on validity as they need to ensure that they are in fact measuring what they intend to measure (Stainback and Stainback, 1984). It is important to note that qualitative research does not need to focus on reliability as “it is not possible to have a measure that has low reliability and high validity - you can't really get at what you want or what you're interested in if your measure fluctuates wildly” (CCNMTL, 2003).

3.7. Chapter summary

Chapter 3 focused on the research approach, procedure, and the sample used. It also provided an explanation of the way in which the data was gathered and how it

was analysed. The focus of Chapter 4 will be to show the characteristics of the sample followed by results obtained from the research. The results will be shown in the same sequence as the six questions which were used during the interview process.

Chapter 4 – Results

4.1. Introduction

Chapter 3 focused on the research approach, procedure and the sample used. It also provided an explanation of the way in which the data was gathered and how it was analysed. Chapter 4 is divided into two sections. Firstly the characteristics of the sample, i.e. demographic parameters, are provided which include their rank, age, gender, length of service, ethnic origin, and highest educational level. Secondly the qualitative results obtained are shown. The results will be shown in the same sequence as the six questions used during the research process as shown in Appendix A.

4.2. Demographic Profile of the Sample

The demographic parameters of the respondents are shown below in Figures 4 to 9. $N = 60$ with eight Production Foremen, fifty one Production Process Personnel and one former Area Manager.

The data label for each pie-chart is defined as “Category, Frequency, Percentage”, e.g. in Figure 4 below “**Trainee, 4, 7%**” means that for the category of “**Trainee**” there were **4** individuals (from $N = 60$) which equates to **7%** of the sample.

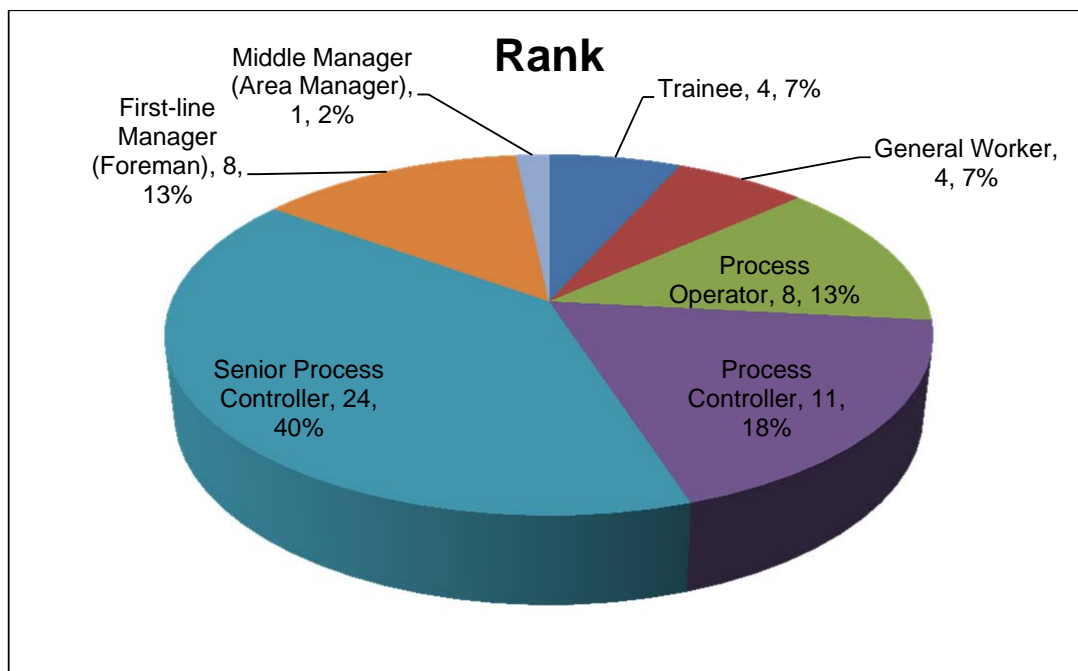


Figure 4: Demographic parameter – Rank

The rank distribution of the employees shown in Figure 4 cannot change too much as a result of the fixed manpower structure, i.e. there are a fixed number of positions available per shift. The only variable is that of the amount of Process Controllers versus Senior Process Controllers (SPC) as promotion to SPC is not vacancy dependent and can occur at any time, provided that the candidate completed the training requirements as per the training matrix.

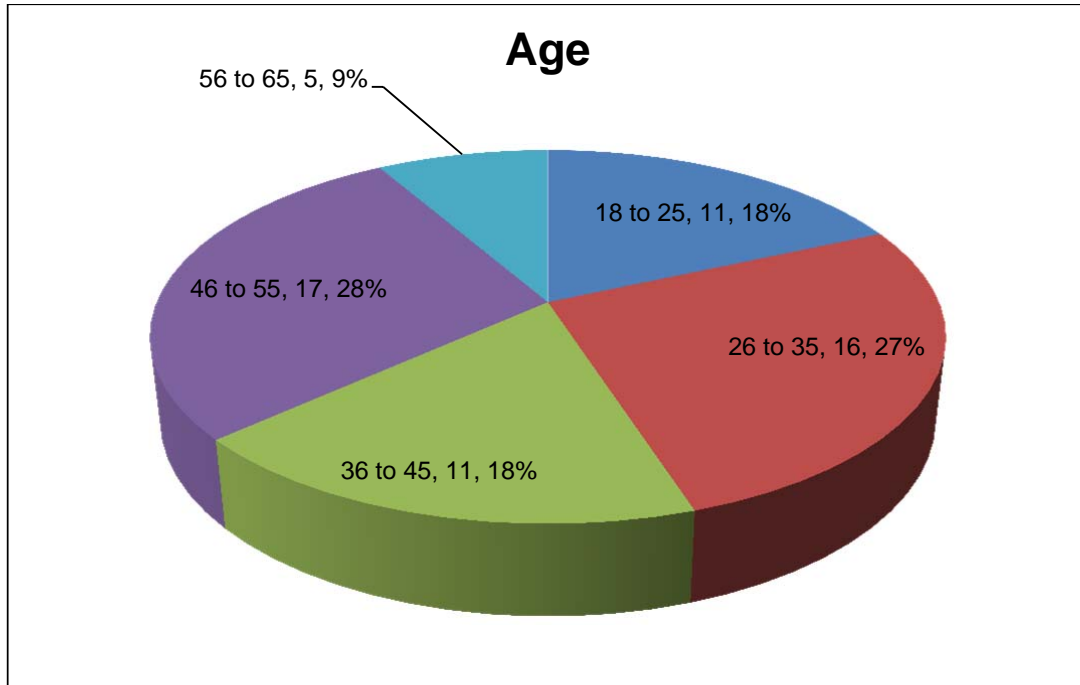


Figure 5: Demographic parameter - Age

As shown in Figure 5 there is a fair representation of all ages, except for individuals 56 and above. This can be attributed to the fact that individuals, given that their retirement planning was done timeously, prefer to retire as soon as they are able to fund their retirement in such a manner that their standard of living will not decrease as time progresses.

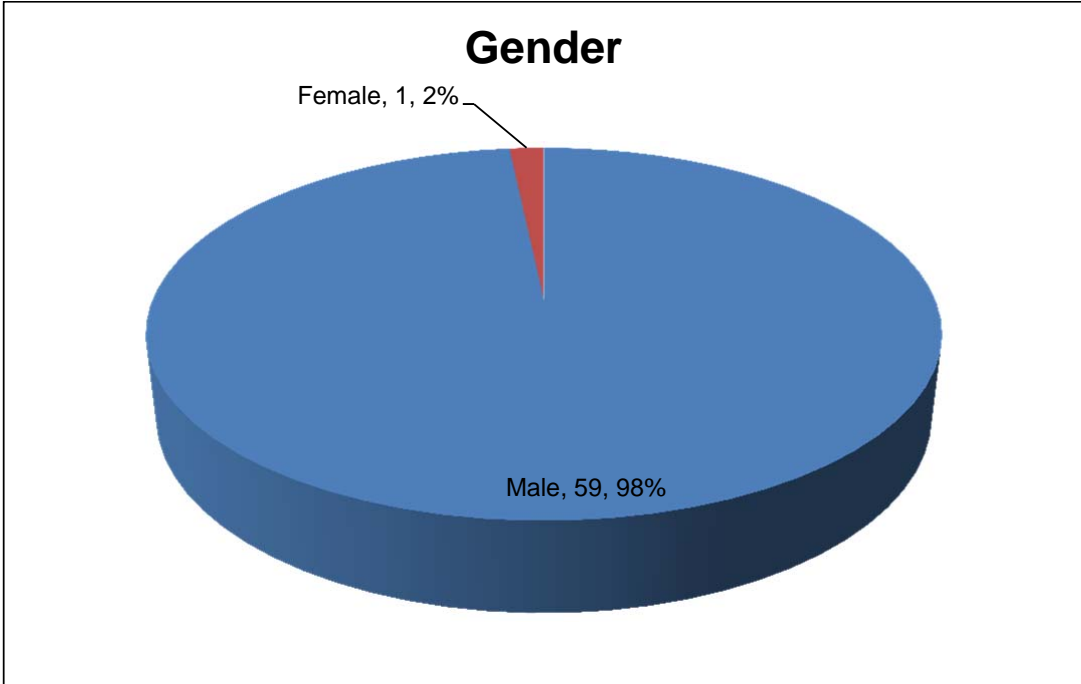


Figure 6: Demographic parameter - Gender

Figure 6 shows that 98% of the respondents were male and 2% were female. This split is not uncommon for the production environment as the work can be extremely physical and demanding, not to mention that the working environment is very dirty. As a result very few, if any, females apply to work within the setting of the study.

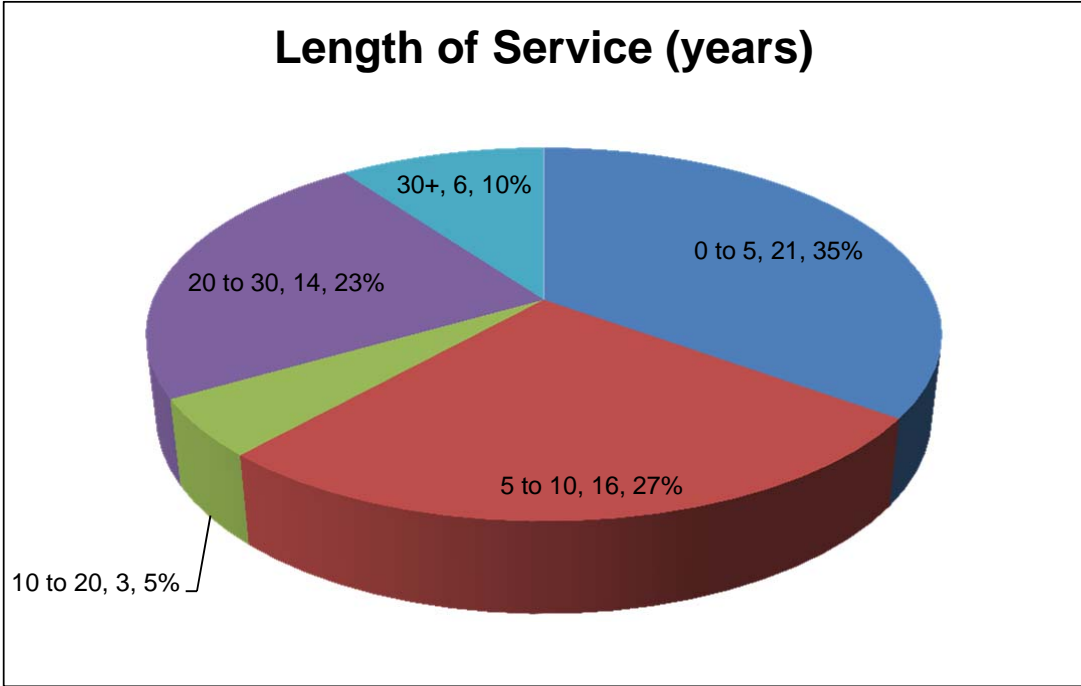


Figure 7: Demographic parameter - Length of Service (years)

The majority of the respondents have only been with the company, of which the production unit forms part of, between 0 and 5 years (35%). However, this does not mean that they only have 0 to 5 years' experience; only 18% of the respondents are 25 or below (refer to Figure 5). The figure of 35% rather indicates that in the past 5 years there has been a mix of external appointments (personnel with prior experience at other companies) and young individuals (personnel that came through the learnership program). Figure 7 also indicates that a third (33%) of the respondents have a wealth of experience as they have been with the company for more than 20 years (20 to 30 and 30+).

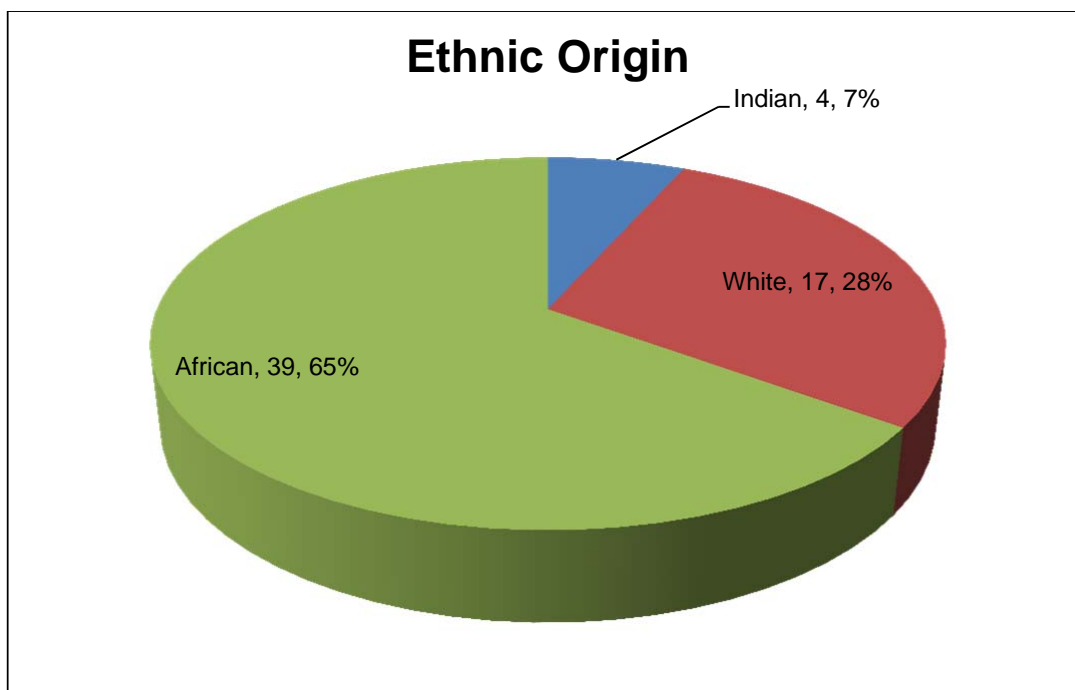


Figure 8: Demographic parameter - Ethnic Origin

As shown in Figure 8, there are only three ethnic groups represented at the production unit; African (65%), White (28%), and Indian (7%).

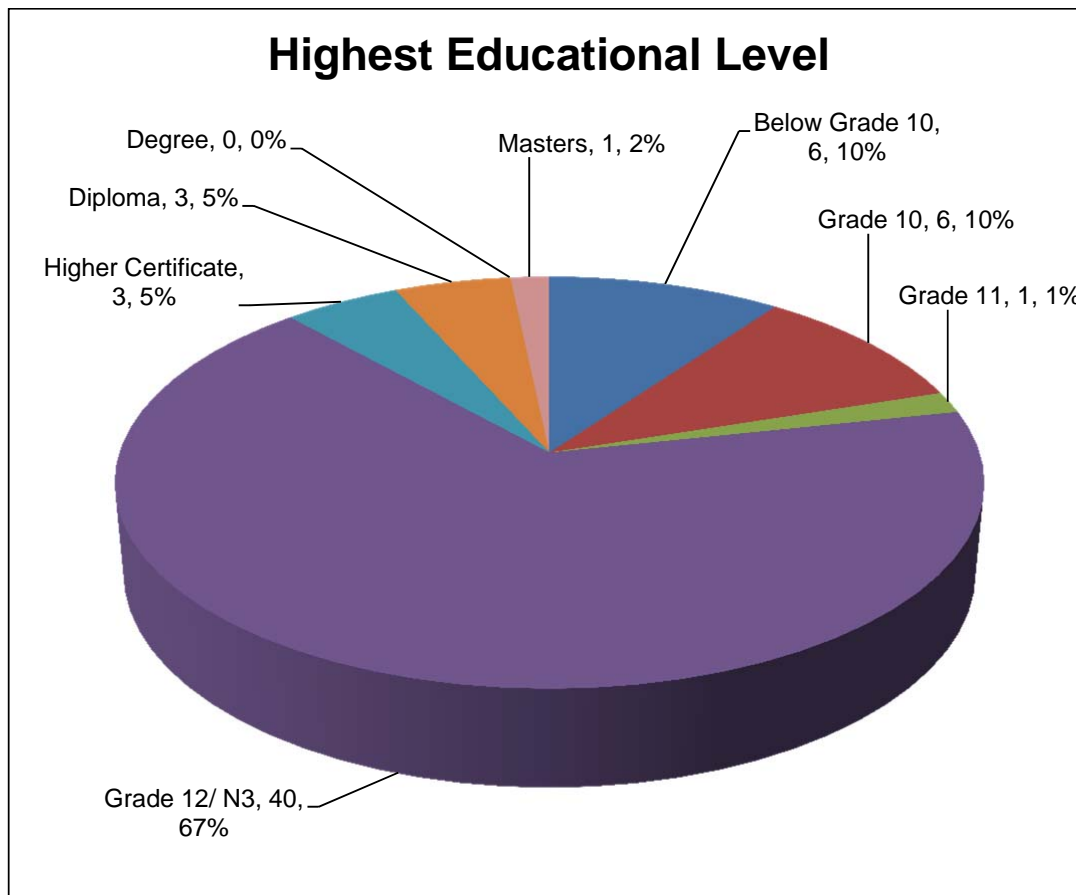


Figure 9: Demographic parameter - Highest Educational Level

Figure 9 indicates that the majority of respondents have obtained a Grade 12 or N3 equivalent qualification. The figures also indicate that 21% (Below Grade 10, Grade 10, and Grade 11) of the individuals did not complete their high school education. It is positive to note that 10% of the respondents (Higher Certificate and Diploma) have a tertiary education which was obtained studying part-time.

To summarize; the demographic profile of the respondents indicate that they are predominantly African, with a Grade 12 or N3 equivalent qualification, exclusively male, and with a fairly equal distribution regarding age/ length of service.

4.3. Qualitative Results

The primary objective of the study was to qualitatively define those dimensions that are perceived to be important for job satisfaction and to ascertain which dimensions are currently present within the production unit. This was done by firstly asking the respondents what they thought job satisfaction was, secondly which dimensions are

important, thirdly which dimensions are currently present and lastly what should be done to maintain the dimensions which are present. The results are shown in sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.4. Another objective of the study was to determine which important dimensions for job satisfaction are not present within the production unit and to gain insight into what the respondents felt was required to improve on the aforementioned dimensions; consequently the results are shown in sections 4.3.5 and 4.3.6.

4.3.1. What do you think is job satisfaction?

A total of 22 comments were made with reference to the question “What do you think is job satisfaction?” Respondents indicated that job satisfaction is about: achievement (8), willingness to go to work (5), employment (2), teamwork (2), the work itself (2), dispositional influences (1), remuneration (1), and working conditions (1).

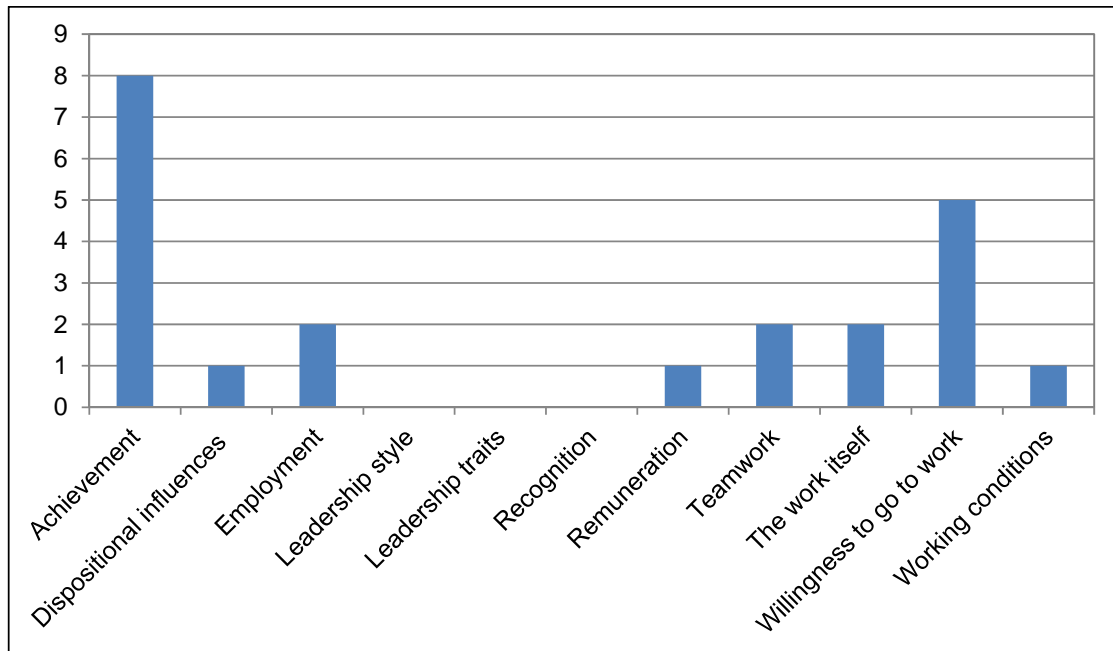


Figure 10: What do you think is job satisfaction?

Elements constituting **achievement** (8) are: meeting your personal needs (4), making a difference (2), goals/challenges (1) and having a match between job requirements and skills (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- “...for instance things that make you **happy**; like promotion-wise, if you are ready for assessment, and there is not a delay, things like that.” (GD, 15 May 2012).
- “To have a home/work/life balance.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)
- “When you achieve your personal needs by doing your job well and having the company to support you in these personal needs, like studying further and achieving something out of it.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “Fulfilling personal need, but putting first your employers need and at the same time my needs are supported by the company.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)
- “Coming to work to make a difference.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)
- “Job satisfaction is basically at the end of the day meeting all your targets and goals, and at the end of the shift seeing all your people with a smile on their face for having achieved everything.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)
- “When you come to work to make a difference in your life, somebody else’s life, the company, and to go home with the same attitude.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “To be allowed to do the work I can at that time, then I’ll be **happy**, I’ll be satisfied.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)

An element constituting **willingness to go to work** (5) is: wanting/ looking forward to go to work. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- “Job satisfaction is to be **happy** at work.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)
- “When you’re **happy** to come to work in the morning.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “Your willingness to go to work.” (GD, 29 May 2012; Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)
- “When you wake up in the morning and you feel like jumping and singing and going to work, I’m **happy**, and when you go home you are still **happy**.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “I would want to look forward to work every day. I don’t want to wake up and think, ah back to this crappy old place again.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)

An element constituting **employment** (2) is: having a job. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Job satisfaction, the fact that you’ve got a job, you should be satisfied, that is the bottom line. It’s a tough world out there.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“Personally it is to be able to have a job. I think there are lots of people who don’t have work or not have any income. Just to have that must be one of the most or biggest motivations to have job satisfaction.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

Elements constituting **teamwork** (2) are: respect between team members (1), and being a part of the team (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Being accepted and being recognized when I’m at work.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“When you come to work and take over from the previous shift, and everything is going well, there is a lot of respect, and you are **happy** to take over shifts.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*

Elements constituting the nature of **the work itself** (2) are: resources (1), and if the individual likes the type of work (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“To me job satisfaction is when all the necessary resources are in place...” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“A person that is **happy** with the job that he is doing.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

An element constituting **dispositional influences** (1) is: personal attitude. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Job satisfaction I think comes from the inside. It is the individual’s decision if he is able to operate within his limits because in every job there are limits.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

An element constituting **remuneration** (1) is: being remunerated as promised. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Getting my salary at the scheduled dates.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

An element constituting **working conditions** (1) is: working in a safe environment. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- “Working in the environment that is safe, no hazards and endangering of community.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)

4.3.2. What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?

A total of 42 comments were made with reference to the question “What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?” Respondents indicated that the following dimensions are important: teamwork (9), leadership traits (7), working conditions (5), achievement (4), leadership style (4), recognition (4), dispositional influences (3), remuneration (3), and the work itself (3).

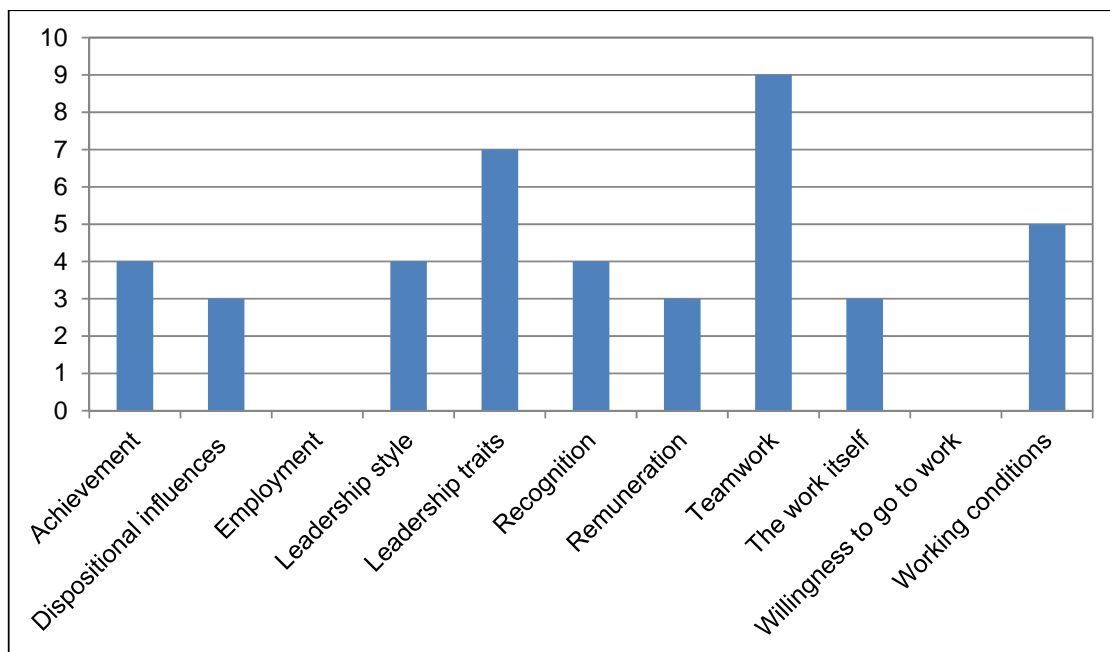


Figure 11: What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **teamwork** (9) are: working together as a team (5), inter-team relationships (1), recognizing the importance of team members (1), competent team members (1), and mutual respect (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- “Teamwork... everybody must take part and participate.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)
- “Teamwork of colleagues.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)
- “If at work, there is teamwork.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “When you work as a team.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)
- “If somebody is not working against me.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)

- *“The only thing that makes me **happy** at work is if you work as a team and correspond in each and every task we come across. As long as you know that if somebody is in the plant, he is also a human being, he is going to get tired, you have to go there and help him or her out. That can build a good relationship between you and your co-workers; that is the only thing that makes me **happy**.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“People whom we work with, they are very important, cause sometimes you will find out there are problems maybe in a shift, those are contributing to dissatisfaction of going to work.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“You should be able to trust your fellow workers to do the job correctly. That he is doing it correctly and that you are not going to have a comeback on it. You send somebody out to do something, you are wondering in your mind is this guy doing it properly, or must I go and check?” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*
- *“Treating each other as a person or respecting each other according to his/her gender regardless the experience or leadership.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **leadership traits** (7) are: fairness (2), behave in a trustworthy way (2), respecting others (2), and being supportive (1).

The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Fairness from management’s side, trust...” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*
- *“Honesty, consistency/ fairness, openness.” (Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)*
- *“If I talk about something personal to somebody then I expect that person he should be trustworthy to speak to you about say a specific problem without going to somebody else and telling him what I said.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*
- *“Not going behind my back and tell somebody that X has done this and this and this.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*
- *“There is one thing, if there is one manager that we’re working under, you can criticize him and say it is not right, I am **not happy** with him or her because of this and that. When they move that manager and bring in somebody else, you might find yourself saying “hey that man who I thought had a heart that was bad, it was good!” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Some people can make a huge difference... some managers can ask you anything, to do anything... you will go that extra mile.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

- *“If management helps one, if management is a people’s person, immediately there is a change in the atmosphere in the environment you work in.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **working conditions** (5) are: safety considerations (2), physical working environment (1), tools required for normal duties (1), and scheduling (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Safety is one of the things that make me **happy**, when I am safe.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“Safety of personnel.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Environment you work in.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Must give you the right tools to do your job safely.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“Because I can work day shift.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **achievement** (4) are: goals/challenges (1), solving problems (1), development opportunities (1), and if results can be seen (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Achieving our daily goals.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“When you solve the problems, the challenges.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“I believe in the near future I am going to grow, that satisfies me, there is something in front of me which I can see I am going this way.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“Seeing results of my work.” (Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at **leadership style** (4) is whether or not the type of leadership style is aligned with personnel expectations (4). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Leadership must always evolve. It can’t be the same as in 1980 or the 60’s”. (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Must not be an army style management.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

- *“I do not like a guy that micro-manage me.” (Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)*
- *“...I like the straight forward management. If I am wrong, must just tell me this is wrong you must stop doing this and this and this.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at the **recognition** (4) is: thanking personnel when things go well (4). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“How I am being treated, because sometimes they only look at the negative side. If you do good they don’t worry, they say nothing.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“Recognizing my achievement within the company; you want your section to be seen as a great section, as a good performance section.”(GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Being thanked by those you do it for.” (Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)*
- *“I think sometimes we need the leaders, they need to give us some recognition that leads us to motivation.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **dispositional influences** (3) are: personal attitude (2), and personal circumstances (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“What makes me **happy**? To be content with what you have. I think that is what keeps me going.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“It comes from within.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“If at home, things are ok.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at the **remuneration** (3) are: amount of compensation (2), and if correct remuneration is paid (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Money, money, money. Money makes the world go around.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“More money.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“If my pay is correct.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at the nature of **the work itself** (3) are: learning something new (2), and if the individual likes the type of work (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- “To be able to come to work and learn something new... I am **happy** to be on Shift 2.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)
- “Learning new things.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)
- “I like my work.” (Peer interview, 7 June 2012.)

4.3.3. What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization?

A total of 17 comments were made with reference to the question “What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization?” Respondents indicated that the following dimensions are important: teamwork (6), leadership traits (4), achievement (2), the work itself (2), dispositional influences (1), leadership style (1), and working conditions (1).

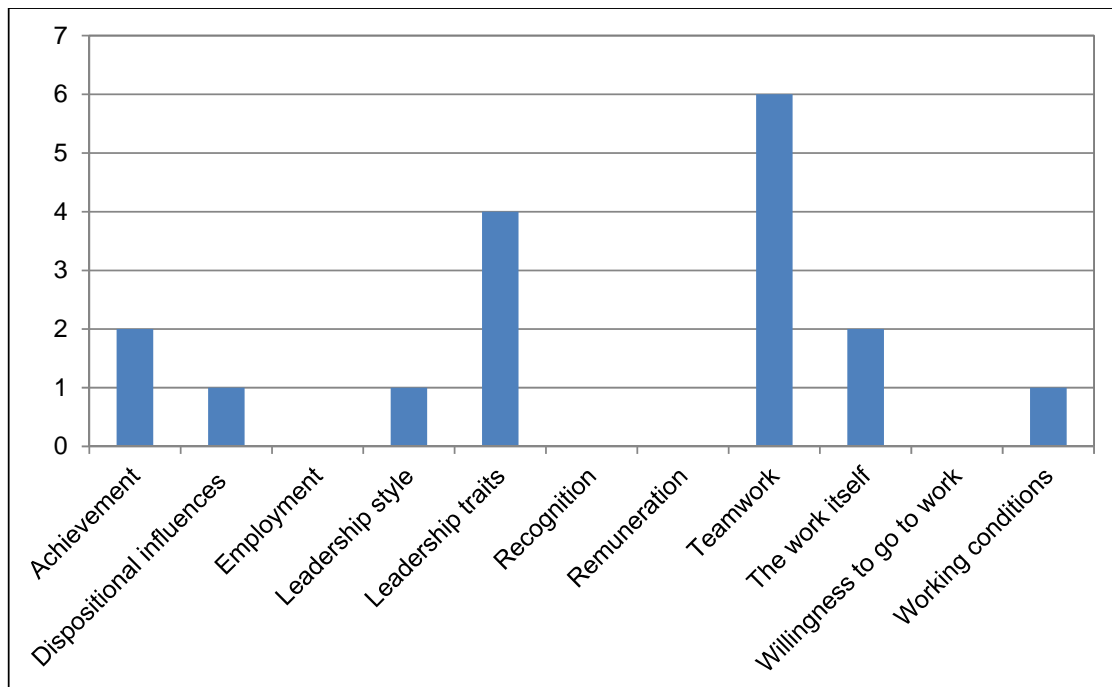


Figure 12: What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization?

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **teamwork** (6) are: competent team members (2), inter-team relationships (2), and equality (2). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“There are certain things that will make you enjoy being at work, even though you are 100% **happy**, like if the shift is in control.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“We are not having a doubtful mind in ourselves... I got confidence in us.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“They make that I enjoy being at work.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“We are like a family at work, and it goes beyond work, even outside, we are always there supporting one another... If you come to the control room, you will always hear us laugh.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Gender and satisfaction. True equality strengthens the morale toward relationships and trustworthiness to achieve our goals in producing petrol and diesel.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“There are ages involved as well. People underestimate ages in the working environment. Certain people with a certain age will make a certain decision and that influences the probability of being able to manage these people.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

Factors that should be focused on when looking at **leadership traits** (4) are: competence (2), and being supportive (2). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“When I came here 2008, 2009, you know the first thing that was worrying me was the temperatures and the cooler problems, and I said “jinne, what did I get myself into?” Today it is the least of our worries. That tells me, that time there was another manager, and now there is another manager and there is this change bringing **happiness** to people.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *Learning from people with experience. The Management that we have, from supervisor level up, they are very good people, that keeps me **happy** every day.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“Firstly, on my side there is support from my leaders. It shows me I am important and a part of the team.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Secondly, in any situation we’re facing in the plant, it’s not always a matter of criticizing or showing that you are stupid or that you don’t know what to do. It always comes as guidance to help you to understand better and to enable yourself to learn from that and to do better next time. That is the kind of*

things that motivate you as a person to grow. But if it comes as criticism, you can't grow. Instead of growing you become negative.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)

A factor that should be focused on when looking at **achievement** (2) is: goals/challenges. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“So for me, your targets, if you achieve them, going home safe, and problems that you had and you could solve it, that is satisfactory for me.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Goals to take the projects are there and focus is very realistic.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at the nature of **the work itself** (2) is whether or not the personnel are continuously learning something new. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“I'm learning quite a lot on projects, especially about systems and procedures.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“Learning new things.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at **dispositional influences** (1) is personal attitude. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“It is not just looking up, it is looking around, looking behind, lift yourself up, your spirits, everything.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at **leadership style** (1) is whether or not the type of leadership style is aligned with personnel expectations (1). The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“If the manager's leadership style is conducive to my working environment; that will affect me a lot. The leadership style that I am experiencing is favourable.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on when looking at **working conditions** (1) is physical working environment. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Also the condition on the plant, it is getting better, and the projects will make a big difference.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

4.3.4. What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?

A total of 9 comments were made with reference to the question “What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?” Respondents indicated that for the following dimensions there are various actions required to maintain the status quo: leadership traits (5), teamwork (3), and working conditions (1).

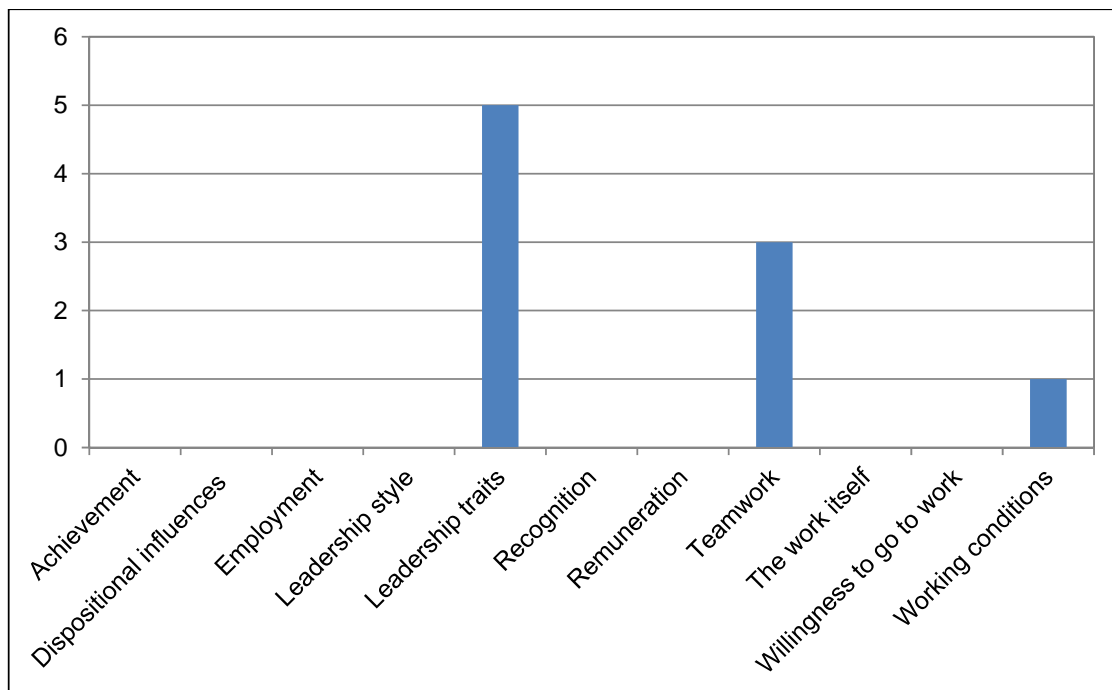


Figure 13: What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?

Actions that are required to maintain **leadership traits** (5) are: communication (2), competence (1), support (1), and caring (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“The good thing that I like is when you sit down with us like this.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

- *“Did you enjoy it, talking about these types of things a little bit? Yes, definitely!” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*
- *“If you have a problem, there must be a valid solution.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Basically support, not change, we need support. If someone needs something or the plant needs something. If he gets support to achieve that at the end of the day, he’s **happy**, doesn’t matter what it is.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Small gestures help a lot.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Actions that are required to maintain **teamwork** (3) are: developing close and enduring relationships (2), and teambuilding (1). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Working together as a unit and understanding ourselves and helping each other in times of need for good relationships and mutual understanding.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“Improve on teamwork between management and shifts.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“Team building, but it depends on how it is structured.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*

Action that is required to maintain **working conditions** (1) is: ensure that tools required for normal duties are available. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“We can’t perform our duties if we don’t have tools.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

4.3.5. What dimensions are currently not present in the department/ organization?

A total of 9 comments were made with reference to the question “What dimensions are currently not present in the department/ organization?” Respondents indicated that the following dimensions are important: recognition (3), dispositional influences (2), teamwork (2), achievement (1), and leadership traits (1).

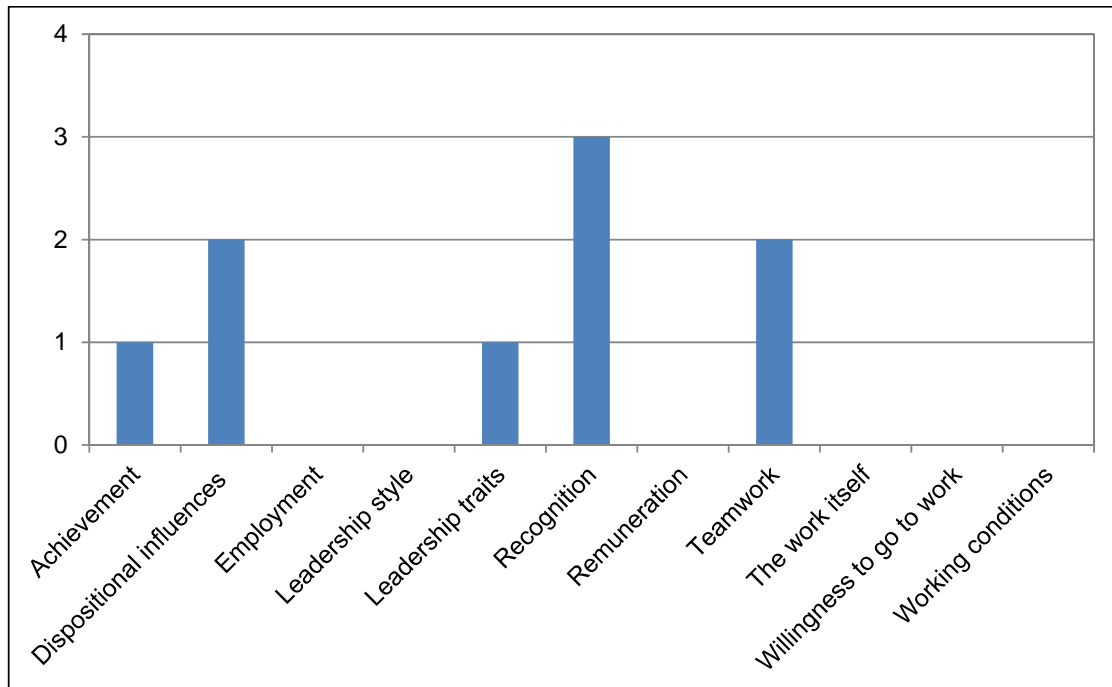


Figure 14: What dimensions are currently not present in the department/ organization?

Factors that should be focused on to create or enhance **recognition** (3) are: thanking personnel when things go well (2), and rewarding personnel for going the extra mile (1).

- *“If you did something good and get recognized for it, it is part of the lifting the morale.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“They don’t recognize, nobody comes and says thank you.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“You just push, push, push saying today I want you to do this, yes, we are going to achieve it, but not realizing how are those guys going to feel, because this is a machine producing this and this, but there is a difference between a machine and the personnel.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on to create or enhance **teamwork** (2) is creating ownership. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Ownership, when everyone brings their part.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*
- *“The foremen can also take a bit more leadership on shifts. They like to sit back and let their shift run the plant; they only want to focus on the HR or peoples’ problems. They must take more leadership, well ownership in the*

plant and designate workers to make sure they go and do their job, and be more active.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)

A factor that should be focused on to create or enhance the **dispositional influences** (2) of the employees is to understand the causes of employee attitudes and then to act on them. The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“In actual fact we can’t make a person satisfied. It is only me that makes me satisfied. Satisfaction depends on me.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“I think the thing that can make us **happy** at work is our attitudes.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on to create or enhance **achievement** (1) is to provide educational guidance so that individuals can reach their maximum potential. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Educating people to realize their potential towards the benefits of themselves and the company. Results is win-win situations.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

A factor that should be focused on to create or enhance **leadership traits** (1) is to be transparent. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“Transparency is not enough.” (GD, 5 June 2012.)*

4.3.6. What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?

A total of 6 comments were made with reference to the question “What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?” Respondents indicated that the following dimensions are important: leadership traits (4), dispositional influences (1), recognition (1), and teamwork (1).

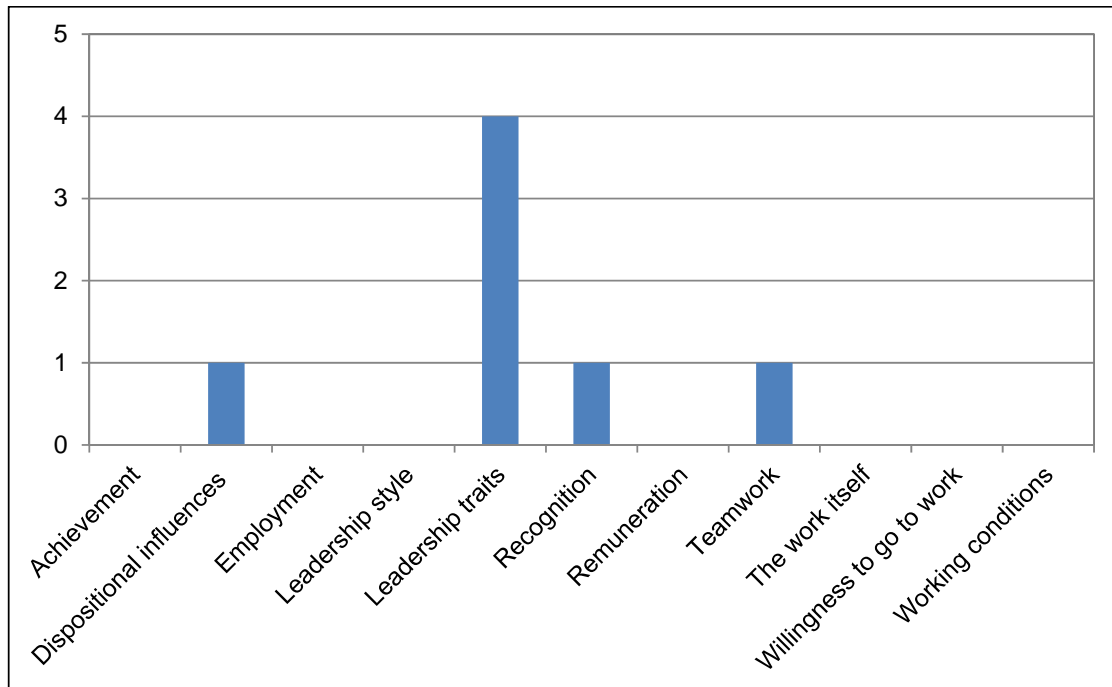


Figure 15: What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?

Actions that are required to improve **leadership traits** (4) are: communication (2) and listening (2). The following quotes substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“Let us meet at least three times yearly to strengthen ourselves toward common goals to meet our perspectives we desired.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“Communication needs to be more effective between management and shifts.” (GD, 22 May 2012.)*
- *“It is good when you talk about yourself, about the condition of the workplace.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*
- *“As leaders, you should open the doors for your people to be open with you, if you are harsh, you disrespect them, or you treat them the way they feel they are not treated well, they’re going to do the same to you, you must open the doors for them, if they got a problem they mustn’t be scared to come and face you and explain their problem to you. We cannot raise our issues to someone who doesn’t listen to us.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Action that is required to improve **dispositional influence** (1) is: focus on intrinsic factors to motivate personnel. The following quote substantiate the above-mentioned deductions:

- *“You need to pick the guys’ morale up, do something to adjust the attitude, not change it. You are never going to change everybody’s attitudes. Just do something to adjust it, to make a small change that you are going to see result at. That is where you come in, you need to decide, look at the bigger picture and see what you can do. It’s not for us to tell you.” (GD, 15 May 2012.)*

Action that is required to improve **recognition** (1) is: catch people when they are doing things right. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“They don’t come to us when things are going smooth, the only time we’ll see them is if there is a problem.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

Action that is required to improve **teamwork** (1) is: letting group members be part of the decision making processes. The following quote substantiates the above-mentioned deduction:

- *“You need to be a part of the solution.” (GD, 29 May 2012.)*

4.3.7. Graph Summary

Figure 16, page 54, is a graph summarizing the three most important questions from the focused group sessions, namely:

- What dimensions are important for job satisfaction? Section 4.3.2.
- What dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization? Section 4.3.3.
- What dimensions are currently NOT present in the department/ organization? Section 4.3.5.

The dimensions which are important are shown by a blue line graph, whereas the dimensions which are present are shown by a green column; the dimensions which are not present are shown by a red column. Where there are both a red and green column at a specific dimension it should be noted that it is as a result of a dimension having different elements, e.g. for the dimension of “Achievement” there were comments made during the focus group sessions about “goals/challenges” which are present, and one comment about that which is not present, “providing educational guidance so that individuals can reach their maximum potential”.

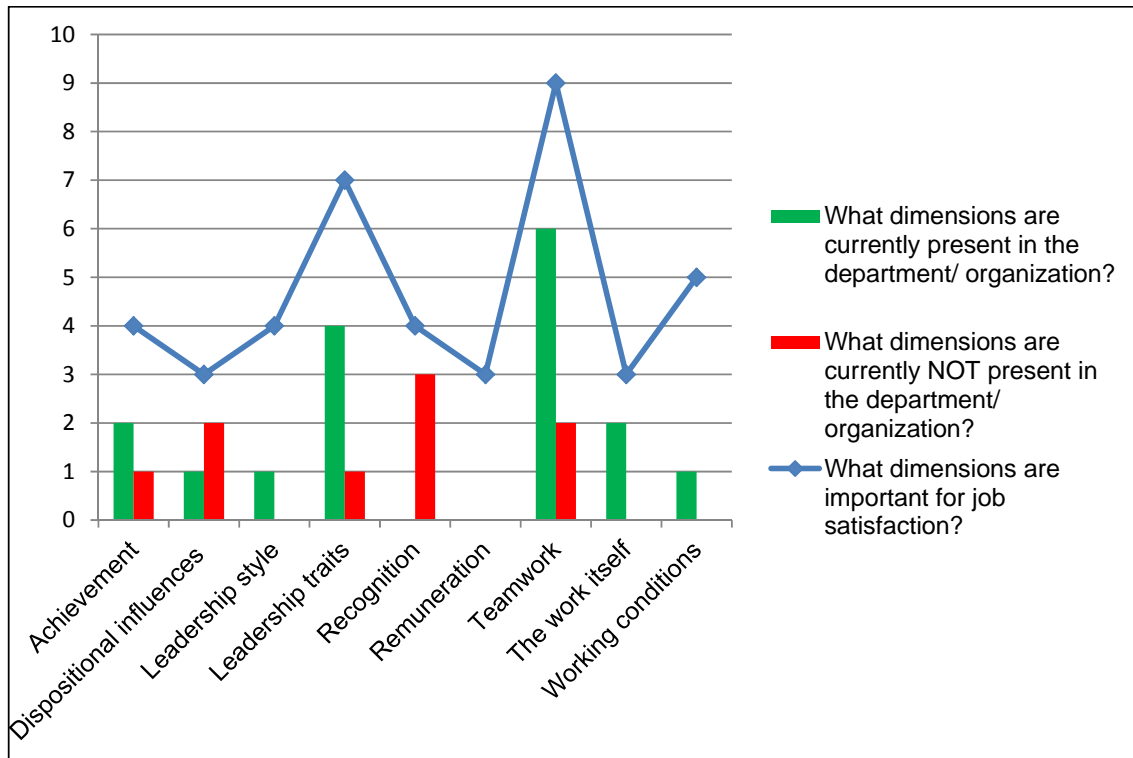


Figure 16: Summary of dimension importance and presence

It is evident from Figure 16 that leadership traits and teamwork are the most important dimensions for job satisfaction from the perspective of employees at the chemical industry production unit. It is exciting to note that the same two dimensions also received the highest amount of comments in terms of which dimensions are currently present. It is clear that recognition requires a lot of attention as it only had elements which are lacking at the production unit.

4.4. Chapter summary

The focus of Chapter 4 was to show the results obtained from the research. The results were shown in the same sequence as the six questions which were used during the interview process. From the results it was evident which dimensions are relevant, present, and not present within the production unit. The focus of Chapter 5 is to discuss the results obtained from Chapter 4 and to make recommendations as to what management can do to instil job satisfaction within their personnel.

Chapter 5 - Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 showed the results of the research which was conducted. The sequence of the results was the same as that of the questionnaire used during the interviews (Appendix A). Chapter 5 starts with a discussion based on the results from the study as shown in Chapter 4. The conclusions reached are included and the limitations of the research are discussed. Furthermore, recommendations are made in terms of the possible directions for future research.

5.2. Discussion

It is of special interest to note that the word **happy** occurred eighteen times (happiness occurred once) during the interviews. These occurrences create questions with regard to what makes employees happy, what makes them satisfied, and what the link is between happy/ happiness and satisfaction/ satisfied. The Oxford Dictionary has the following definitions:

- Happy – “feeling or showing pleasure or contentment” (Oxford 1, 2013)
- Happiness – “the state of being happy” (Oxford 2, 2013)
- Satisfaction – “fulfilment of one’s wishes, expectations, or needs, or the pleasure derived from this” (Oxford 3, 2013)
- Satisfied – “contented, pleased” (Oxford 4, 2013)

What is then the difference between being happy and being satisfied? Are they similar feelings? Can you be happy, but not satisfied, or vice versa? Or is it impossible to have the one without the other? From the definitions of “happy” and “satisfaction” it is evident that there is indeed a link in that, as per the definition, satisfaction is about deriving pleasure whereas being happy is about showing pleasure. For this mini-dissertation the presumption is that in order for an employee to be happy, he first and foremost needs to be satisfied, i.e. satisfaction is required for happiness.

The first objective of the interviews was to determine how the respondents defined job satisfaction (Section 4.3.1). Respondents indicated that job satisfaction is primarily about achievement (8/22 comments = 36%) and their willingness to go to work (5/22 comments = 23%).

Four of the eight comments made about achievement interestingly revolved about meeting your personal needs. This is in fact extremely similar to the Oxford (Oxford 3, 2013) definition of satisfaction as it is defined as “fulfilment of one’s wishes, expectations, or needs...”. Comparing this finding to the formal definitions of job satisfaction (section 2.2) it is evident that job satisfaction is more than just a response or attitude towards the job; rather it is the pleasure derived from the job if the job fulfil one’s wishes, expectations or needs. This is confirmed by Cranny *et al.* (1992) in that job satisfaction is a comparison between that which was hoped for by the employee compared to that which really occurred. If pleasure is derived, and then shown, the employees are by definition happy with their job. Job satisfaction is therefore not just about having a response or attitude towards the job, but about having a pleasurable response or attitude as a result of the job.

Respondents indicated that job satisfaction is also about wanting or looking forward to going to work. This finding is supported by research which indicates a negative relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:173; Vieira, 2005; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii; Saari & Judge, 2004:399). Absenteeism is therefore a definitive variable indicating the level of job satisfaction.

The second objective of the interviews was to determine which dimensions the respondents deemed important for job satisfaction (section 4.3.2). A total of forty two comments were made with reference to the question “What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?” Respondents indicated that the following dimensions are important: teamwork (9/42 = 21%), leadership traits (7/42 = 17%), working conditions (5/42 = 12%), achievement (4/42 = 10%), leadership style (4/42 = 10%), recognition (4/42 = 10%), dispositional influences (3/42 = 7%), remuneration (3/42 = 7%), and the work itself (3/42 = 7%).

Teamwork is indicated as an essential dimension to the job satisfaction of employees with the highest amount of comments. When considering that the production personnel work on a four-shift cycle it is clear that they are not only extremely dependent on the successes of one another’s shifts to provide a stable and predictive platform, but also on one another for assistance during physically

challenging (like opening/ closing a 24" valve) commissioning/decommissioning activities where numerous valves needs to be opened/ closed. This is evident in the comments as five of the nine were about working together as a team. Lund's (2003) study examined the relationship between organizational cultures and job satisfaction of marketing specialists in the USA and revealed that clan (cohesiveness, participation, teamwork and a sense of family) and adhocracy (entrepreneurship, creativity and adaptability) cultures caused higher levels of job satisfaction than hierarchy (order, uniformity, rules and regulations) and market (competitiveness and goal achievement) cultures. It can therefore be presumed that in an environment where the interdependence of tasks is prevalent, such as a chemical industry production unit, a clan culture will cause higher levels of job satisfaction. In a study by Sarwar and Abugre (2013:28) in two service sector private companies in Ghana, 29.8% of respondents indicated that a good working relationship between supervisors and sub-ordinates contributed to job satisfaction. This finding by Sarwar and Abugre supports the notion that a clan culture where bonding is achieved through interpersonal cohesion improves job satisfaction.

Leadership traits were identified as the dimensions with the second most comments. The four traits identified are fairness, behaving in a trustworthy way, respecting others and being supportive. Behaving in a trustworthy way is one of the core qualities of authentic leaders (Van Staden, 2010) whereas fairness, respect, and support are ways of building the trust of employees (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:319). Trust is effectively the cornerstone required for a collaborative climate in order to develop an effective team (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:8), i.e. trust is a fundamental requirement for **teamwork**. Trust is also directly linked to job satisfaction as companies which are best to work for have been acknowledged for the amount of trust which exists between the staff and management (Maughan, 2005).

The factors influencing **working conditions** were identified as safety considerations, physical working environment, tools required for normal duties, and scheduling. Of interest is that during this study working conditions were found to be an important dimension for job satisfaction, whereas Herzberg's two-factor theory model (Figure 1, page 11) defined it as an extrinsic (hygiene) factor determining job dissatisfaction.

Hence this study supports research that found hygiene factors to be unrelated to job satisfaction (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:217) and that good working conditions did in fact contribute to job satisfaction (Soni, 2003:13; Rad and Yarmohammadian, 2006:xxi; Sutherland and Canwell, 2004:244). It is evident that the factor of tools is universal throughout different industries as 28.84% of respondents in a study of service sector private companies in Ghana also indicated that the availability of working equipment at all times could lead to job satisfaction (Sarwar & Abugre, 2013:28).

When considering that **achievement** (intrinsic factor or motivator according to Herzberg), which is a dominant attribute of a market culture, only had four out of forty two comments (compared to nine out of forty two for teamwork which is an attribute of a clan culture) the findings of this study are in line with that of Lund (2003) in that a clan/ adhocracy culture will provide more job satisfaction than a market/ hierarchy culture. Lund (2003:235) “stresses, however, that while overall job satisfaction in clan and adhocracy organizational culture types is higher than overall job satisfaction in market and hierarchy cultures, this does not imply that employee performance will be correspondingly higher”.

Even though a clan culture will provide higher levels of job satisfaction with a corresponding **leadership style** where leaders are mentors, facilitators and parent figures (Lund, 2003:235), it is of utmost importance to note that a clan culture does not necessarily provide the best business performance. Other research has shown that a market culture, where leaders are decisive and achievement orientated, provides the best business results, followed by adhocracy, clan and hierarchy (Lund, 2003:235). The research of Rad & Yarmohammadian (2006:xi) into the relationship between managers’ leadership styles and employees’ job satisfaction implicated that “managers should select the best leadership style according to the organizational culture and employees’ organizational maturity” as there was a significant correlation between the job satisfaction of employees and the leadership style.

Expressing thanks to personnel when things go well was found to be the only element contributing to **recognition** (4/42 = 10%). Sarwar and Abugre (2013:28) found through research in two service sector private companies in Ghana that 50%

of respondents took the view that recognition and motivation contributed to job satisfaction. Recognition was even found to be important to employees for job satisfaction at 12 medical institutions (hospitals) in Iran (Rad and Yarmohammadian, 2006:xxi) which indicates the universality of recognition to be an important dimension of job satisfaction across cultures, continents, and industries.

Dispositional influences accounted for only a very small percentage of comments during the interviews (3/42 = 7%). Arvey *et al.* (1991) found that personal dispositions account for only 10-30% of the variance in job satisfaction. This is supported by Soni (2003:13) who found that some personality dimensions (agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, stability, openness) are indeed related to some aspects of job satisfaction, but that overall personality dimensions explained relatively small variances in job satisfaction.

Remuneration was mentioned only three out of forty two times (7%). It can therefore be concluded that although **remuneration** is important for job satisfaction, it is not the main driver and that in general “the psychological rush from a salary increase... is usually short lived” (Soni, 2003:14). A contributing factor to this conclusion is that very few of the respondents have a tertiary qualification (12%), or even a matric certificate (22%), and therefore the probability of advancement to a higher level within the organization is currently not possible (refer to Figure 9: Demographic parameter - Highest Educational Level, page 37). Subsequently many of the respondents are solely relying on yearly wage negotiations for advancement and are fully aware of the limitations due to lack of qualifications. Another possible explanation for this is that the salaries of the respondents compares very well with others in similar jobs in other companies. Given the fact that even during the global recession no jobs were lost at the company, there is currently no dissatisfaction towards their monthly salaries. This finding is supported by Sarwar and Abugre (2013:29) whose findings showed that the majority of respondents were unhappy with their **remuneration** as compared with others in similar jobs with other companies. If the remuneration is therefore similar between companies it does not lead to dissatisfaction.

The work itself accounted for only a small percentage ($3/42 = 7\%$) which is possibly why it is often overlooked by human relations practitioners when addressing job satisfaction (Saari & Judge, 2004:396). However, the small percentage does not mean that it is not an important area contributing to job satisfaction, as one must select and place individuals in positions that are appropriate for them (Saari & Judge, 2004:397). Much can be done to garner job satisfaction by improving the nature of the work and making it as stimulating, meaningful, interesting, and challenging as possible (Saari & Judge, 2004:397; Spector, 2000:205). The research findings by Soni (2003:13) also support previous research findings that job satisfaction occurs as a result of the conditions at work and the nature of the work.

The third objective of the interviews was to determine which dimensions are currently present in the department/ organization (section 4.3.3) and what actions are required to maintain them (section 4.3.4). In terms of the dimensions which are currently present, respondents indicated that the following are important: teamwork ($6/17 = 35\%$), leadership traits ($4/17 = 24\%$), achievement ($2/17 = 12\%$), the work itself ($2/17 = 12\%$), dispositional influences ($1/17 = 6\%$), leadership style ($1/17 = 6\%$), and working conditions ($1/17 = 6\%$).

Within **teamwork** there were three elements present: competent team members, inter-team relationships, and equality. "Competent team members" is one of the eight characteristics which explain how and why effective teams develop (Larson & LaFasto, 1989:8). It should be noted that "sources of low satisfaction are associated with working with unskilled or inappropriately trained staff" (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii) indicating that there is indeed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and the competency of team members. The element of inter-team relationships is similar to interpersonal cohesion which is a bonding mechanism for a clan culture. Equality too points to a clan culture where the strategic emphasis is on developing human resources, emphasizing yet again the extremely strong correlation between a clan culture and job satisfaction as perceived by the respondents of the survey.

Competency is not only a requirement for teamwork, but also to build trust (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:319) between management and their teams. Another element

identified is that of being supportive; this element is also a requirement to build trust. A leader is supportive by helping, coaching, mentoring, and giving advice. Mentoring again points to a clan culture as it should form part of the **leadership style**. These two elements are therefore vital **leadership traits** within the production unit environment. It was indicated by one respondent that the current **leadership style** is indeed favourable, *“If the manager’s leadership style is conducive to my working environment; that will affect me a lot. The leadership style that I am experiencing is favourable.”* (GD, 29 May 2012.), indicating that there are already many of the clan culture elements present within the production unit.

The fourth objective of the interviews was to determine which dimensions are NOT currently present in the department/ organization (section 4.3.5) and what actions are required to improve on them (section 4.3.6). Respondents indicated that the following are important: recognition (3/9 = 33%), dispositional influences (2/9 = 22%), teamwork (2/9 = 22%), achievement (1/9 = 11%), and leadership traits (1/9 = 11%). It is important to note that even though some of the dimensions are the same as in section 4.3.3/ 4.3.4, the elements are not; i.e. an element of teamwork present in section 4.3.3/ 4.3.4, will not be present in section 4.3.5/ 4.3.6.

The quotation related to the **dispositional influences** of employees (section 4.3.6) was: *“You need to pick the guys’ morale up, do something to adjust the attitude, not change it. You are never going to change everybody’s attitudes. Just do something to adjust it, to make a small change that you are going to see result at. That is where you come in, you need to decide, look at the bigger picture and see what you can do. It’s not for us to tell you.”* (GD, 15 May 2012.) It suggests that it is the responsibility of management to take the lead in the process of improving the job satisfaction of employees and motivate them. This is confirmed by Tietjen and Myers (1998:226) who noted that the instilling of satisfaction within workers is a crucial task of management. It is therefore imperative that managers should focus on strategies to create job satisfaction (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226). When comparing the main intrinsic factors of achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:215) to the results of section 4.3.5, it is evident that **recognition** most definitely needs to be focused on as part of a strategy to improve the employees’ job satisfaction.

With reference to teamwork the elements that need to be focused on, are improving ownership and improving support by the first-line managers or Foremen. By being supportive and providing guidance, the Foreman will also increase the trust of the personnel; this indicates that first-line managers play a vital role in the job satisfaction of employees. They should therefore “see” themselves as part of the management team and it is vital that they are held accountable for managerial work (Sparkes & Van Vuuren, 2010).

Two elements were not present with reference to leadership traits and as such they need to be improved upon. The first is communication - team members need to be informed about the vision, strategy, and decisions made. A possible contributing factor to this is that not all of the Foremen provide feedback to their teams after meetings between themselves and the Area Manager. It is therefore imperative that the minutes of such meetings be distributed to all team members; if not by the Foreman, then by e-mail or even displaying it on the notice boards. The second element to be focused on, is that of listening. This is a quality of an authentic leader and therefore one need to be aware that sometimes it is important to stop, pause and listen to an employee, even if there is a rush to get to an appointment. If it is not possible, the leader should as a minimum standard get back to the employee as soon as possible to continue the conversation. This can even be done by setting up an appointment.

5.3. Conclusion

The findings of the research as they relate to the objectives set in Chapter 1 are summarized below:

- The primary objective was to qualitatively investigate and measure those factors or dimensions that have the greatest impact on the job satisfaction of the employees at the chemical industry production unit.

From the literature, though, there is tremendous uncertainty as to what exactly it is that makes an employee happy, and it is clear that in some companies different approaches are required to achieve success as employees’ “personal characteristics were significant predictors of job satisfaction”

(Okpara, 2004). It is important to note that the presence of various factors or dimensions can create job satisfaction, but that the absence thereof does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction. Hence, if employees are not satisfied, it should not be assumed that they are dissatisfied; there is simply a lack of satisfaction. Vice versa, if there is no dissatisfaction, it does not mean that there is satisfaction; there is simply no dissatisfaction (Hertzberg, 1968).

When an organization/ department/ manager initiate a measurement or survey of employees, it is very important to provide and act on the feedback. If this is not done, it will actually in the long run decrease the job satisfaction of employees. Hence, if employees give their time for a survey, they expect to receive feedback, i.e. they did not give their time to receive nothing in return (BlessingWhite, 2011). This is essential in the prevention and limitation of questionnaire toxicity. Questionnaires are time consuming; if no feedback is received, it was deemed as a waste of time.

It is evident that there **is no absolute dimension** that will provide job satisfaction. This is because very few, if any, of the dimensions stand alone in determining the job satisfaction of employees, e.g. “principled leadership” is one of the core characteristics of “teamwork” (section 2.4.1.1, page 13), and also indicates the importance of two of the leadership traits (section 2.4.1.2, page 13) - honesty and fairness. In addition, “a collaborative climate where trust is the cornerstone” (teamwork, section 2.4.1.1, page 13) can only be accomplished by the authentic leader quality of “trusting others and behaving in a trustworthy way” (leadership traits, section 2.4.1.2, page 13). Hence it is clear that the dimensions do not act interdependently to create job satisfaction and it is therefore no wonder that the topic of job satisfaction is even now, after decades of research, still debated amongst Human Relations Practitioners (Saari & Judge, 2004:395).

This study concludes that job satisfaction is a conglomeration of MANY dimensions, with no absolutes, which need to be present in the correct mix in order for an employee to be happy or satisfied. To focus on only one dimension will provide little success. It is proposed that an integrated strategy

with the most common dimensions (in this instance: teamwork, leadership traits, and working conditions) are followed to establish a working environment that is conducive to satisfied employees. One of the most important dimensions is that of the employees themselves in that ultimately 10-30% (Arvey *et al.*, 1991) of job satisfaction depends on the employee. It is therefore imperative to employ personnel with the right characteristics that will be able to fit in in the culture of the organization.

- One of the secondary objectives was to identify dimensions which are currently present within the production unit and what can be done to maintain these dimensions.

The two dominant dimensions of which certain components were present are teamwork and leadership traits.

In an environment where the tasks are interdependent and the individuals rely not only on their colleagues who are on the same shift, but also on other shifts, teamwork and the facilitation thereof is crucial for their success and achievement. Although there are many factors contributing to teamwork, the one that can definitely not be ignored is the competency of team members as the lack thereof will not only lead to dissatisfaction but also impact negatively on the safety of all personnel. Training and re-training of employees should therefore be of paramount importance. Leaders/ managers should continuously organize this as well as seminars to increase and sharpen the skills of employees (Sarwar & Abugre, 2013:29).

In addition, leaders/ managers should strive towards being authentic, as their authenticity (leadership traits) will most likely contribute more to the job satisfaction of the employees than their leadership style.

In terms of organizational culture it is evident that there is an extremely strong correlation between the job satisfaction of the employees and the characteristics of a clan culture. In order to not only enhance job satisfaction, but also performance, it will be required of management to combine the

attributes of both a clan (for job satisfaction) and market (for business performance) cultures.

- Another secondary objective was to identify dimensions which are currently not present and the actions that are required to improve these dimensions.

The main dimension which is currently not present, is recognition. This conclusion compares extremely well with a recent quantitative survey done throughout the chemical industry complex, of which the production unit forms part of. One of the areas for improvement which were found is “Leadership’s commitment to create a great place to work for, including amongst others a lack of appropriate recognition and praise.” (Chemical Industry HR.)

In addition, ownership needs to be focused on enhancing teamwork and group members need to be involved in the decision making process. The communication should also be improved so that all employees are informed about the vision, strategy, and decisions made.

5.4. Recommendations

Below is a summary of the actions required not only to maintain important dimensions for job satisfaction, but also to continuously improve.

What to look for when appointing personnel:

- Dispositional influences of the candidate
- Values of the candidate
- Will the candidate be able to fit in with the organizational culture

What to do on a continuous basis:

- Ensure that the employee has the right tools for the job.
- Determine the gaps and train individuals in order to have a person that is competent to do his job. Have a personal development plan for all employees, not only to improve competency, but also to develop them for future opportunities. This will ensure that both the vision and strategy of the individuals and organization are fulfilled (Robbins, 1998).

- Have regular meetings where all employees participate; include all employees in the decision making process as far as possible. This will also serve as teambuilding because then all the employees feel like they are part of a team. These are the perfect sessions to use as a platform for communication between management and personnel so as to inform them about issues like strategies, projects, and challenges. It is important that the personnel understand the vision, buy into it, and be transparent when communicating information. The sessions must result in the development of concrete goals followed by **actual actions**, as participation alone does not bring about change (Saari & Judge, 2004:402).
- Be visible! Do not only go to the employees when things go wrong; also go to them just to have chats about general matters. Focus on “catching” personnel doing things right.
- Be authentic! It is evident from the research conducted with all the members of the production team that there are no absolutes to what provides job satisfaction; however, it is evident that there are some golden threads. Fair and just treatment, openness, including personnel in identifying and solving problems, recognition, and valuing employees all contribute to a satisfactory workplace.
- Give employees work that is worthwhile. They must know “why” they do things and be encouraged to make a difference.
- Identify which is in/out of your subordinates’ control. Coach them on what is in their control. Support them on that which is out of their control and devise a strategy to fix it.
- When should you give recognition? When someone goes the extra mile? Have clear, fair and transparent standards for recognition (how do you define the extra mile) and give recognition to the person in front of his colleagues to ensure that it is a special occasion.
- Regularly monitor the absenteeism of employees as there is definitely a negative correlation between absenteeism and job satisfaction (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:173; Vieira, 2005; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006:xii; Saari & Judge, 2004:399).

- “Hold first-line managers accountable for managerial work.” (Sparkes & Van Vuuren, 2010.)

5.5. Limitations

The following were limitations of the research:

- The research was conducted in a specific production unit. This makes it difficult to generalize the findings to other production units within the production complex and impossible in relation to the total organization.
- Due to the qualitative nature of the research, personnel characteristics such as the temperament of the individuals and cultural influences could not be measured.

5.6. Future Directions

A topic for future research which will no doubt become more important when considering the amount of time, effort and money that is spent to recruit candidates (not to mention to train and, if required, discipline an employee) is that of how interviews should be conducted so as to unearth the employees' dispositional and cultural influences. Even though Arvey *et al.* (1991) found that personal dispositions account for only 10-30% of the variance in job satisfaction, it is most definitely beneficial to “work” with and motivate employees who are already, by default, 30% satisfied compared to employees who, due to their dispositions, are 0% satisfied. If all the situational factors are then focused on by management (which can account for up to 60% of the variance in job satisfaction) the result will be employees who are 90% (30% + 60%) satisfied and not 60% (0% + 60%) satisfied. By achieving a greater understanding of the employees' dispositional and cultural influences, a better and more informed decision would be possible. In addition it will become crucial to gauge whether or not the employees will be inclined to not only be satisfied with their job, but also how they will fit in with the organizational culture and if they share the same set of values that the company aspire to.

A dimension that created more questions than answers during the study is that of “Recognition”. From both this study and literature it is apparent that it is indeed a dimension required for and contributing to job satisfaction (Herzberg *et al.*, 1959). However, what is unclear is exactly how management should go about recognizing

their employees. Is the pay cheque every month sufficient or is an incentive such as an above average yearly increase for exceptional performance required? Do employees not perhaps require on-the-spot recognition? The creation and implementation of a recognition system to satisfy most, if not all, of the employees most definitely require more research so as to provide guidelines for management and organizations to develop effective strategies.

Appendix A

Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

What the textbooks say

"Formally defined, **job satisfaction** is an effective or emotional response toward various facets of one's job" (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008:170)

Some background info

- "The instilling of satisfaction within workers is a crucial task of management" (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226).
- "The challenge lies therein as to how management should go about to realize the job satisfaction of the staff as it is "not the simple result of an incentive program" (Tietjen & Myers, 1998:226).
- Both Kreitner and Kinicki (2008:170) and Vieira (2005) note that several studies have attempted to identify the determinants for job satisfaction but that there is no agreed consensus as to the exact dimensions.

Job satisfaction dimensions

From literature there are numerous dimensions that constitute job satisfaction. Some of these are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achievement• Age• Benefits• Communication• Co-workers• Development opportunities/ Possibility of growth• Educational level• Experience• Gender• Hours of work• Innovative environment• Interesting jobs/ Nature of the job/ Work itself• Leadership style	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of trust between staff and management• Life events• Pay/ Wage rate/ Income/ Salary• Promotions/ Advancement• Rank of the employee• Respect which leadership inspire• Recognition• Responsibility• Skills match/ mismatch• Sociable work environment• Supervision• Teamwork• Union membership• Work conditions
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Questions for discussion

- What do you think is job satisfaction?

- What dimensions are important for job satisfaction?

- What dimensions are currently present in the department/organization?

- What can we do to maintain the dimensions which are currently present?

- What dimensions are currently not present in the department/organization?

- What can be done to improve on the dimensions which are not present?

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