



THE EFFECT OF FIVE FRENCH AND RAVEN'S MANAGERIAL POWER BASES ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION: A REVIEW AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction is an attitude of employees towards their job. It is important in business organizations because it increases individual and organizational effectiveness. Employee job satisfaction mostly is attributed to demographic characteristics, employee behaviours and psychological capital. The effect of managerial power on job satisfaction has not been explicit among antecedents of job satisfaction in management literatures. The paper objective was to explore the effect of five French and Raven's managerial power bases on employee job satisfaction in organizations of various backgrounds. The paper adopted a qualitative methodology by reviewing 13 empirical literatures published online from different parts of the world. The paper found that referent, reward and expert power bases used by managers mostly had significant positive effect on employee job satisfaction. It was also found that coercive and legitimate power bases had mixed findings regarding their effects on employee job satisfaction. While coercive and legitimate powers had positive effect on employee job satisfaction in some few organizations, several others felt the negative effect of legitimate and coercive powers on job satisfaction. Based on the perspective of literature review, the paper concluded that reward, referent and expert managerial power bases lead in having positive effect on job satisfaction. The paper provided implication for managers in Tanzania to sustain employee job satisfaction through usage of power bases by French and Raven.

KEYWORDS: Managers, expert, power, employee, satisfaction

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Employee job satisfaction is beneficial to the organization because it increases organizational and employee job performance (Akansimse, 2019; Korir & Ndegwa, 2020; Rabi'u *et al.*, 2019). Job satisfaction is conceptualized as an attitude of employees towards their job (Carmen *et al.*, 2019; Ranaweera, 2018). In other words, job satisfaction manifest when employee show attitudes of contentment on the job and its related facets in terms of recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, growth, job security, working conditions, interpersonal relations and management of the organization (Msuya, 2016; Noeli, 1976).

Antecedents mostly provided to account for job satisfaction of employees in the organizations range from socio-demographic characteristics, employee behaviours and psychological capital which together involve issues like healthy lifestyle behaviours, character strengths, self-efficacy and hope (Dai & Akey-Torku, 2020; Shuvro *et al.*, 2020; Zaidi *et al.*, 2018). However, the role of managers' social power on employee job satisfaction has not been explicitly included

among such common antecedents of employee job satisfaction. Power is a reality in organizational contexts where individuals particularly managers use it to achieve the organizational goals (Ahmadi, 2016).

Managers' power can be conceived as an ability of the manager in influencing the behaviour of employees to perform the tasks which would not have been performed in the absence of power (Håvold & Håvold, 2019). Power enables managers to gain staff compliance on responsibility, duties and task performance (Ahmadi, 2016). Some scholars like Giurge *et al.* (2019) considers power from a negative standpoint by looking at it as a means in which managers dominate and impose self-interests on employees. These conceptions on power reveal that the five power bases introduced by French and Raven (1959) can lead to specific employee reactions which may influence the level of employee job satisfaction. These power bases include referent, expert, reward, coercive and legitimate power (Raven, 2008). Managers in organizations use these power bases to exercise power during their interaction with employees (Hewat, 1992; Meng *et al.*, 2014).



Despite the fact that managers' power is based on such five forms of power bases, there is dearth of information on five original French and Raven's social power bases in the management literatures (Elias, 2008). Further systematic information on how each of the five French and Raven's power bases affect job satisfaction can permit managers to undertake reforms in their power use or uphold others for realizing managerial effectiveness (Lee & Tui Low, 2008). Therefore, the paper seeks to explore the effect of five French and Raven's managerial power bases on employee job satisfaction based on the literature perspectives. The paper will increase availability of information on the effect of power bases on job satisfaction and provide implication that can be drawn by managers in Tanzania to sustain employee job satisfaction through the power bases.

2.0.METHODOLOGY

The paper employed a qualitative methodology in which the authors conducted a literature review. Before conducting a desk review, the author started with online literature search. A

total of 45 pieces of literature were retrieved from internet and stored on personal computer for later selection and review. All the literature had been published on themes relating to French and Raven managers' power bases. Eventually, 13 pieces of literature out of 45 were selected for review because they had relevant information sought by this paper.

The reviewed pieces of literature were published between 2010 and 2021 which presented findings from a single decade of research on the influence of power bases on employee job satisfaction. Nine out of 13 empirical literatures reviewed stipulated countries where the findings were obtained and such countries included the United Kingdom, USA, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and Ethiopia. During their review, a summary of information regarding findings on the influence of power bases on job satisfaction was prepared in Table 3 on the appendix. A discussion on the findings from the literature was conducted simultaneously with citation to support or contradict findings obtained from the review of literature. Tables 1 and 2 attempt to operationalize the variables used in this paper.

Table 1: Operationalization of Job satisfaction as a Dependent Variable

Major Variable	Common Dimensions Used by Researchers	Description	Instruments
Employee Job Satisfaction	Job Security	Satisfied with job security and tenure	A variety of instruments prepared on Likert Scales by past scholars usually are used by different researchers
	Recognition	Satisfied with recognition	
	Growth	Satisfied with growth opportunities	
	Work itself	Satisfied with work itself	
	Management	Satisfied with manager	
	Company policy	Satisfied with company policies and procedures	
	Co-workers	Satisfied with co-worker relations	
	Physical Working Conditions	Satisfied with the physical working conditions	

Source: Compiled from Various Literatures

Table.2: Five French and Raven Power Bases as Independent Variables

Major Variable	Common Dimensions Used by Researchers	Description	Instrument for Five Power Bases
Managerial Power Bases	Referent Power Base	Referent power is considered as an informal power base exercised by managers through respect and admiration by employees due to some vital values and model actions displayed by managers	The Leader Power Inventory by Rahim (1988) mostly used by researchers
	Expert Power Base	This power base involves knowledge possessed by managers on issues like projects and programmes due to	



Reward Power Base	education or experiences This power base involves the capability of managers to give reward such as pay increase, promotion, recognition, bonuses and awards in cases of change of behaviour or compliance
Coercive Power Base	Coercive power involves managers' use of threats and punishments on employees who fail to show compliance
Legitimate Power Base	Legitimate power stems from position authority in which codes, standards and procedures are applied by manager to gain compliance among subordinates

Source: Compiled from Various Literatures

3.0. FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

3.1. Power Bases Associated with Employee Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

One study by Megheirkouni (2018) in United Kingdom's Sports Organizations revealed that there was positive relationship between the *type of power bases* and coaches' job satisfaction. Another study by Dirik and Inan (2018) among 380 white collar job holders found that personal power of *expert* was positively and significantly related with job satisfaction as summarized in Table 1 on the appendix. A review of empirical studies qualitatively by Haffer (2017) found similar results by showing that *referent and expert* power bases contributed on satisfaction and performance. A quantitative study using multiple regression by Carmarillo (2019) on perception of Principal's power sources in a foreign context found that *reward and expert* power bases had significant relationship on satisfaction with supervision job facet as displayed in Table 1 on the appendix.

In similar vein, Idrus (2020) conducted a study using regression data analysis among 150 employees in public school settings and found that *reward power* was significantly related with subordinates' job satisfaction. A survey conducted by Bağcı (2015) among 400 employees working in 27 textile industries found a significant positive relationship between *reward power* and job satisfaction. Another study by Junaimah et al (2015) found that *reward, referent and expert powers* were positively related to employee's satisfaction in terms of supervision in the organizations.

Furthermore, a qualitative review of secondary data by Lunenburg (2012) found that generally, the personal power (*referent and expert*) were strongly related to employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Further study conducted by Gebreegziabher (2015) found that *referent and expert* power bases were positively correlated to job satisfaction among 188 academic staff in tertiary educational institution.

Surprisingly, there are some few researchers like Nooradi et al (2017) who found that harsh power bases including *coercive and authority (legitimate) powers* were predicting employee job satisfaction in school settings. Others like Cubay (2020) found a significant correlation between all five French and Raven's power bases and job satisfaction among teaching staff in a school setting.

Despite the fact that some few studies have linked all French and Raven's power bases to job satisfaction, Peyton et al (2019) found that coercive and legitimate power bases were negatively related to optimal job attitude among 1,103 workers in the United States of America. This study supports many others above which found a negative relationship between coercive and legitimate power bases. Another study by Faiz (2013) found that *coercive power* had negative influence on job satisfaction among employees in Public and Private sector.

4.0. DISCUSSION

The paper found that managers' referent power base had positive effect on employee job satisfaction. As managers are admired by employees because of their model actions they influence them to attain higher job satisfaction as suggested by Elmazi (2018). These findings support those by Cenkcı (2018) which found a positive impact of managers' referent power base on employee compliance and attitudes such as job satisfaction among professional technology professionals. The paper further found that managers' reward power base also had positive effect on employee job satisfaction in many literatures. These results were consistent with those found by researchers such as Burke and Wilcox (1971) in 1970's. Managers' reward power based on awards, pay increase and promotion increased employee self-sense of appreciation while achieving favourable job satisfaction levels.

Expert power base also had positive effect on employee job satisfaction as found from the reviewed literatures. As managers expressed knowledge and their expertise gained from



training and experiences as expressed by Raven (2008), they increased job satisfaction of their employees. The findings supported those found by Pierro et al (2013) which had shown from other literatures that expert was one among the soft power bases which was received favourably and linked to positive individual and organizational outcomes.

It was further found from the literature that coercive power had negative effect on employee job satisfaction. The findings from secondary data sources supported other scholars such as Wantaate (2017) which also found that coercive power base had resultant negative effects such as increasing anger, and employee resentment during its use by managers. But surprisingly, some researchers particularly in school settings had found a positive effect of coercive power base on job satisfaction showing a mixed experience. The findings suggest that probably the influence of coercive power bases on job satisfaction depended on the nature of industry where they were applied by managers. Managers in an industry which had high work pressure, high rate of sabotage and under-performance could apply threats, punishment and sanctions to deal against employee misbehaviour to rescue job satisfaction of many other effective employees.

Furthermore, the paper found that legitimate power base had mixed findings on employee job satisfaction like coercive counterpart. The findings from literature partly supported Burke and Wilcox (1971) who found moderate positive effect between legitimate power base and job satisfaction. Mixed findings on the effect of legitimate power base suggested that managers' emphasis of rule, regulations, standards and policies could influence job satisfaction based on the nature of job demands. In organizations where rules and standards were important for success, managers could promote job satisfaction of their staff by employing legitimate power bases unlike jobs which did not require high level of rules and regulations.

5.0. IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS IN TANZANIA

Based on the findings by this paper, it implies that managers such as directors, presidents, human resource managers, heads of departments and supervisors in Tanzania should use more referent, reward and expert power bases to enhance employee job satisfaction. Managers should attempt as much as possible to use referent power by acting as models and insisting on good virtues such as respect of others, trust, keeping promise and treating staff equally which will draw admiration from employees and hence increase level of job satisfaction.

Managers in work organizations in Tanzania should also use more of reward power base to influence positive attitudes. Provision of pay increase, promotion, conducive work environment, awards and recognition programmes and removal of things not desired by employees as suggested by Cummings(2017) will increase staff job satisfaction in Tanzanian organizations like hotels, factories, private and public institutions.

Use of expert power base also should be paramount in instigating job satisfaction in organizations operating in Tanzania. Managers should display capacity of knowledge and skills of tasks and activities as components of expert power base (Nzeyimana, n.d.). Persistent learning by managers will accumulate knowledge and skills interpreted by employees as good for sustaining their job satisfaction.

Regarding implications from legitimate power, managers have a legal right in their position to make others feel responsible to meet managerial expectations (Sorm & Gunbayi, 2018) . This power by managers will involve issuance of codes and standards suggested by Warren (1969). The paper considers that managers who might be more involved in legitimate power use during their interaction with most educated personnel may lead to job dissatisfaction. Managers in organizations in Tanzania may use this power base but they are required to use it more cautiously to sustain employee job satisfaction.

Findings further imply that managers in organizations in Tanzania should avoid coercion except when circumstances compel the use of coercive power (Green, 1999). It can be used in organizations where dishonest, corruption and theft are rampant among employees. Dealing against such employees by giving punishments can maintain job satisfaction of trustworthy and diligent employees. However, it is emphasized that coercion should not be used in an hostile way because it can lead to job dissatisfaction, anxiety and demotivation (Yeşilbaş & Akyol, 2019).

6.0. CONCLUSION

The five French and Raven's power bases were introduced almost in the past sixty three years ago. The five power bases as originally coined are still relevant today because managers and power are inseparable in organizations. The paper has explored the effect of the five French and Raven power bases on employee job satisfaction. It was found that reward, referent and expert power bases were mostly having positive effect on employee job satisfaction in organizations. Despite the fact that the paper found mixed results regarding the effect of coercive and legitimate power on job satisfaction, the paper believes that possibly moderate use of legitimate power and justifiable coercive power use could maintain job satisfaction of employees. However, the deep-rooted legitimate and coercive powers by managers could devastate employee job satisfaction. The paper also drew implications for managers when using the power bases to sustain job satisfaction in organizations in Tanzania.

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Table 3: A Summary of Findings from Empirical Literature

S/No.	Author(s) and Year	Methodology	Types of Organizations	Results
1.	Megheirkouni (2018)	Quantitative methods approach	Sports Organizations in United Kingdom	The results revealed that there is a positive relationship between power bases and job satisfaction
2.	Dirik and Inan (2018)	Correlational study	Organizations employing 380 white collar jobs	Positional power is (legitimate and coercive) is associated with lower levels of job satisfaction especially when employees or followers perceive higher levels of organizational politics. Expert and referent power is positively related with job satisfaction
3.	Haffer (2017)	Documentary review	Organizations of various backgrounds	The best source of job satisfaction is referent or expert power
4.	Carmarillo (2019)	Quantitative methodology using multiple linear regression	Schools	Principal's power sources of reward and expert are related positively with supervision satisfaction



S/No.	Author(s) and Year	Methodology	Types of Organizations	Results
5.	Idrus (2020)	using regression data analysis among 150 teachers'	Public Schools in the City of Jambia, Indonesia	reward power was significantly related with subordinates job satisfaction while coercive power influenced job dissatisfaction.
6.	Bağci (2015)	Survey using correlation and regression analysis of data	400 employees working in 27 textile enterprises in Denizli province, Turkey	reward power predicted employees' job satisfaction significantly
7	Junaimah et al (2015)	Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used to analyze the hypotheses	Data was collected from 180 respondents who were working in organizations located in Penang, Malaysia	The result indicated that reward, referent and expert powers were positively related to employee's job satisfaction with supervision
8.	Lunenburg (2012)	Qualitative	Used Secondary data sources and not organizations	personal power (expert and referent). Generally, the personal sources of power are more strongly related to employees' job satisfaction, and organizational commitment,
9	Gebreegziabher (2015)	Quantitative Correlational study	188 academic staff at Wolaita Sodo University, Ethiopia	Referent and expert power bases have moderate positive correlation with employee job satisfaction
10.	Cubay (2020)	Correlational study	Schools in First Congressional District of Bohol in Philippines	Significant relationship between overall five bases of power with teachers' job satisfaction
11.	Faiz (2013)	Quantitative methodology	130 respondents from Private and Public Colleges in Attock district, Pakistan	Coercive power negatively influences job satisfaction of employees in public and Private sector.



S/No.	Author(s) and Year	Methodology	Types of Organizations	Results
12.	Peyton et al (2019)	Survey	1,103 employees in various organizations in USA	Hard power (coercive and legitimate) negatively affect job attitudes
13.	Nooradi et al (2017)	Correlation study	Schools in the City of Golbahar among 700 teachers in Iran	Hard powers like coercive and authority powers were leading to teachers' job satisfaction