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# JOB SATISFACTION OF FEMALE CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS IN MALE DOMINATED FIELDS

Patience F. Tunji-Olayeni., James D. Owolabi., Lekan M. Amusan and David O. Nduka  
Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

## ABSTRACT

*Employee satisfaction plays a crucial role in organizational performance and survival. The present study assessed job satisfaction of female construction professionals in male dominated fields specifically, construction. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design with the aid of questionnaires to elicit information purposively from 50 female construction professionals in Lagos, Nigeria. Data from the survey was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics like frequencies, means, cross tabs and inferential statistics like correlation. The major finding is that most of the respondents' within the age bracket of 30 and 39 were dissatisfied with their salaries and fringe benefits. There was also a correlation between respondents' age and level of satisfaction. The study recommends that construction organization should improve on their salaries and fringe benefits so that employees can be motivated to put in their best thereby increasing organizational performance.*

**Keywords:** age, construction industry, job satisfaction, Nigeria, women

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of changes have occurred in the workplaces. Women are now entering into careers that used to be an exclusive preserve for men. Engineering and construction are fields that have low entrants and retention of women because of the negative image of these sectors. The construction industry in particular is seen as an industry that is hazardous and requires brute strength. Ibem *et al.*, (2011) noted that the construction industry is characterized by high volume of work and harsh working conditions. Nonetheless, some women are found in the construction industry. This may be because of the reports of skill shortages in the industry (Amusan *et al.*, 2017). The construction industry is a potent motivator of the national economy (Tunji-Olayeni and Omuh, 2010). It contributes significantly to social and economic development of nation. This it does by contributing to Gross Domestic Product (GDP),

providing jobs and the infrastructure that the society needs. Employees play significant roles in sectors like construction which depend heavily on human resource. Employee satisfaction can affect employee turnover which can be detrimental to organizational performance and survival (Oluwatayo and Amole, 2011).

## **2. JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which a person conforms to his or her work environment or the pleasant feelings a person gets from his or her work experiences (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is the willingness of an employee to stay within an organization despite inducement to leave (Avi-Ithzal, 1988). It could also be viewed as a positive or negative judgment that a person makes about his or her job (Weiss, 2002).

### **2.1. Personal Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction**

These factors may also be referred to as demographic factors and it includes age, gender, educational level and working experiences. Age has been found to affect job satisfaction. Al-Ajmi (2001) found that younger people are less satisfied with their jobs because they consider themselves more mobile to seek better alternatives than their older counterparts. Gender has also been found to affect job performance although conflicting evidences exist. While (Spear, Gould and Lee, 2000) found that women are more satisfied with their jobs Hulin and Smith, (1976) noted that women are less satisfied with their job. The later may be due to work place inequality (in terms of salaries, promotions and other work place benefits) between men and women. Educational qualification also contributes to job satisfaction. Okpara 1996 and Sokoya 2000 found that more educated employees were more satisfied with their work.

### **2.2. Work Place Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction**

Amin, Ofori and Okyere (2015) identified 8 work place factors affecting job satisfaction. These factors include: pay, recognition, supervision, nature of work, job security, work environment and co-workers. Some of these factors are discussed below.

**2.2.1. PAY:** Pay has a significant effect on job satisfaction (Arnold and Feldmann, 1996). Poor pay can lead to dissatisfaction and discontent (Ching, 1977). Workers belief their pay indicates the value placed on them by the organization (Amin, *et al.*, 2015).

**2.2.2. RECOGNITION:** Recognizing workers for their contribution to organizational performance is a major way of motivating them. Herzberg (1959) noted that workers can be recognized in different ways including: presentation of awards, promotion or salary increase.

**2.2.3. SUPERVISION:** Supervision also plays a leading role in determining workers' satisfaction. Bacharach, Bauer and Coloney (1989) explained that positive supervision improves job satisfaction because workers are treated with respect and their opinion is considered valuable. On the other hand, negative supervision breeds poor job satisfaction because under such condition, workers are constantly criticized.

**2.2.4. WORK ENVIRONMENT:** Work environment is an important factor affecting job satisfaction. Handy (1997) noted that an inspiring workplace, will breed inspired workforce. He also noted that the reverse will be the case in an environment that is not inspiring.

## **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

The study was based on a quantitative research approach using questionnaires that were purposively distributed to 50 female construction professionals in Lagos, Nigeria. Descriptive statistics like frequencies, means, cross tabs and inferential statistics like correlation were used to analyze data obtained from the questionnaire.

### 3.1. Characteristics of respondents

**Table 1** Characteristics of respondents

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Designation</b>	
Architect	16
Builder	8
Quantity Surveyor	12
Engineer	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Years of experience</b>	
<10 years	19
10-20 years	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Age</b>	
<29 years	11
30-39 years	32
40-49 years	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

Table 1 indicates the demography of the respondents in terms of their age, years of experience and designation. From the table, 16 respondents were Architects, 8 were Builders, 12 were Quantity Surveyors while 14 were Engineers. Thirty one respondents have a work experience of between 10 and 20 years while the remaining 19 respondents had worked for less than 10 years. From the table, 3 age categories can be seen. Eleven respondents were less than 29 years of age, 32 respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age while the remaining 7 respondents were within 40 and 49 years of age.

### 3.2. Assessing Job Satisfaction

**Table 2** Type of satisfaction

<b>Satisfaction Type</b>	<b>Mean</b>
I am satisfied with the chances i have to do something that makes me feel good about myself	4.42
i am satisfied with the chances i have to accomplish something worthwhile	4.38
i am satisfied with the friendliness of the people i work with	3.88
i am satisfied with the respect i receive from the people i work with	3.78
i am satisfied with the chances i have to learn new things	3.74
i am satisfied with the way i am treated by people i work with	3.52
i am satisfied with the amount of job security i have	2.52
i am satisfied with the amount of pay i get	2.46
i am satisfied with fringe benefits i receive	2.34

Table 2 shows the mean score of respondents' satisfaction. Most of the respondents are satisfied with the chances they have to do something that makes them feel good about themselves with a mean score of 4.42. This is followed by 'i am satisfied with the chances I have to accomplish something worthwhile with a mean score of 4.38 and 'i am satisfied with the friendliness of the people I work with. This had a 3.88 mean score. From the table, it can be seen that the respondents were greatly dissatisfied with the level of security that their jobs offer, the amount of pay (salaries) they receive and the fringe benefits they get from their present employments. These items of dissatisfaction have the lowest means in table 2

### 3.3. Correlation between respondents' age and satisfaction

**Table 3** Correlation between respondents' age and satisfaction

I am satisfied with the chances i have to do something that makes me feel good about myself	0.819
i am satisfied with the chances i have to accomplish something worthwhile	0.828
i am satisfied with the friendliness of the people i work with	0.468
i am satisfied with the respect i receive from the people i work with	0.401
i am satisfied with the chances i have to learn new things	0.000*
i am satisfied with the way i am treated by people i work with	0.927
i am satisfied with the amount of job security i have	0.732
i am satisfied with the amount of pay i get	0.000*
i am satisfied with fringe benefits i receive	0.002*

All the items of satisfaction in table 3, there is a statistically significant correlation between respondents' age and three items of satisfaction namely: chances to learn new things ( $0.000 < 0.005$ ), amount of pay ( $0.000 < 0.005$ ) and fringe benefits received ( $0.002 < 0.005$ ). All other items do not show any correlations. At a particular age people might be interested in learning new things so as to broaden their horizon and gain experience for a better job in the future. Interest in earning new things may also stem from the fact that sometime in the future the skills acquired may be needed in starting and running their own business. At a specific age in life, particularly when one is starting or raising a family, there may be great financial need that one could easily get dissatisfied with a job having a relatively low pay. Hence, there is a correlation between age and satisfaction. Moreover, younger people believe they are more mobile than their older counterparts and can quit a less paying job for a higher paying job at any time. Some others particularly, older people find it difficult to quit a job once they have settled into it. The same applies for fringe benefits which may include career developments, promotions and other allowances. These fringe benefits motivate employees and boost job satisfaction.

### 3.4. Crosstabs between respondents’ age and satisfaction with pay

**Table 4** Crosstab between respondents’ age and satisfaction with pay

		<29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	Total
i am satisfied with the amount of pay i get	strongly disagree	0	7	0	7
	disagree	1	21	7	29
	not sure	0	1	0	1
	agree	8	2	0	10
	strongly agree	2	1	0	3
<b>Total</b>		11	32	7	50

Table 4 indicates respondents’ degree of satisfaction with the amount of pay (salaries) they receive. Of all the respondents surveyed, 21 of them within the age bracket 30-39 are dissatisfied with the amount of pay they get. This may be because many people settle down to raise their family between the ages of 30 and 39. At the stage of their life, people need all the money they can get to meet the financial obligations of raising a family.

### 3.5. Crosstabs between respondents’ age and satisfaction with fringe benefits

**Table 5** Crosstabs between respondents’ age and satisfaction with fringe benefits

		<29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	Total
i am satisfied with fringe benefits i receive	strongly disagree	0	9	0	9
	disagree	2	20	6	28
	not sure	0	0	1	1
	agree	9	2	0	11
	strongly agree	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>		11	32	7	50

From table 5, it can be seen that respondents within the age bracket of 30 and 39 years are dissatisfied with the fringe benefits they receive from their present employment.

### 3.6. Crosstabs between respondents’ age and satisfaction with chances to learn new things

**Table 6** Crosstabs between respondents’ age and satisfaction with chances to learn new things

		<29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	Total
i am satisfied with the chances i have to learn new things	strongly disagree	0	1	0	1
	disagree	0	2	5	7
	not sure	2	2	0	4
	agree	3	26	1	30
	strongly agree	6	1	1	8
<b>Total</b>		11	32	7	50

Table 6 shows the cross tabs between age and satisfaction with chances to learn new things. Respondents who are less than 29 years and those that fall within 30 and 39 years are more satisfied with the chances they have to learn new things; unlike their older counterparts. Younger people are more eager to learn new things so that they can broaden their horizon and gain experience for a better job in the future. This interest may also be because of the need to acquire relevant knowledge which will be useful in starting their businesses in the future.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study assessed job satisfaction of female professionals in the construction industry. The findings revealed that most of the respondents were dissatisfied with their salaries and the fringe benefits they get from their present employment. The study also found a correlation between respondents' age and satisfaction and that the greatest dissatisfaction came from respondents who were within the age of 30 and 39. The study recommends an improvement in salary and other fringe benefits to boost workers' productivity and ultimately improve organizational performance.

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