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## GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE JOB? THE SATISFACTION WITH JOB ACROSS VARIOUS SECTORS AND GENDERS IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Job satisfaction, Gender difference, Public Sector, Government Or Private, Karachi, Pakistan	This research was aimed to compare the Job Satisfaction (JS) in private and public sector employees and also explored the gender difference in JS. A stratified convenient sample of 300 (female: 123, male:177) employees was drawn from Karachi. The total number of government employees was 143 and there were employees of private sector. The sample was of ages amid 19 to 64 years (mean age=36.47, SD=11.33). The sample belonged to a wide range of fields like banking and finance to police and teaching. It was hypothesized that (1) there will be significant difference in JS in private and public sector employees, (2) there will be gender difference in JS. The first hypothesis of study was proved. Generic Job Satisfaction scale was used on the sample. The results indicated that the public sector employees score significantly higher in job satisfaction as compared towards private sector employees however gender difference is insignificant in JS in the sample under study. The results provide significant information in reaching desired conclusion of study by extracting suitable information used for the decision -making. Consequently, the conclusion of current study offers the valuable insights into the dynamics of job satisfaction across various job sectors as well as genders.
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## INTRODUCTION

The job or employment are some words that are frequently used to describe any individual's occupation and their source of livelihood (Cambridge, 2025). It indicates how a person earns the financial resources that they require to sustain themselves. Since the creations of societies and known history of human civilizations, it is known that people have certain professions, designations and duties and get rewarded for what they do for society. Although, the concept

of job or employment is social and economic but it is very much related to psychology because it involves concepts of motivation, self-knowledge and self-actualization, self-esteem, interest and aptitude. All of these concepts are much related to realm of psychology. Job satisfaction is also a very important concept in psychology. Satisfaction experienced in job is a multi-faceted and complex concept considering various factors. Research has shown that it is related closely with employee productivity, engagement, motivation, and overall job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001). The employees who are satisfied with their job can build better teams which can nurture a positive work environment. The employees with higher satisfaction levels also create quality work, have good time management skills that can increase work productivity (Singh & Jain, 2013).

When it comes to jobs, two sectors are usually describes as the broad category in Pakistan. The first is public sector (also called government sector) that include jobs in armed forces, police, government owned schools, colleges, universities and hospitals and also government owned corporations while rest of the jobs and occupations that are owned and managed by private entities come under the category of private sector (Nandedkar, 2025). In third world countries like Pakistan where economic stability is many times missing, government jobs are very much liked because of their stability, profits and less working hours. But there are many people who prefer private jobs as more chances of growth, many times better salaries. Government and private jobs are a topic of constant discussion and memes in Pakistani social media. In times of COVID-19 many people working in private sector or owning small businesses lost jobs and businesses due to constant lockdowns and changing working conditions due to governmental restrictions while people working in public sector were not affected by it. This also contributed in an increased sense of dissatisfaction with the private jobs in the society (Centre for Labour Research, 2020).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The attitude of a worker toward his or her job, often expressed as like or dislike about work itself, the pay, promotions and recognition, or the working conditions is called job satisfaction (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2023). Sarason (1997) explained JS as feelings and attitudes that person has towards his or her job. Cowen (1991) considers JS as a blend of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that makes a person truly to say that he or she is satisfied with job. JS is a multifaceted concept and is affected by many factors. For instance Kamrani, Kamrani and Kamrani (2020) found a strong negative association between paranoia and JS. Meaning higher degree of fear means lower degree of JS. Another study (Kamrani, Zia & Mursaleen, 2024) found internal locus of control a strong predictor of JS. Another research (Kamrani, Zia & Mumtaz, 2023) found vital aspect of psychological well-being, environmental mastery to be positively correlated with JS. The job satisfaction is an important phenomenon in organizational behavior leading to positive outcomes. In study on government employees led in Pakistan, it was found that facets of job like pay, career growth, workload, interpersonal relations, job security, recognition and immediate supervisor's behavior were related to JS (Jiskani, 2011).

A study by Wang (2024) achieves that organizational environment, salary and benefits, career planning and leadership style are positively related to employee satisfaction. The latest work on job satisfaction has shifted to studying job satisfaction and understanding the factors that are responsible for these differences among the public and private sector employees (DeSantis & Durst, 1996). The research has pointed that the workplace environment must be taken into consideration in order to understand the dynamics behind these differences. Three factors that are most relevant to the suitable working environment are highlighted in research includes: organizational goal conflict, organizational goal specificity, in addition procedural constraints (Wright & Davis, 2003). Goal conflict is defined as lack of clear goals, goal specificity indicates lack of clear and defined goals and constraints are referred as the limitations that are imposed on the employees all these factors negatively impact job satisfaction as lack of clarity as well as constraints foster an unstable work environment in the private sector organizations (Wright & Davis, 2003).

In the large scale sample of over 13,000 U.S. personnel from around 130 organizations it was concluded that that women and men did not differ from one another in sources of satisfaction at work (Mason, 1995). According to study, Olafsdottir and Einarsdottir (2024), if workplace is gender-balanced employees show higher levels of the job satisfaction than those in any gender dominated workplace. Thus, a comparative analysis was conducted in 2025 that compared the satisfaction of employees in public sector jobs and private sector jobs and also analyzed the factors that are relevant to job satisfaction. The finding of the study depicted that employees working in the public sector reported more job satisfaction as compared to the private sector employees. It reflects how employees feel about their roles, responsibilities, the organizational culture, and rewards they receive in return for their efforts. In addition the role of supportive job policies was also found to be relevant in current study (Moldabekov et al., 2025). A study by DeSantis and Dust (1996) has also put forth similar findings by conducting the study on a sample of 12000 male & female aged between 19-26 years by extracting the information from diverse aspects.

The findings supported that level of job satisfaction was knowingly higher amid government job employees as compared to private job employees. Gender also plays very important role in terms of satisfaction with job because expectations regarding job and occupation are very different from both genders. Thus, a large sample scale study conducted in China by Liu, Wu, Jiang, Wang, Liu and Tang (2021) found that there were no significant gender differences in JS in physicians of tertiary care hospitals. The employees who are satisfied with their job can build better teams which can nurture the positive work environment. All of these concepts are very much related to realm of psychology. The job satisfaction is also a very important concept in the psychology. The study had similar findings in Pakistan (Kamrani, Zia & Mursaleen, 2024). The question that arises in this regard is, employees of which sector are more satisfied with their jobs? Either it is public or private? And also whether there are any gender differences in job satisfaction. It is hypothesized that there will be significant difference in terms of JS in public and private sector employees. Also it is hypothesized that there will be a gender difference in terms of JS.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A stratified convenient sample of the 300 (female: 123, male: 177) employees was drawn from Karachi, Pakistan. The total number of government employees was 143 and the rest were of employees of private sector. The sample was of ages between 19 to 64 years (mean age=36.47, SD=11.33). The sample belonged to the wide range of fields like banking and finance to police and teaching.

**Table 1**

*Occupation-Wise Distribution of Sample*

Occupation	Count	Percentage in sample
Public sector employees	143	47.66%
Private sector employees	157	52.33%

## Measures of Study

The 10 items generic JS scale was developed. This scale measure different aspects of JS, that covers intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The scale can be rated on 5 points from strongly disagree to strongly agree. It is a frequently used measure of JS, strong reliability & validity (McDonald et al., 1997).

## Procedure of Study

This research was done in Karachi, Pakistan. The data was collected from a number of private and public organizations. The consent was acquired before collection of data. Subjects filled the questionnaires in the presence of the researchers. To test the hypothesis t test was calculated. Descriptive statistics were also used to measure the mean values and standard deviation of job satisfaction. For research ethical standards are followed. Consent was taken from participants and relevant organizations. The participants were told that they can leave this research if they want and any time. The data collected from participants was kept personal and only used for research purposes.

## RESULTS OF STUDY

To statistically check the significance of the difference in job satisfaction in public and private sector employees, t-test was calculated. In this connection, the following are the results of the current study.

**Table 2**

*Differences in JS in Public and Private Sector Employees (N=300)*

	Public (N=143)		Private (N=157)		T	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
JS	36.95	6.96	34.94	7.99	-2.30	0.01	0.26

\*Mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

The table 2 shows that significant difference was found in job satisfaction where public sector employees were found more satisfied than the private sector employees due to one or another reason.

**Table 3***Gender Differences in JS (N=300)*

	Female (N=123)		Male (N=177)		T	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
JS	35.99	7.12	35.13	7.63	0.98	0.16	0.11

\*Mean difference is not significant at  $p < .05$ .**Table 4***Differences in JS in Public and Private Sector Female Employees (N=123)*

	Public (N=54)		Private (N=69)		T	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
JS	35.81	6.42	36.49	7.65	-0.52	0.30	0.09

\*Mean difference is not significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 4 shows that the difference in job satisfaction of public sector and private sector female employees is insignificant as per the results obtained through the statistical procedure to reach the conclusion.

**Table 5***Differences in JS in Public and Private Sector Male Employees (N=177)*

	Public (N=89)		Private (N=88)		T	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
JS	37.64	7.98	33.67	7.26	3.46	0.00	0.52

\*Mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

Table 5 shows that significant difference was found in job satisfaction where public sector male employees were found more satisfied than private sector male employees as per the results of current study.

## DISCUSSION

This study was attempt to examine whether there is significant difference in job satisfaction among employees of government and private sector. The results indicate that public sector employees have significantly higher degree of job satisfaction. This finding is new in context of Pakistan and very little literature is available that compares the psychological aspects of employees of government and private sector in Pakistan. Interestingly difference in female public and private sector employees is insignificant indicating that females tend to be equally satisfied (or dissatisfied) with their jobs while male government employees are found at a significantly higher job satisfaction (table 4 & 5). According to Wang (2024) leadership style, organizational environment, benefits, salary and, career planning and are positively related to the satisfaction of employee. The question arises that, which sector has these aspects more, Government or private? While organizational environment, career planning and leadership

styles be better in private sector salaries, benefits (specially job security) are more in public sector jobs.

In economic study of public private wage variance [Akram \(2022\)](#) concludes that government jobs may not be best paid jobs but the job security makes it very attractive for people because of the fluctuating economic conditions of country. A previous study conducted on the topic of job satisfaction is also highlighted the same factors that are responsible for differences in satisfaction level of employees. The factors showed were: working hours, promotion policies, time schedule, flexibility, remuneration and breaks and holidays ([Sanchez & Puete, 2020](#)). Studies have depicted that government jobs provide Job stability and better working hours, therefore level of job satisfaction is higher. However but in terms of remuneration the private sector jobs are better paid that might also impact their job satisfaction in diverse situations and circumstances ([Sanchez & Puete, 2020](#)). It is also relevant to note here that public sector may not be providing best salaries but private sector is also not very much willing to provide better wages.

Although in banking and finance sectors private sector is providing far better salaries as compared to government but in education sector (school, colleges and universities) private sector is giving equal or lesser salaries. Equal or less salary and far less job security creates a sense of dissatisfaction in employees. The 2nd hypothesis of this study was related to gender difference in job satisfaction. In current study the insignificant difference in job satisfaction indicates that both men and women are equally satisfied (or dissatisfied) with their jobs. A number of causes be related to this finding. According to [Khan \(2024\)](#) there is less amount of pay disparity in terms of gender in Pakistan ([Khan, 2024](#)). Pay disparity in terms of gender does exist in Pakistan but this, again is a phenomenon explicit to private sector. As Pakistan is traditional society, women are not usually likely to work so when do work they compare them self with non-working women instead of men and remain satisfied ([Arshad et al, 2015](#)). In a very large scale study by [Mason \(1995\)](#) it was found that the gender difference in JS is not significant.

## CONCLUSION

This study compared the job satisfaction level in employees of private sector and public sector. Employees of public sector institutions were found more satisfied as compared to private sector employees. Job security and other benefits present in public sector were discussed as the probable cause of satisfaction. This finding gives highlights this important feature of Pakistani society. This study also studied gender difference in job satisfaction. There was no significant gender difference found in this regard that is consistent with the previous studies on this topic. Many probable causes of this were discussed, namely lesser pay disparity in terms of gender and also lower expectation from job is females as confirmed through existing literature and this research study. Therefore, this study is significant to provide meaningful contributions to the existing literature from different perspectives in analyzing the issues more comprehensively in particular context.



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