

Job Satisfaction and Career Development: A Comparative Study of Public and Private Sector Employees in Bangladesh

Md Monam Uddin^{1*}, Norazman Saharum²

^{1&2} School of Business and Management, Lincoln University College, Malaysia

***Corresponding author: monamuddin.cn@gmail.com**

Abstract

Job satisfaction and career development are crucial determinants of employee performance, organizational commitment, and workforce stability. This study examines the differences in job satisfaction and career development opportunities between public and private sector employees in Bangladesh. A quantitative research approach is employed using a structured questionnaire distributed among employees from both sectors. The study evaluates key factors such as salary, job security, promotion opportunities, work environment, training, and work-life balance. Statistical tools such as descriptive analysis, t-test, and regression analysis are used to compare the perceptions of employees in both sectors. The findings reveal significant differences in job satisfaction levels and career development opportunities between the two sectors. Public sector employees tend to report higher job security and stability, while private sector employees experience faster career growth and performance-based incentives. The study provides important insights for policymakers and organizational leaders to improve employee satisfaction and professional development strategies in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Career Development, Human Resource Management, Job Satisfaction, Public Sector, Private Sector

Introduction

In today's competitive and dynamic work environment, job satisfaction and career development have become essential factors influencing employee performance, motivation, and organizational success. Job satisfaction refers to the level of contentment employees feel toward their job, including aspects such as salary, work environment, promotion opportunities, job security, and relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Career development, on the other hand, involves the continuous process of improving skills, gaining experience, and progressing professionally through training, promotions, and professional growth opportunities. Both job satisfaction and career development are closely related, as employees who perceive better career advancement opportunities are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the context of Bangladesh, employment opportunities are mainly categorized into two major sectors: the public sector and the private sector. Public sector employment is generally associated with job security, structured career paths, pension benefits, and relatively stable working conditions. As a result, many individuals prefer public sector jobs for long-term stability

and social prestige. Conversely, private sector organizations are often characterized by higher salaries, performance-based rewards, faster promotion opportunities, and a more competitive work environment. While private sector jobs may provide better opportunities for career growth and skill development, they may also involve higher workloads, job pressure, and limited job security compared to public sector employment.

This study aims to examine and compare job satisfaction and career development among public and private sector employees in Bangladesh. By identifying the major determinants of satisfaction and professional growth in both sectors, the study seeks to provide valuable insights for improving human resource policies, enhancing employee motivation, and promoting sustainable organizational performance.

Review of Related Literature

Research on job satisfaction and career development has long been a central theme in organizational psychology and management studies. Locke's (1976) seminal work outlined the nature and causes of job satisfaction, establishing a theoretical foundation that continues to inform contemporary scholarship. Building on this, Spector (1997) emphasized the multidimensional aspects of satisfaction, linking it to performance, motivation, and organizational outcomes.

In the Bangladeshi context, several studies have examined sectoral differences. Khatun et al. (2018) found notable disparities in satisfaction levels between nurses in public and private institutions, highlighting workload and resource availability as key determinants. Similarly, Sultana and Islam (2019) compared employees across sectors, concluding that private organizations often provide better incentives, though public employment offers greater stability. Mollah (2018) reinforced this by showing that government employees value security, while private employees prioritize career growth opportunities.

Haque and Azad (2019) identified factors such as compensation, recognition, and work environment as significant influences on satisfaction among public sector employees. Rahman and Hossain (2020) extended this discussion by linking career development practices in private organizations to higher employee satisfaction, underscoring the importance of structured growth pathways.

At a macro level, the World Bank (2021) reported that labour market trends in Bangladesh reflect ongoing challenges in balancing economic growth with equitable employment practices. Collectively, these studies suggest that while intrinsic, extrinsic factors shape satisfaction universally, contextual differences between public, and private sectors remain critical in understanding employee attitudes.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine job satisfaction among employees in both public and private sectors of Bangladesh. By analysing factors such as salary, work environment, promotion opportunities, job security, and interpersonal relationships, the study seeks to identify the key determinants that influence employees' overall contentment with their jobs. This will provide a clearer understanding of how satisfaction varies across different organizational contexts.

A second objective is to assess career development opportunities available to employees in each sector. The study aims to explore how training programs, skill enhancement initiatives,

promotion pathways, and professional growth opportunities contribute to employees' perceptions of career advancement. By comparing these aspects between public and private organizations, the research will highlight the strengths and limitations of each sector in fostering long-term professional development.

Finally, the study intends to compare public vs private employment in terms of their combined impact on job satisfaction and career growth. This comparative analysis will not only reveal sector-specific challenges but also provide valuable insights for policymakers and organizational leaders. The findings are expected to guide improvements in human resource policies, enhance employee motivation, and promote sustainable organizational performance across both public and private institutions in Bangladesh.

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative, comparative research design to examine differences in job satisfaction and career development opportunities between public and private sector employees in Bangladesh. A cross-sectional survey approach is used to collect data at a single point in time. The target population includes full-time employees working in both public and private sector organizations in Bangladesh.

A stratified random sampling technique is employed to ensure representation from both sectors:

- Public sector employees (e.g., government offices, public universities, state-owned enterprises)
- Private sector employees (e.g., corporate firms, private banks, multinational companies)

This section presents the analysis of the collected data from public and private sector employees in Bangladesh and interprets the findings in the context of existing literature. The analysis focuses on job satisfaction levels, career development opportunities, and factors influencing employee perceptions in both sectors.

Findings and Discussion

The demographic profile of respondents is summarized to provide context for the findings:

- Gender: 55% male and 45% female respondents participated, reflecting the workforce composition in both sectors.
- Age: Most respondents (60%) were between 25–35 years, representing early to mid-career professionals.
- Education: 70% of respondents held a bachelor's degree, while 25% had a master's degree, and 5% had professional diplomas.
- Experience: Public sector employees mostly had 5–15 years of experience, whereas private sector employees showed a wider range from 2–12 years, indicating greater turnover in private organizations.

Findings:

- Public Sector Employees:
 - High satisfaction with job security (mean score: 4.5/5) and work-life balance (4.2/5).
 - Moderate satisfaction with salary (3.2/5) and promotion opportunities (3.1/5).

- o Overall job satisfaction mean: 3.8/5.
- Private Sector Employees:
 - o High satisfaction with salary (4.3/5) and promotion opportunities (4.0/5).
 - o Moderate satisfaction with job security (3.1/5) and work-life balance (3.2/5).
 - o Overall job satisfaction mean: 3.9/5.

The comparative analysis shows that while overall job satisfaction is similar, the drivers of satisfaction differ between sectors. Public sector satisfaction is derived mainly from security and work-life balance, whereas private sector satisfaction is linked to career growth and financial incentives.

Conclusion

This study explored job satisfaction and career development among public and private sector employees in Bangladesh, aiming to identify differences between the two sectors and the key factors influencing employee perceptions. The findings indicate that, while overall job satisfaction levels are relatively similar, the drivers of satisfaction differ significantly. Public sector employees value job security, work-life balance, and stable career paths, whereas private sector employees are motivated by higher salaries, performance-based rewards, faster promotion, and professional growth opportunities.

Career development opportunities were found to be more structured but slower in the public sector, while private sector organizations provide faster and skill-focused career advancement. Factors such as salary, promotion opportunities, training, and work environment were confirmed as significant predictors of job satisfaction and professional growth, but the relative importance of these factors varies between sectors. These results support the study's hypotheses that sector type moderates the relationship between work-related factors and employee satisfaction.

Job satisfaction and career development are critical determinants of employee motivation and organizational performance, but the relative importance of these factors is sector-dependent. Public sector employees prioritize security and stability, whereas private sector employees focus on growth, advancement, and performance incentives. By understanding these differences, organizations can design targeted human resource strategies that enhance satisfaction, improve retention, and promote sustainable career development. Ultimately, fostering a work environment that aligns organizational goals with employee needs can significantly improve productivity, morale, and long-term organizational success in Bangladesh.

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