

Effect of Relational Governance on Job Satisfaction: Empirical Evidence of Supportive Staff of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT: This paper attempted to identify the effect of Relational Governance on Job Satisfaction of the supportive staff of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. This paper was based on primary data collected from 40 supportive staff who are working in the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling. The study tested three hypothesis between three dimensions of relational governance (i.e. Flexibility, Inter-personal Trust and Cooperation) and job satisfaction. The results revealed that these three dimensions of relational governance have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction of the supportive staff of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.

Keywords -Cooperation, Flexibility, Inter-personal Trust, Job Satisfaction, Relational Governance.

INTRODUCTION

Relational governance is a corporate governance structure used to manage the relationships between two parties [1], [2]. The concept of governance refers the coordinating mechanisms which reduce transaction costs [3]. Williamson (1979) [4] takes up the term governance in his theory of transaction costs to describe alternative forms of governance mechanism between market and hierarchy. In his theory, governance designates the coordinating mechanism of those individual and organizational actions, different from hierarchies and the market, through which the construction of the social order is achieved [4]. As explained by Gil (2009) [5], relational governance refers to the kind of governance in which the personal relations become heavily intertwined with the economic exchange. These personal relations refer to social norms such as trust, cooperation and solidarity, among the members of network. Far from being an isolated affair, relational contract theorists advocate that it is present in every contract, as “*all economic exchanges happen in a relational context*” [5]. In these relationally-governed exchanges, obligations, pledges and expectations are enforced through the promotion of noneconomic, sociological norms such as flexibility, solidarity and information exchange [6].

Job satisfaction is one of the most studied fields of human resource management and the wide interest in psychology research [7]. Job satisfaction can be seen in two different ways: on one hand, it is used as a measurement for well-being of employees [8]. In this respect, job satisfaction displays the emotional state of the employees that is also frequently used as an indicator in workplace health promotion projects to develop specific interventions [9]. On the other hand, job satisfaction is seen in a dynamic process as a predictor and outcome variable for other job-related factors in the direction of performance [10], e.g., work engagement. Since engaged employees are more productive [11], organizations want to explore the ways and means to improve the level of job satisfaction of their employees. Higher job satisfaction can be a goal for organizations to enhance their performance, but for the employees by themselves, it is of deep interest to enhance their own quality of life. Relational governance may lead to achieve employment performance through a better understanding between manager and workers. However, dearth of empirical evidence to understand how relational governance affect the job satisfaction particularly in Sri Lankan public universities is a major hindrance to make policies. Therefore, this study attempted to explore the effect of relational governance on job satisfaction of supportive staff of a public university in Sri Lanka.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The study reviewed the theoretical literature which helps to study the effect of relational governance on job satisfaction. Relational governance explain using Relational Contract Theory and the job satisfaction is explained by using Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory and Locke's Value Theory.

Relational Contract Theory: According to MacNeil (1985) [12], exchange relationship is a behavioral aspect of contracting and the most of his work is related to the social environment and behavioral norms. Meanwhile, Macaulay (1963) [13] defined that relational governance is simply occurs based on the trust between parties. It may be said that empirics are on their way of perceiving the importance of this concept, which has had significantly longer persuasion scholarship in law and social sciences and classical contract laws [14], [15].

A relational contract or a self-enforcing agreement so rooted within parties in particular circumstances while it contains some elements which can't be enforced by a third party, such as court and contains absolute elements where third parties are unable to verify whether contractual obligations have been met [16], [17]. Indeed, relational contracts are frequently based upon unwritten codes and conducts of informal agreements, for economists it can be create indefinite situations that makes a doubt on relational elements which referred to the interpretation and the establishment of contracts [17].

Relational governance emphasizes the role of repeated interactions which lead to mutual understanding, social identification, and trust [18]. Poppo and Zenger (2002) [6] states that relational governance basically hinges on trust, cooperation or cooperative spirit, open communication and sharing of information, and dependence. The relational view emphasizes non-contractual elements of the relationships such as trust [16], reciprocity and flexibility (Heide, 1994) as safeguards against opportunism. Many researchers [1], [6], [14], [15] have argued that the effectiveness of these relational mechanisms depends on the level of exchange hazards in the relationship. This study has recognized Trust, Flexibility and Cooperation as major determinants of relational governance based on some empirical findings.

Trust plays an important role in facilitating economics exchanges in some important cases and outcomes of the business world, economics including academics disciplines and marketing [14], [19]. Trust mainly can be defined under two categories which is inter-personal trust and inter-organizational trust, where with the development of inter personal trust develops and generates the inter-organizational trust by time [20]. Inter-personal trust refers to the belief of patient that the network member is creditable (honest, flexible, fair and in no circumstance will purposely do anything to damage the relationship).

Heide and John (1992) [21] define flexibility as the practice of making necessary modifications in favor of the disadvantaged party. Flexibility means not always working according to the contract, which may be written or verbal. Flexibility drives exchange parties to work out a new deal when some unexpected situation arises. Under flexibility, exchange parties adapt to changing circumstances rather than hold each other to the original terms. If one party is unable to fulfill an obligation, the other party would make allowances. Flexibility can exist in two forms: a) Flexibility in response to environmental uncertainty, and b) Flexibility in response to behavioral uncertainty. Flexibility reflects the desire of the parties to adjust the practices and policies in responses for unexpected or changing circumstances due to uncertain situation, to continue activities for the future, environment, planning, and adjustments are required [21]. Many researchers suggest the flexibility allows for ongoing planning and continuously adjusting the obligations between the partners, while a more rigid approach leads to certain conditions of work between teams [21].

Cooperation refers to the tendency to work as a team in order to fulfill common interests [21]. When exchange parties realize they have common interests, they develop a team spirit which leads them to consider each other's success as their own. This encourages them to invest a cooperative effort in the relationship. Heide and John (1992) [21] defines cooperation as a situation where partners highly value the relationship and therefore do their best to maintain it while refraining from any activity that might harm the relationship. Cooperation is defined as task support. Task support is the degree to which people must work with supervisors, co-workers, clients, etc. providing help, active support and cooperation to individuals when performing their task [15]. According to Nelson (2008) [23], cooperation is "*a protocol that allows you not to get in each other's way*" as you work. He uses the example of an assembly line and reaches the conclusion that "*a cooperative enterprise could in some way be done, as long as you had enough time or other resources, by a single person.*"

Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction has been defined and measured both as a global construct and as a concept with multiple dimensions or facets [23]. Locke (1969) [24] define job satisfaction as a sense of personal growth most often measured by the extent of new challenges and learning situations experienced. The research conducted by Herzberg determined what people actually want from their jobs. The respondents had to describe work situations in which they felt good (satisfied) or bad (dissatisfied) in their jobs. The feedback received was then categorized into satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The characteristics related to job satisfaction included advancement, recognition, the work itself, achievement, growth and responsibilities. Herzberg referred to these characteristics as motivators. The characteristics related to dissatisfaction, which included working conditions, supervision, interpersonal relationships, company policy and administration were referred to as “hygiene” factors [25].

According to Schermerhorn (1993) [26], Herzberg’s two-factor theory is an important frame of reference for managers who want to gain an understanding of job satisfaction and related job performance issues. Schermerhorn asserts that Herzberg’s two-factor theory is a useful reminder that there are two important aspects of all jobs: what people do in terms of job tasks (job content), and the work setting in which they do it (job context). Schermerhorn suggests that managers should attempt to always eliminate poor hygiene sources of job dissatisfaction in the workplace and ensure building satisfier factors into job content to maximize opportunities for job satisfaction. This theory is relevant and significant to this study in that it recognizes that employees have two categories of needs that operate in them and that both should be addressed. This theory therefore can guide a researcher in establishing determinants of employees’ satisfaction in Telecommunication sector in Kenya.

III. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES

Strong positive relationships have been observed between organizational commitment and desirable work outcomes such as performance, adaptability and JS [27]. Research results indicate that satisfied employees tend to be committed to an organization, and employees who are satisfied and committed more likely to attend work, stay with an organization, arrive at work on time, perform well and engage in behaviors helpful to the organization. According to [28], a strong correlation has been empirically established between job satisfaction, employee commitment and retention. Organizational commitment is most probably affected by factors such as type and variety of work, the autonomy involved in the job, the level of responsibility associated with the job, the quality of the social relationship at work, rewards and remuneration, and the opportunities for promotion and career advancement in the company [29].

According to social network theory, relationship with colleagues occurs in a network where people are dots and relationships are lines. Solid lines connect people who have a strong relationship and dashed lines connect pairs of people who have a weak relationship. This implies that individuals who do better are somehow better connected [30]. Relationship with colleagues can be defined as follows: “*the social and working transactions with others on the job*” [31]. There are different means of creating job satisfaction: promotional opportunities, interesting work, supportive supervisor and friendly peers. According to Herzberg [31] there are three different groups of the relationship at the workplace: relationship with peers, relationship with supervisor and relationship with subordinates.

Ferguson et al. [32] examined the effect of relational governance on the performance of financial partnerships to compare biotechnology manager assessments of their financial and non-financial partnerships. They have conducted a structural interview to collect data and the respondents were chief executive, operations or financial officers of 79 emerging biotechnology companies and 36 lead investors in Germany, Canada, and France. They found that relational governance is positively associated with performance. Relational governance was measured by relational norms such as flexibility, information sharing, solidarity and fairness, and performance was measured by overall effectiveness and partnership benefits. Among the four dimensions of Relational governance, communication (information sharing) was found as the most predictive variable on partnership performance [32].

In examining the relationship between contractual governance and relational governance on firm financial performance, scholars Boateng et al. (2017) [33] have investigated a study from a survey of 2432 management and non-management employees of family business through China & Ghana. They used measurement returns on asset to analyze the family firm’s overall performance. Relational governance viewed as a composite factor with three fundamental norms namely, open communication, trust and cooperation. Hu, Zhu, & Pang (2002) and Wang & Gu (2004) study represented that relational governance is a kind of internal management within a Chinese family enterprise, which is based on different degrees of strength of the

relationships between employees and business owners and managers rather than explicitly stipulated, formally institutionalized regulations. Yang (2009) believes that relational governance has three patterns: family-based governance, diversity-orderly governance, and patriarchal authority governance. Heide & John (1992) [21] said that relational governance is a governance pattern, which is based on shared goals and which channels partners use to protect specific assets and to maintain cooperation through relational norms (e.g. Trust, Commitment, Cooperation, Joint problem solving) and Joint actions.

Gërdoçi, Skreli, & Imami (2015) [34] was conducted a survey targeting orchard farmers specialized in apple production. Particular attention is paid to the types of relations between agricultural producers and marketing channel chosen by them, distinguishing between big wholesalers, local collectors and exporters, longer term relations, commitment and trust, and contracting along the value chain. To enhance the sustainability of business relationships, trust, coordination and reliability are to be considered as important determinants for relational governance.

Thus, many scholars emphasized that relational governance has a positive influence on JS. Therefore, the study hypothesizes that;

H1: There is a positive relationship between Flexibility and Job satisfaction of supportive staff in public universities in Sri Lanka.

H2: There is a positive relationship between Trust and Job satisfaction of supportive staff in public universities in Sri Lanka.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Cooperation and Job satisfaction of supportive staff in public universities in Sri Lanka.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study is an explanatory study because it attempts to explain the relationship between two variables i.e. relational governance and JS. The unit of analysis for this research is supportive staff in public Universities in Sri Lanka. Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka out of fifteen public universities is selected to conduct the survey. Primary data are collected from the supportive staff of the Sabaragamuwa University. 40 of academic supportive staff are randomly selected out of 354 supportive staff to represent 10 percent sample. Data were collected for a structural questionnaire which was divided into three sections. The section one contained profiles of the respondents. Section two addressed questions related to relational governance & the section three addressed questions related to job satisfaction.

The data analysis was aided by Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS version 3. The study assessed measurement model evaluating reliability and validity of each variables. To determine the relationship between relational governance and JS (structural model), path confidents was used. Further, SPSS version 25 also used to get descriptive statistics.

All 40 participants (100%) included in the sample were responded. Many of them are males (57.5%). 35 % of sample population are between age 26-35. It can conclude that younger generation is relatively high compared to age level of 36-45 (32.5%). Most of them are learned up to A/L (70%). 42.5% of respondents are between 6 to 10 years' experience. Both 40% of respondents receive monthly income between Rs.20001-Rs.40000 & Rs.40001-RS.60000 respectively.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Patton (2002), states that validity and reliability are two factors which any researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analyzing results and judging the quality of the study. Healy & Perry (2000) [35], assert that reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. Reliability is in two types such as indicator reliability & internal consistency reliability. Table 01 shows that outer loading values of questionnaire items are above of 0.7. Therefore, indicator reliability exists in the variables. On the other hand, T-statistics values are higher than 1.96 (0.05 significance level) which means that constructs are highly significance. Since both the tests conclude that the model has a higher indicator reliability in constructs.

Internal consistency reliability is measured through composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha value. Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well items in a set are positively correlated to one another. In here, Cronbach's alpha should be higher than 0.5. In the research Flexibility and Trust have high values than 0.5. All variables show high association between items and prove that the questionnaire is consistency reliable through composite reliability, because values are higher than 0.7. Therefore, it can conclude

that model has higher reliability.

Table 01: Reliability & Validity of Independent Variable

Construct	Indicator Reliability		Internal Consistent Reliability		Convergent Validity
	Loading	T-Statistics	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's α	AVE
Flexibility			0.843	0.751	0.573
Q5.1.a	0.821	10.465			
Q5.1.b	0.765	5.377			
Q5.1.c	0.715	3.557			
Q5.1.d	0.724	4.104			
Trust			0.83	0.727	0.549
Q5.2.a	0.702	2.506			
Q5.2.b	0.735	8.804			
Q5.2.d	0.769	3.536			
Q5.2.e	0.756	4.486			
Cooperation			0.831	0.696	0.623
Q5.3.a	0.789	3.958			
Q5.3.b	0.733	3.568			
Q5.3.c	0.842	3.746			
Job Satisfaction			0.902	0.864	0.651
Empowerment	0.842	26.824			
Organizational Commitment	0.862	9.715			
Relationship with colleagues	0.791	8.147			
Reward	0.689	7.157			
Working Environment	0.838	20.640			

Source: Survey data, 2018.

There are two validity tests as convergent validity & discriminate validity. According to the table 02, AVE values is greater than 0.5 that they all are above the recommended value of 0.5, therefore, there is a convergent validity in the model. Discriminate validity refers to extent to which a measure does not measure other constructs a different procedure has to be follow. This measure using Fornell-Lacker Criteria which shows in table 02.

Table 02: Discriminant Validity using Fornell-Lacker Criteria

variable	AVE	Cooperation	Flexibility	Job Satisfaction	Trust
Cooperation	0.623	0.789			
Flexibility	0.573	0.697	0.857		
Job Satisfaction	0.473	0.783	0.841	0.871	
Trust	0.549	0.675	0.788	0.847	0.851

Source: Survey data, 2018.

Structural Model: Collinearity indicates that two variables are measuring the same variable & it occurs when correlations among variables are high. Collinearity among exogenous variables are measure through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). If VIF greater than 5, it is said to be Multi-collinearity. Further Tolerance (TOL) also use to evaluate multi-collinearity. TOL is the inverse of VIF. The tolerance value is higher than 0.2, it leads to say no multi-collinearity problem. It can represent using following table 03.

Table 03: VIF & TOL values

	TOL	VIF
Q 5.1.a	0.587	1.703
Q 5.1.b	0.642	1.557
Q 5.1.c	0.722	1.385
Q 5.1.d	0.698	1.432
Q 5.2.a	0.742	1.347
Q 5.2.b	0.749	1.335
Q 5.2.d	0.671	1.491
Q 5.2.e	0.685	1.46
Q 5.3.a	0.653	1.532
Q 5.3.b	0.829	1.206
Q 5.3.c	0.644	1.552

Source: Survey data, 2018.

All VIF values in the table are lower than 5 and TOL values are higher than 0.2. Therefore it can conclude there is no Multi-collinearity among Exogenous variables. To assess the path coefficients, PLS algorithm was conducted & T-values were used to evaluate significance of each path confident. Critical t-value for a two-tailed test is 1.96 at 0.05 significance level.

Table 04: Path Coefficients & Significance among Constructs

Relationship	Coefficient	T - statistics	Results
Flexibility -> Job satisfaction	0.338***	2.871	Supported
Trust -> Job satisfaction	0.385***	3.364	Supported
Cooperation -> Job satisfaction	0.295***	2.584	Supported

***p>0.01

Source: Survey data, 2018.

The study found that Flexibility has significant positive impact on Job satisfaction by 33.8 percent ($\beta = 0.338$) and according to the t statistics (t value=2.871) variable is significant at 99% confidence level so, hypothesis 1 is strongly accepted. Trust showed a significant impact on job satisfaction by 38.5 percent ($\beta = 0.385$) and significance at 99% confidence level (t-value=3.364) thus the H2 is also accepted. Cooperation showed a significant impact on job satisfaction by 29 percent ($\beta = 0.295$) and significance at 99% confidence level (t-value=2.584) thus the H3 is accepted.

The R² of the model is 0.838 which describes adequacy of the model. According to the R² value 83.8% of total variation is explained by the fitted model. Sometimes it may mislead the goodness of fit of the model. Therefore adjusted R² will be useful. In this model it is 0.824. It can conclude that model is good. The research findings for the fieldwork analyzed in the positive influence of relational governance on JS. Conforming to the hypothesis, relational governance which were denoted by Flexibility, Trust & Cooperation positive association with JS.

VI. Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to explore the effect of Relational governance on Job satisfaction identifying how Flexibility, Trust & Cooperation were affected on JS. To achieve this goal, a conceptual model has been developed with Relational Contact Theory, Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory & Locke's Value theory which carefully capturing the most appropriate dimensions to the model with the support of literature. Flexibility, Trust & Cooperation used as dimensions for relational governance. The work demonstrated that building & develop relational governance mechanism among supportive staff will help to achieve strong JS. The study revealed that relational governance dimensions have higher positive influence on JS of supportive staff of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Flexibility has greater positive impact on job satisfaction which means that if a manager is more flexible with supportive staff, JS of them will increase. Trust has significant positive impact on JS which means that the manager work fair & justice, keep promises, supportive staff may like to work with him leading to higher satisfaction. According to the results, cooperation also has significant effect on JS, it suggests that the manager is more cooperated with supportive staff in their work plans, more support and free expression of problems. The study would be useful to improve the understanding of the relationship between internal governance and institutional differences in implementation sustainable practices. Further, it can organize more social programs to increase relationship between supportive staff and managers leading to higher JS.

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