ROLE OF OPTIMISM SUBCULTURE IN PROMOTING JOB SATISFACTION
Evidence from Beverage Industry of Pakistan

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Abstract. The core objective of this research endeavour is to assess empirically to what degree perceptions of optimism subculture are associated with overall job satisfaction and its dimensions. Structured survey questionnaire was employed to test the study hypotheses. Hierarchical regression analyses reveals that perceived optimistic cultural values, at group or team level, fosters not only satisfaction to overall job but also its intrinsic and extrinsic components of sales persons employed by beverage companies in Pakistan while controlling the effects of important demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures. Practical implications of study findings and future research suggestions are presented, too.

Keywords: Subculture, Job satisfaction, Sales person, Beverage industry, Pakistan

JEL classification: F00, J12, L60, M14

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I. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction, undoubtedly, is one of the most researched topics in industrial and organizational psychology (Spector, 1997). It is defined as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the perception of one's job as fulfilling or allowing the fulfillment of one's important job values" (Locke, 1976, p. 1342). From practitioners' perspective, interest in job satisfaction is mainly due to its link with work-related behaviors and job performance (Judge *et al.*, 2001; Riketta, 2008; Snipes *et al.*, 2005), employee retention (Robins and Coulter, 2005), organizational commitment (Snipes *et al.*, 2005), mental health and longevity (Locke, 1976; Sempane, Rieger and Roodt, 2002). Researchers debated extensively about how organizational culture is linked to job satisfaction for the last many decades. As regards organization culture, it is defined as "the pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and thus provide them norms for behavior in the organization" (Deshpande and Webster, 1989, p. 4). The cultural values represent "internalized normative beliefs that can guide behavior. When a social unit's members share values, they may form the basis for social expectations or norms" (O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991, p. 492). By developing a common way of thinking and understanding, the enacted culture influences the interpretation of the organizational reality (Ott, 1989), and hence formulates employee attitude and behavior (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

Martin (2002; 1992) proposed that multiple cultures may operate at individual (fragmented culture), group (differentiated culture) and organization levels (unitaristic culture). As regards work group/unit cultures, it is likely that they "apply different criteria in defining knowledge" (De Long and Fahey, 2000, p. 117) which reflects the different values of each subculture about what is important, useful, and valuable to achieving the task at hand (De Long and Fahey, 2000). Although the effect of different organizational culture types or cultural dimensions on job satisfaction has been extensively examined yet researchers are taking interest in determining whether or not cultural values at functional subgroups of sales force groups or teams are related to employee attitudes (Bridges, 2003) particularly job satisfaction. In this connection, mixed results of positive, negative, weak or strong and insignificant relations were found. For instance, Johnson (2004) had the opinion that few dimensions of the organizational culture may not be positively associated with the job satisfaction. For example, in the study of Sempane *et al.* (2002), some dimensions of organizational culture had positive whereas others have negative relationship to job satisfaction (Sempane *et al.*, 2002). Interestingly, organizational culture was not

significantly related to job satisfaction in empirical study conducted by Mehr *et al.* (2012). Lund (2003) found positive association of flexibility and internally oriented cultures and negative relationship of control and externally oriented cultures to job satisfaction. Differential impact of organization culture types on job satisfaction is evident whereby job satisfaction was found to be more likely when culture is supportive than when it is innovative and finally when it is bureaucratic (Silverthorne, 2004). The ranking of organization culture types, from the highest to the lowest impact on job satisfaction, is clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy cultures (Lund, 2003). Therefore, the relationship between organizational culture and job satisfaction is still unclear and there is lack of empirical evidence to suggest how strong their relationship is. Despite mixed evidence, numerous researchers have found positive relationship of organization culture with job satisfaction (Schneider and Snyder, 1975; Field and Abelson, 1982; Hellriegel and Slocum, 1974; Kerego and Mthupha, 1997; Moynihan and Pandey, 2007; Vukonjanski and Nikolić, 2013; Jacobs and Roodt, 2008; Hoppock, 1935; Navaie-Waliser, 2004; Rad and Yarmohammadian, 2006; Azanza, Moriano and Molero, 2013; Jiang and Klein, 1999; Amos and Weathington, 2008; Seashore and Taber, 1975; Johnson, 2004; Chang and Lee, 2007; Yousaf, 1998; Mckinnon, 2003; Arnold, 2006; Mansor and Tayib, 2010; Sabri, Ilyas and Amjad, 2011).

Although numerous research studies were conducted to investigate the relationship of organizational culture on job satisfaction of the employees yet limited studies aimed at ascertaining empirically the effect of positive sub cultural values, particularly optimism subculture, on overall job satisfaction and its intrinsic and extrinsic components in selling context of South Asian companies from the perspective of frontline field sales force placed on mission critical positions. This dearth of literature prompted us to investigate whether or not and to what extent sales force perceptions of optimistic culture prevailing at sales groups or teams of beverage companies nurture not only their overall job satisfaction but also their intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

The research methods to address the following research question and related hypotheses are given underneath:

Research Question

To what extent do beverage sales persons' perceptions of optimistic subculture values relate to their overall job satisfaction and its dimensions such as intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction taking into consideration important demographic variables?

Hypothesis 1: Perceived optimism subculture is positively related to overall job satisfaction of beverage sales persons while controlling for the effect of their demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures.

Hypothesis 1a-1b: Perceived optimism subculture is positively related to (1a) intrinsic job satisfaction, (1b) extrinsic job satisfaction of beverage sales persons while controlling for the effect of their demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative relational survey research design was employed to assess to what degree sales persons' perceptions of optimism subculture are related to their overall job satisfaction and its intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. One hundred and ten statistically useable structured questionnaires were collected from frontline field sales persons, based at Lahore city, employed by five beverage-selling companies in Pakistan through self and personal modes of communication. Optimism subculture was measured by seven items validated scale developed by Green, Medlin and Whitten (2004) comprising of four major dimensions such as outcome orientation, team orientation, people orientation and creativity and innovation orientation extracted from Organization Culture Profile (OCP) measure developed by O'Reilly *et al.* (1991). Overall job satisfaction was measured by eight items of job dimension scale developed by Schletzer (1967) with four items from each of its two components such as intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction. All these study measures were found to have reasonable reliability as their coefficient alpha ranges from 0.62 to 0.80. Five-point Likert scales with response format having extreme anchors "1" for "strongly disagree" and "5" for "strongly agree" were used for all the study measures. Demographic variables of sales persons such as gender, age, company and selling tenures were employed as control variables while empirically testing the study hypotheses. Hierarchical regression procedures were employed for data analysis to test the study hypotheses.

III. RESULTS

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and percentage used for the study constructs and demographic variables are presented hereunder in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics (N = 110)

Study Constructs and Demographic Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Optimism Subculture	3.39	0.64
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.49	0.61
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	3.39	0.71
Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	3.59	0.63
Company Tenure	3.13	1.93
Selling Tenure	4.45	2.70
Age (Years)	27.74	3.74
Gender:	Male: 90%	Female: 10%

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: Perceived optimism subculture is positively related to overall job satisfaction of beverage sales persons while controlling for the effect of their demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures.

Hierarchical regression analysis of data revealed (*see* Table 2) that when overall job satisfaction construct was regressed on sales persons' demographic variables only, such as gender, age, company and selling tenures, all of them remained statistically insignificant with the exception of company tenure which was found to negatively related to overall job satisfaction. Demographic variables explained 10.5 percent variance in overall job satisfaction. However, when the construct of interest, optimism subculture, was added in the model, it contributed 20.5 percent variance in overall job satisfaction above and beyond what is explained by demographic variables. Optimism sub culture was found to have highly significant positive moderate relationship with overall job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.47$, $t = 5.63$, $p < 0.001$, R Square Change = 0.205) whereas none of the demographic variables remained significant except company tenure, negatively related to overall job satisfaction, which is consistent to study hypothesis 1.

TABLE 2

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	ANOVA[c]		
					R Square Change	F (sig.)	β t (sig.)
1	0.32[a]	0.105	0.071	0.59	0.105	3.07 (0.019)[a]	Company Tenure: –0.40 2.96 (0.004); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)
2	0.56[b]	0.31	0.281	0.52	0.205	9.51 (0.000)[b]	OptSCul: 0.47 5.63 (0.000); Company Tenure: –0.30 2.51 (0.014); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)

a   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure;

b   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure, Optimism Subculture (OptSCul);

c   Dependent Variable: Overall Job Satisfaction; NS: Demographic variables were non-significant

Hypothesis 1a: Perceived optimism subculture is positively related to intrinsic job satisfaction of beverage sales persons while controlling for the effect of their demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures.

Hierarchical regression analysis of data revealed (*see* Table 3) that when intrinsic job satisfaction construct was regressed on sales persons' demographic variables only, such as gender, age, company and selling tenures, all of them remained statistically insignificant with the exception of age and company tenure. The age was positively but weakly related whereas company tenure was negatively but moderately related to intrinsic job satis-faction. Demographic variables explained 19 percent variance in intrinsic job satisfaction. However, when optimism subculture was added in the model, it contributed 12 percent variance in intrinsic job satisfaction above and

beyond what is explained by demographic variables. Optimism subculture was found to have highly significant positive moderate relationship with intrinsic job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.45$, $t = 5.46$, $p < 0.001$, R Square Change = 0.12) whereas none of the demographic variables remained significant except company tenure, negatively related to intrinsic job satisfaction, which is consistent to study hypothesis 1a.

TABLE 3

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	ANOVA[c]		
					R Square Change	F (sig.)	β t (sig.)
1	0.34[a]	0.19	0.08	0.68	0.19	3.51 (0.01)[a]	Age: 0.23 1.72 (0.089); Company Tenure: −0.45 3.36 (0.001); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)
2	0.56[b]	0.31	0.28	0.60	0.12	9.53 (0.000)[b]	OptSCul: 0.45 5.46 (0.000); Company Tenure: −0.36 2.95 (0.004); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)

a   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure;

b   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure, Optimism Subculture (OptSCul);

c   Dependent Variable: Intrinsic Job Satisfaction; NS: Demographic variables were non-significant

Hypothesis 1b: Perceived optimism subculture is positively related to extrinsic job satisfaction of beverage sales persons while controlling for the effect of their demographic variables such as gender, age, company and selling tenures.

TABLE 4

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	ANOVA[c]		
					R Square Change	F (sig.)	β t (sig.)
1	0.26[a]	0.07	0.034	0.62	0.07	1.95 (0.107)[a]	Company Tenure: –0.27 1.93 (0.056); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)
2	0.47[b]	0.22	0.180	0.57	0.15	5.78 (0.000)[b]	OptSCul: 0.39 4.44 (0.000); Gender: –0.15 1.68 (0.096); Other Demographic Variables: (NS)

a   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure;

b   Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Age, Selling Tenure, Company Tenure, Optimism Subculture (OptSCul);

c   Dependent Variable: Extrinsic Job Satisfaction; NS: Demographic variables were non-significant

Hierarchical regression analysis of data revealed (*see* Table 4) that when extrinsic job satisfaction construct was regressed on sales persons' demographic variables only, such as gender, age, company and selling tenures, all of them remained statistically insignificant with the exception of company tenure which was found to negatively related to extrinsic job satisfaction. Demographic variables explained 7 percent variance in extrinsic job satisfaction. However, when optimism subculture was added in the model, it contributed 15 percent variance in extrinsic job satisfaction above and beyond what is explained by demographic variables. Optimism sub-culture was found to have highly significant positive moderate relationship with extrinsic job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.39$, $t = 4.44$, $p < 0.001$, R Square Change = 0.15) whereas none of the demographic variables remained significant except gender which is consistent to study hypothesis 1b. Interestingly, the impact

of optimism subculture on extrinsic job satisfaction was stronger for male than female sales persons.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Given the practical implications of job satisfaction related to sales force organizational commitment, turn over, work related behaviors, in-role and extra role performance, the present study empirically ascertained to what degree positive work environment prevailing at sales group or team level such as optimistic cultural values could foster intrinsic, extrinsic and overall job satisfaction of trade sales persons selling beverages in Pakistani context. The results indicated that perceived optimistic sub-cultural values had its reasonable role in fostering not only overall job satisfaction but satisfaction to intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of job beyond the impact of important demographic characteristics of sales force. These findings supported all the expected relationships. These findings could be explained by postulations of social exchange theory that these trade sales persons might have reacted favorably to job and its characteristics when supportive and innovation oriented cultural values prevailing at their work units are meeting their expectations of positive work environment of which the job is the important dimension. These finding are consistent with the findings of Lund (2003) and Silverthorne (2004).

Taking into consideration study findings, the sales organization leadership should take necessary formal and informal interventions of recruitment, selection, sales force group dynamics, socialization and communications to embed optimistic cultural values, at work group level, comprising of team orientation, people orientation, outcome orientations, creativity and risk taking to make sales force more satisfied with overall job and to its intrinsic and extrinsic aspects to reap the potential benefits of sales force organizational commitment, retention and job performance. Future researchers may use longitudinal, experimental and mixed method designs rather than cross sectional design to assess the robustness of these study findings. In addition, research endeavors should be aimed at how different but pertinent individual, job, leadership and organization specific factors could moderate or mediate the relationship between optimism subculture and its components to satisfaction to job and its sub components of intrinsic and extrinsic aspects to improve further understanding of the direct and indirect link of these study constructs.

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