

Exploring the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy, Work Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the relationships between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction among corporate employees in India. Data from 164 participants was analysed using Spearman's rho correlation analysis and Mann-Whitney U tests. The findings reveal significant positive correlations between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction, suggesting that increased levels of work autonomy and self-efficacy are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. Gender and educational background were found to have limited impact on these variables, while age diversity within the sample highlighted the importance of considering age-related factors in workplace dynamics. The study underscores the need for organizations to foster environments that empower employees and enhance their self-efficacy and autonomy, ultimately leading to increased job satisfaction and organizational well-being. Future research should explore potential moderating and mediating factors, conduct longitudinal studies, and examine cross-cultural differences to further understand these relationships and inform evidence-based practices in organizational psychology and management.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy, Work autonomy, Job satisfaction, corporate employees.*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary corporate landscape, prioritizing employee happiness is pivotal for long-term success. The intricate interplay between work autonomy and self-efficacy, both influential factors shaping employee attitudes and behaviors, stands at the forefront of this endeavor. This research aims to delve into the nuanced dynamics among corporate employees concerning self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction. Understanding these elements is crucial in navigating the ever-evolving nature of modern work environments and fostering a culture of thriving within organizations. Self-efficacy, rooted in

Albert Bandura's social cognition theory, refers to one's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve desired outcomes. It serves as a fundamental cognitive process through which individuals assess their capability to overcome obstacles and fulfill responsibilities across various life domains. Self-efficacy is the individual's judgment of their own capacity to plan and carry out actions in particular circumstances [1]. It is the capacity as judged by one's actions [12]. People who have a high level of self-efficacy think they can do a task well. Conversely, those who have poor self-efficacy seem to doubt their ability to complete a given activity [8]. A person who

feels good about themselves finds confidence in their work. High self-efficacy is a strong predictor of worker motivation, productivity, and well-being, fostering a positive work environment conducive to job satisfaction. Factors such as mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological/emotional states influence self-efficacy, shaping individuals' motivation, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Workers with high self-efficacy are more inclined to undertake tasks, persevere through challenges, and feel in control of their environment compared to those with low self-efficacy. They set ambitious goals, perceive their environment as controllable, and exhibit analytical thinking, ultimately contributing to organizational achievements. Self-efficacy also plays a crucial role in how employees respond to stress and adversity, with higher levels correlating with increased resilience and coping skills.

Work autonomy, another essential concept in organizational psychology, pertains to the degree of freedom and discretion individuals have in making decisions about their jobs, assignments, and schedules. Granting autonomy in the workplace is associated with various desirable outcomes, including motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. Autonomy fosters intrinsic motivation by empowering employees with a sense of ownership and responsibility, contributing to a positive work environment. Research indicates that autonomy positively influences job satisfaction, as it enhances employees' perceived responsibility and fosters positive work outcome behaviors [9]. Organizations emphasizing autonomy tend to witness higher levels of motivation, performance, and innovation among employees. Autonomy allows individuals to experiment with different approaches and ideas, leading to increased creativity and job enrichment.

Job satisfaction, a crucial metric in organizational research, reflects an individual's favorable emotional state resulting from their assessment of work

experiences and fulfillment of expectations in the workplace. It significantly influences absenteeism, performance, and employee retention, making it a key indicator of organizational health and employee well-being [11]. Enhancing an employee's work autonomy leads to a rise in experienced responsibility, which in turn causes job satisfaction and other positive work outcome behaviors, according to Hackman and Oldham [4]. Research from empirical studies indicates that work autonomy is a measure of job happiness [6]. It generally suggests a favorable assessment of one's work and a favorable outcome that arises from it; in other words, it represents a "positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or Job experiences" [10]. Because workers have more freedom to choose their own work schedule and effort, it is believed that autonomy would lead to higher levels of job satisfaction. Understanding the complex relationships between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction is essential for crafting strategies to enhance employee engagement and well-being. This study aims to shed light on these constructs within corporate settings, characterized by formalized policies, performance-driven cultures, and hierarchical structures. By analyzing these dynamics, organizations can gain valuable insights to inform practices aimed at promoting a positive work environment and improving employee satisfaction.

In conclusion, self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction are fundamental constructs influencing employee behavior and performance in the workplace. Recognizing their interconnections and implications is crucial for organizations striving to foster a culture of thriving and enhance organizational effectiveness. Through empirical research and targeted interventions, organizations can cultivate environments conducive to employee engagement, satisfaction, and overall well-being.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Statement of Problem

The purpose of the current study is to thoroughly investigate the relationship between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction among corporate employees by building on the body of previous research and filling in the identified research gaps. The study specifically aims to: Examine the relationship, taking into account any moderating or mediating factors, between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction. Examine how the nature of the job affects employees' perceptions of job satisfaction, taking into account elements like job autonomy and remote work arrangements. Give organizations advice and ideas on how to improve worker well-being and job satisfaction by focusing on work autonomy and self-efficacy in interventions.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant correlation between self-efficacy and job satisfaction among corporate employees.

H02: There is no significant association between work autonomy and job satisfaction among corporate employees.

H03: Self-efficacy does not mediate the relationship between work autonomy and job satisfaction among corporate employees.

Research Design

The present study adopted a quantitative research design focusing on the objective collection and analysis of numerical data to elucidate, predict, or exercise control over variables of interest.

Variables

Demographic variable: Age, Gender

Independent variable: Self Efficacy, Work Autonomy

Dependent variable: Job Satisfaction

Sampling Procedure

A total of 164 participants were selected for the study using Purposive Sampling technique. The questionnaire was administered through google forms

consisting of informed consent from the participants. The google form contained basic demographic details of the participants and three scales, measuring Self Efficacy, Work Autonomy and Job Satisfaction. The google forms were circulated to various online platforms like (WhatsApp groups, LinkedIn and Instagram) to collect data from the desired age group of students. After the collection of data, analysis was done.

Tools used for the study

General self -efficacy scale (gses)

The General Self-Efficacy Scale is a 10-item psychometric tool used to measure positive self-beliefs to manage a range of challenging tasks in life. In 1981, Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem established the scale in German.

The respondent is required to use these response categories in order to address the statements:

1 = Not at all true 2 = Hardly true 3 = Moderately true 4 = Exactly true.

The sum of all the components is used to determine the final score. A higher score on the GSE denotes greater self-efficacy. The total score ranges from 10 to 40.

Internal reliability for GSE Cronbach's alphas is between .76 and .90 The tool is highly reliable and valid to measure generalized self-efficacy.

Work autonomy scale

James A. Breugh developed the scale. The scale has nine items. Based on a 5-point Likert scale scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) ($\alpha = 0.82$). Three aspects of job autonomy are measured by the scale: work criteria, work schedule, and work technique. The scale was chosen because it measures a wide range of work autonomy factors and has good validity and reliability [2].

Job satisfaction scale

The scale was published by Dr. Amar Singh and Dr. T. R. Sharma [7]. The scale consists

of 30 statements and each statement has 5 alternatives. There are both positive and negative statements on the scale. As far as scoring is concerned, item nos. 4, 13, 20, 21, 24, and 28 are negative items and the others are positive. The weighting of the positive statement was 4, 3, 2, 1, 0, and the negative statement was 0, 1, 2, 3, 4.

The scale has a 0.743 validity coefficient and a 0.978 test-retest reliability.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

This research, conducted using SPSS software for analysis, primarily focused on employing Spearman Rho's Correlation to examine the relationship (Hypothesis 1) between job satisfaction and self-efficacy,

RESULT

Table 1: Correlation Index of Self efficacy, Work Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

Sub-scales	Self-efficacy	Work autonomy	Job satisfaction
Self-efficacy	1.000	.317**	.320**
Work autonomy	.317**	1.000	.490**
Job satisfaction	.320**	.490**	1.000

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of the Spearman's rho correlation study, which looked at the relationships between the three variables total work autonomy, total job satisfaction, and total self-efficacy, are shown in the table. Total Work Autonomy and Total Self-Efficacy: A significant positive relationship has been observed between the two variables ($\rho = 0.317$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that overall work autonomy scores tend to rise along with total self-efficacy levels. The significance level (Sig.) of 0.000 indicates that the correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Overall, Job Satisfaction and Self-Efficacy: According to this, there is a significant positive correlation ($\rho = 0.320$, $p < 0.01$) between overall job satisfaction and self-efficacy. This shows that people tend to report higher levels of overall job satisfaction when their levels of total self-efficacy are higher. Its correlation coefficient has a significance level (Sig.) of 0.000 and is statistically significant at the

the relationship (Hypothesis 2) between job satisfaction and work autonomy and if self-efficacy (Hypothesis 3) mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and work autonomy. Descriptive Statistics was used to examine factors like Age, Gender and Educational level.

Ethical Consideration

Before beginning the study, each participant gave their informed consent. Anonymity and confidentiality for the study's participants were rigorously upheld. All information will be safely kept in a password-protected file that only authorised researchers can access.

0.01 level (2-tailed). Total Work Autonomy and Total Job Satisfaction: A significant positive relationship ($\rho = 0.490$, $p < 0.01$) has been observed between total work autonomy and total job satisfaction. This suggests that overall job satisfaction scores tend to rise along with an increase in total work autonomy scores. With a significance level (Sig.) of 0.000, the correlation coefficient is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). All things considered, these results point to significant positive relationships between overall job satisfaction, total work autonomy, and total self-efficacy. Greater job satisfaction is correlated with higher degrees of work autonomy and self-efficacy.

Gender Differences

The table shows the rankings for three factors, divided into two gender groups: total self-efficacy, total work autonomy, and total job satisfaction. The table illustrates

the U-values and mean ranks for the several gender-based subscales (self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction). Male

participants scored slightly higher on the self-efficacy scale (83.54) than did female participants (80.50).

Table 2 Comparison of Mean Scores & U-value of Males & Females in Self efficacy, Work autonomy and Job satisfaction

Subscales	Gender	Mean Rank	U-value
Self-efficacy	Male	83.54	2912.000
	Female	80.50	
Work autonomy	Male	87.17	2520.000
	Female	73.50	
Job Satisfaction	Male	82.26	2998.000
	Female	82.96	

There was no statistically significant difference in self-efficacy between genders, according to the U-value of 2912.000. Male participants had a much higher mean rank (87.17) in work autonomy than did female participants (73.50). This shows that compared to women, men reported higher levels of work autonomy. A statistically significant difference in work autonomy across genders is indicated by the U-value of 2520.000. Interestingly, male participants had slightly lower mean rank (82.26) than female participants (82.96) when it came to job satisfaction. The statistical analysis indicates that there was no significant difference in job satisfaction between

genders, as indicated by the U-value of 2998.000.

These results suggest that although there might be differences in participants' perceptions of their perceived work autonomy between male and female, these differences do not always correspond to differences in their levels of job satisfaction or self-efficacy. According to this, variables other than gender might be more important in influencing participants' levels of self-efficacy and work satisfaction. To gain a deeper understanding of these characteristics' impact on views and experiences at work, more research is required.

Education Level

Table 3 Comparison of Mean Ranks and Mann-Whitney U Values for Self- Efficacy, Work Autonomy and Job Satisfaction by Current Education Level

Scales	Current Education level	Mean	u-value	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Efficacy	Under Graduation	79.48	2236.500	0.171
	Post Graduation	90.99		
Work Autonomy	Under Graduation	82.21	2566.500	0.896
	Post Graduation	83.31		
Job Satisfaction	Under Graduation	79.64	2255.500	0.171
	Post Graduation	90.55		

The table shows the mean scores, U-values, and asymptotic significant levels (2-tailed) for the self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction measures for the two groups of participants, Under Graduation and Post Graduation, according to their present educational status. The mean score for self-efficacy among participants with an education level below graduation is 79.48, whereas the mean score for those with an education level above graduation is 90.99. This difference is not statistically

significant, though, as indicated by the U-value of 2236.500 and the corresponding asymptotic significance level of 0.171 ($p > .05$). Accordingly, there isn't any evidence to suggest that participants with Under Graduation and Post Graduation education levels had significantly different levels of self-efficacy.

Participants with an Under Graduation education level had a mean score of 82.21 for work autonomy, while those with a Post Graduation degree level scored 83.31. As in

the case of self-efficacy, the U-value of 2566.500 and the asymptotic significance threshold of 0.896 show that work autonomy does not differ statistically significantly between the two education levels ($p > .05$). There is a significant difference in the mean job satisfaction score between participants with Under Graduation and Post Graduation education levels (79.64 and 90.55, respectively). The U-value of 2255.500 and the asymptotic significance threshold of 0.171 indicate that there is no significant difference ($p > .05$) in work satisfaction between individuals with Under Graduation and Post Graduation education levels.

Overall, the results show that the participants' present educational levels had no apparent effect on their levels of self-efficacy, work autonomy, or job satisfaction. The participants with Post Graduation education level had slightly higher mean scores on all scales, but these differences are not statistically significant.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics for Age

Age	
Mean	26.23
Median	24.00
Std. Deviation	4.913
Range	23

The findings about participant ages provide insight into the study sample's demographic structure. The average age of the participants, at 26.23 years, indicates that they were, on average, in their mid-twenties. This is consistent with the demographic patterns found in related research in our area. Given that the median age of the participants was 24 years old, half of them were younger than 24, and the other half were older. This distribution highlights the significance of taking age-related factors into account in our analyses and may reflect the diversity of age groups represented in our sample. The age distribution around the mean is shown by the 4.913-year standard deviation. The observed variability indicates that the participants in our sample were of a

diverse age range, ranging from young adults to those in their early thirties. Our comprehension of the phenomenon we are studying can be enhanced by this age diversity, and our findings can be interpreted in more complex ways. It also highlights the diversity of our participant pool given the large range of 23 years. Since age-related variations in behaviors, attitudes, and experiences may affect study outcomes, the wide range of ages may make it more difficult to interpret some findings. All things considered, the careful analysis of participant ages sheds light on the makeup of our sample and establishes the framework for further investigation into any potential age-related influences on our study variables. The aforementioned results emphasize the significance of taking age variety into account in subsequent analyses and point to potential directions for future research on the topic of age in our field.

DISCUSSION

The study aimed to investigate the relationships between Self efficacy, Work autonomy and Job satisfaction among corporate employees in India. The study's findings shed light on the relationships between participant age, gender, educational attainment, and total work autonomy as well as overall job satisfaction and total self-efficacy.

Correlation Analysis: self-efficacy, work autonomy and job satisfaction all showed significant positive correlations when analyzed using Spearman's rho correlation. Therefore, we reject all the null hypotheses. These results imply that greater job satisfaction is linked to higher levels of work autonomy and self-efficacy. This is in line with other studies that show people who feel more in charge of their work and have greater self-efficacy in their skills typically have satisfied jobs. The results of the Spearman's rho correlation analysis demonstrate the complex interactions among important factors in the domains of work autonomy, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction, as noted in Kok's review of the

literature [5]. Strong evidence is found in the study to support the favorable relationships between these variables. The findings reveal a noteworthy affirmative correlation between overall work autonomy and total self-efficacy ($\rho = 0.317, p < 0.01$), suggesting that an increase in self-efficacy is generally associated with an individual's perception of increased autonomy in their work environments. This is in line with Kok's investigation into the mediating function of job autonomy in the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, which posits that autonomy is an essential resource impacting workers' self-efficacy and, as a result, their general job happiness. Moreover, the research reveals a noteworthy affirmative association between self-efficacy and total job happiness ($\rho = 0.320, p < 0.01$), which aligns with Kok's focus on the moderating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction results. The correlation between total work autonomy and total job satisfaction is positive ($\rho = 0.490, p < 0.01$), which supports Kok's theory that higher levels of job satisfaction are associated with greater workplace autonomy. Together, these results support the main conclusions of Kok's study, highlighting the critical roles that self-efficacy and job autonomy play as mediating factors in the relationship between employees' job satisfaction and leadership styles like transformative leadership and abusive supervision. The earlier findings highlight the importance of promoting supportive leadership styles and creating conditions that enable individuals to exercise autonomy, as these factors ultimately contribute to increased job satisfaction and organizational well-being. In 2016, Izlem Gozukara conducted a study at Istanbul Arel University that focused on the relationship between job autonomy, organizational identification, and job happiness [3]. The study also highlighted the significance that job satisfaction plays as a mediator in this relationship. This emphasizes how crucial job satisfaction is to comprehending the relationships between

organizational elements and work autonomy. The results of the study also lend support to the idea that job satisfaction serves as a moderator, enhancing the favorable relationship that exists between organizational identification and work autonomy.

The self-efficacy and work autonomy were found to have a strong positive association. This finding is in line with recent research that shows how autonomy empowers people's views about themselves and their ability to manage problems and tasks. The literature's conclusions that higher levels of self-efficacy led to increased job satisfaction are further supported by the considerable positive association between self-efficacy and total job satisfaction.

Further supporting current studies indicating a favorable correlation between greater levels of job satisfaction and workplace autonomy is the substantial positive link observed between total work autonomy and total job satisfaction. In general, the results of this study offer empirical backing for the favorable correlations that exist between work autonomy, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. This highlights the significance of cultivating autonomy and self-beliefs in order to improve employee well-being and contentment in corporate environments.

Gender-based disparities in job satisfaction, work autonomy, and self-efficacy were examined, and complex trends emerged. There were no statistically significant variations in the participants' levels of job satisfaction by gender, despite the fact that males showed significantly higher levels of work autonomy and slightly higher levels of self-efficacy than females. The aforementioned results emphasize the need of taking gender dynamics into account when comprehending experiences at work. Nevertheless, they also emphasize the necessity of investigating other factors outside gender that could affect how people see their own abilities, their level of autonomy at work, and their level of job satisfaction. The examination of the educational backgrounds of the participants

provided intriguing new information about the relationship between beliefs of the workplace and education. The participants with Under Graduation and Post Graduation education levels did not differ statistically significantly in terms of self-efficacy or work autonomy, which was unexpected. On the other hand, there was a noteworthy distinction in work satisfaction, with Post Graduation individuals indicating marginally greater levels. These results imply that although education may influence how people see their jobs, it may have less of an impact on their sense of self-efficacy and work autonomy. In order to understand the mechanisms behind these associations and find other variables that might interact with educational background to affect job experiences, more research is required. The examination of the ages of the participants yielded significant information about the demographic composition of the research sample. The sample's diversity of experiences is highlighted by the individuals' wide age range and very youthful average age. These results emphasize how crucial it is to take age into account when analyzing workplace dynamics. Age variety offers chances to delve further into the effects of age on perceptions of self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction, even though it may also complicate the interpretation of study results.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study revealed significant positive correlations between self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction among corporate employees in India. Despite the non-normal distribution of the data, non-parametric tests confirmed these relationships. Additionally, the examination of demographic factors such as age, gender, and education level provided insights into how these variables may influence perceptions of self-efficacy, work autonomy, and job satisfaction. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of fostering an empowering work environment

that promotes self-efficacy and autonomy, which ultimately leads to increased job satisfaction. These results have implications for organizational policies and practices aimed at improving employee well-being and performance.

Declaration by Authors

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