

## **Investigating the Influence of Work Environment Factors on Employees' Job Satisfaction and Determining the Most Important Ones at Mahan Air Company**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this empirical research is to investigate the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company in Iran and determine the most important work environment factors for Mahan air employees. Today all the managers know how important job satisfaction is for all the employees of the organizations. Several factors influence employees' job satisfaction such as external environment factors, technical environment factors and also work environment. This research focus on investigating the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction. This survey conducted in seven departments of Mahan Air Company. Findings of the research indicate that all the work environment factors have significant influence on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air but employee participation has the greatest influence on employees' job satisfaction and performance feedback has the least influence. In conclusion, the research helps the managers of Mahan Air Company to obtain a better comprehension of various components of the work environment and the influence of these factors on employees' job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, mahan air, work environment factors

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Today all the managers know job satisfaction is an important matter for all the employees. Several factors affect job satisfaction. This empirical research endeavors to explore the effect of work environment factors on employee's job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company in Iran and find the environment work factors which have most important influence on employees' job satisfaction. The research considers communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description as work environment factors.

The most important element in today organizations is their human resource. For being a competitive company, it is essential that organizations pay attention to their human resource, specially their job satisfaction.

Some researchers endeavored to explore the effect of different factors which are related to work environment on employees' job satisfaction. Ting (1997) declared that experimental evidence showed the characteristics of job like opportunities for promotion, task clarity, present pay, connection with colleagues as well as supervisors have important effect on job satisfaction of the employees. Ellickson and Logsdon (2002) study which explained that the employees' satisfaction of public sectors drastically influenced by their conceptions are promotional

opportunities, pay, connections with supervisors, employee's performance, management systems and irregular benefits. Bahatti and Qureshi (2007) studied 34 Palestinian organizations from oil and gas, telecommunication and banking sectors and found that job satisfaction is correlated with employee participation, employee productivity and employee commitment. Shikdar and Das (2003) studied 48 operators of a large fish processing plant in sultanate of Oman for investigating the effect of utilizing of performance feedback on increasing work satisfaction in repetitive industrial task. The result of their survey showed that when a specified goal standard was given, performance feedback and workers' satisfaction increased drastically.

**Problem statement:** In order to be successful in current global economy, companies must concern more on maintaining and developing their employees. Human resource like other assets can make the organization grow. The organizations should pay so much attention to employees for improving their productivity, performance and survival in competitive environment. Because of significant role of human resource on organization performance, managers try to satisfy their employees. Satisfied employees would generate greater quality performance in right time which directs to increase

profits. When employees are satisfied with their job, would be more creative and cause advances that let the company to develop constantly with changes in market conditions. On the other hand, low level of employee commitment which result from lack of job satisfaction, effect on organization performance. So, organizations try to increase employees' satisfaction or at least keep employees satisfied by applying a series of policies and laws to support employees in work place. Organizations have direct connection with two kinds of environment: internal and external environment. They have capability to manage internal environment more than external environment. One of the elements of internal environment is work environment which has great effect on their performance. So, it is very important for managers to know and comprehend the different elements within the work environment that have an impact on employees' job satisfaction. There are some work environment factors that have been found to influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Communication, employee participation, performance feedback, reward, job security and job description are the work environment factors that have influence on employees' job satisfaction.

One of the biggest airline company in Iran is Mahan Airline. This airline company endeavors to remain competitive and increase its market share in airline industry. So, this research tries to investigate the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at this company. In addition, it determines the most important work environment factors which have impact on employee's job satisfaction.

**Research objectives and questions:** The objectives of this research are as follows: first, to determine the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company, second, to determine the most important work environment factors for Mahan Air employees. The research questions for this study are:

- To what extent work environment factors (communication, employee participation, performance feedback, reward, job security and job description) have influence on employees' job satisfaction in Mahan Air?
- Which of the work environment factors are the most important factors for Mahan Air employees?

**Research purpose:** Job satisfaction can be identified in terms of reduce employee's turnover, absenteeism and increase productivity. Higher level of satisfaction among employees who have an important role in achieving strategic objectives helps managers to make better decisions and finally causes increasing sustainability of the company in competitive environment. As competitive market, airline companies face several threats and opportunities. Mahan Air Company as a largest private

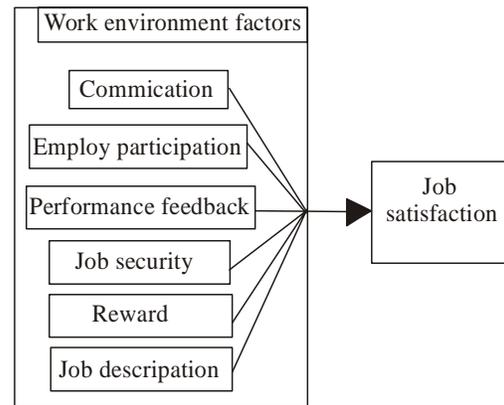


Fig. 1: Research framework

airline company in Iran must compete with other public and private airlines to increase its market share. To achieve this goal this company must pay so much attention to the matter of employees' satisfaction. With satisfied employees, the quality of service and employees' commitment increase. On the other hand, turnover, absenteeism and cost decrease, which finally influence on organization performance. As the purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company, so the result of this research can be useful to increase managers' knowledge about the influence of work environment on employees' satisfaction to improve job satisfaction among employees. Also it can be used as a guideline for Mahan Air and many other airline companies to obtain a better comprehension of various components of the work environment and the influence of these factors on employees' job satisfaction.

**Research framework and hypotheses:** Generally the aim of this research is to determine the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air. As it mentioned some of work environment factors have been found to influence job satisfaction. Research framework suggests that work environment has an influence upon job satisfaction of employees. In this research, work environment includes communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description. The research framework for the study can be illustrated by Fig. 1.

In this research study environment factors are considered as independent factors and job satisfaction as dependent factor. The research tries to explore the potential influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction.

The hypotheses for this research are as follows:

**H1:** Communication in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

- H2:** Employee participation in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.
- H3:** Performance feedback in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.
- H4:** Job security in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.
- H5:** Reward has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.
- H6:** Job description has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

**Mahan air company:** Mahan Air Company situated in Kerman, Iran, is the second largest company which is active in the airline industry. The airline established in 1992 as a private company. In mid 1999, Mahan Air modernized its fleet by introducing Airbus A300 wide body aircraft into the fleet; this was followed in 2002 by adding long range Airbus 310-300, enabling it to offer the customers non-stop access to prime destinations such as Bangkok. During 10 years following Mahan Air has made a good improvement in every aspect of its operation including aircraft utilization, dispatch reliability, on-time performance and in-flight service. Mahan Air currently operates scheduled passenger services to thirty four international destinations in Europe, Asia and Persian Gulf. The company covers thirty four domestic networks within Iran. The airline currently has over 2600 employees and became a member of International Air Transport Association (IATA) in 2001.

**Job satisfaction:** The concept of job satisfaction for the first time developed from Hawthorn studies in late 1920s and early 1930s by Elton Mayo at Hawthorn plant of Western Electric Company in Chicago. The result was that emotions of the employees can influence their working behaviors. Since job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon, researchers have given great attention to the matter. Many researchers defined job satisfaction. Scarppello and Vandenberg (1992) concluded that job satisfaction is the difference between what employees want or expect from certain job and what they really get from particular work.

**Importance of job satisfaction:** The significant of job satisfaction among the employees in certain institutions and organizations date back to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with introduction of Maslow (1956) theory. Ever since great consideration has been given by researchers to the subject. Job satisfaction has considerable significance for both employers and employees. Employers obtain advantage from employees who are contented with their work since they are to be expected to obtain from lower staff income but higher productivity if they can provide a

good level of job satisfaction to the employees. Nevertheless, employees might as well need to feel content with the job they do and provide the amount of time that they need to dedicate for all through their working lives (Nguyen *et al.*, 2003). Job satisfaction is important for employees and organization. Employee satisfaction is important for organization for these reasons:

- Enhance employee retention
- Increase productivity
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Reduce turnover, recruiting and training costs
- Enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty
- More energized employees
- Improve teamwork
- Higher quality products and services due to more energized employees

Furthermore, importance of employees' job satisfaction for employees is because of:

- Employee will believe that the organization will be satisfying in the long term
- They will care about the quality of their work
- They will create and deliver superior value to the customer
- They are more committed to the organization
- Their works are more productive

**Work environment:** Many years have passed since the hawthorn studies which are the first examinations of the influence of environmental factors on productivity. The result of this study has shown that beside pay, factors such as work group norms, informal organization and aptitudes of the individuals have significant influence on employees' performance and motivation in an organization.

Regarding to Ayres (2005), the work environment must motivate employees to go to extreme lengths to fulfill their responsibilities and feel connected to the organization, improve the work conditions to support organizations strategic intent and satisfy employees who have essential roles in the success of the organization. It is important for management to know and understand the different elements within the work environment that have influence on employees' job satisfaction. So, the work environment can be designed to satisfy the needs of their employees and accomplish strategic goals. Business leaders must therefore formulate the work environment that focuses on components pertaining to the job content and context to unite the organization human resource with its vision and mission, to generate job satisfaction and fulfill an employee's needs so that they feel valued and perceive their job as been meaningful. The organizations

need to adapt a structured approach to align elements within the work environment with the company's strategy and need business leaders to show commitment and support towards improving conditions influence on work environment, which not only affects employees' job satisfaction but also affect their levels of performance and motivation. Eisenger (2002) stated that leaders need to generate an environment to inspire, support and leverage the imagination and initiative of employees in the organization. Thus lead to positive outcomes like better performance, lower staff turnover and greater commitment toward achieving organizational goals. Bergh and Theron (2000) denoted that both the working environment as well as the employees plays a part to the organization accomplishment and the form of employee-employer contact will verify the job satisfaction level between employees. Employees' job satisfaction level is highly influenced by the main factors in the employee's working environment. Factors such as communication, employee participation, performance feedback, reward, job security and job description are the environment factors which influence on employees' job satisfaction investigated in this research.

**Communication:** Dwyer (2005) defined organizational communication as the process whereby people within an organization give and receive messages. The latter viewpoint is reflected by Mayers and Myers (1983) who defined organizational communication as "the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organized behavior". Management practice emphasizes the role of communication and variety of research shows communication can influence employees' job satisfaction. Yammarino and Naughton (1988) asserted that there is a significant relationship between communication time spent and work outputs such as effort and strength consume among employees and their work satisfaction. It means that amount of time managers spend for communicating with employees may have positive influence on employees' job satisfaction. Effective communication is seen as an essential element of the work environment that ought to inform employees of industry challenges, what is happening in the workplace and the company's strategy intent. Beyerlein *et al.* (2003) stated it is management responsibility to align support systems in the strategic design, so that employees can communicate their needs and frustrations, as this will keep an organization functioning effectively. Furthermore, Holbeche (1998) mentioned that in an organization where change is inevitable, open and honest communication are essential elements in building trust and belief in the necessity for change. Organizations should have an open communication channel to create a working environment that encourages employees to raise concerns and disseminate information with other employees on industry challenges or new offerings,

promoting a cohesive workforce and employee development to inspire job satisfaction amongst employees. The suitable communication system which was developed lets the employees to work through both formal and informal communication links development, which makes sure that the members are always informed and involved. This leads to the improvement of job satisfaction level among employees. To measure the influence of communication on employees' job satisfaction, we can consider indicators such as informal, open communication, amount of time managers spend for communication and general communication systems in organizations.

**Employee participation:** Definition of employee participation is involvement of workers in some way with making decisions in a business organization (Encarta, 2009). Productivity and efficiency were produced by that provide direct link between employees' involvement in making decision and work outputs such as increasing of job satisfaction and productivity. Participation in decision making will increase satisfaction among employees especially their self-actualization needs, therefore increasing their motivation and job performance (Likert, 1961). It is imperative for organization to encourage their employees to participate in decision making and give them chance to make suggestions. In such situation employees have more opportunities to participate in company's operations which cause to see themselves as critical and valued resources for organization. Smith (2006) wrote "jobs and work environment using high involvement activities provide people with autonomy, learning opportunities, purpose and a way to grow and get ahead". Furthermore, management must guide employees in order to achieve desired outcomes and gain the confidence to participate in other aspects of the business. The effective participation programs will not only provide a huge responsibility among the employees but also important skills and information they needed to successfully carry out the roles. The employee participation has a huge consequence upon job satisfaction. Therefore emphasizing that organizations must authorize employees and provide them independence to make decisions in order to let them be aware of their accountability for their work. The employees will be managed to seriously participate in any activity of the organization and permit them to extend and obtain new skills as part of the job enrichment, which cause to higher involvement. If the organization gives them the opportunity, they will gain confidence in making decisions, realizing that they are the organization's best resources and that the supervisor's support is with them (Bailey, 1989). Employees will be more satisfied by giving employees chance to participate in decision making and creating a challenging environment and

giving autonomy to them. These factors can be considered as good indicators for measuring influence of employee participation on job satisfaction.

**Performance feedback:** Feedback is comment in the form of opinions about and reaction to something, intended to provide useful information for future decisions and development (Encarta, 2009). Performance feedback plays an essential role in responding and notifying employees regarding their performances and creates a good respond that consist of motivational atmosphere. In fact, feedback creates a good respond that consists of motivational values to standard the recipients by comparing themselves with their own performance. The respond may encourage the recipients to modify and improve their own performance standard as well as effort in their duties (Ilgen and Moore, 1987). Performance feedback is a key element that fosters job satisfaction. Increasing employees' job satisfaction more often occurs when there is a regular performance feedback in situation such as organizational changes, department processes, employment shifts, opportunities for advancement (Nadler, 1997). Company's directors and senior managers should encourage employees to get feedback from them on policies and procedures and other aspects relating to the work environment. In this situation employees feel a sense of satisfaction, so they pretend themselves as a worthwhile and valuable resources for organization. Indeed, organizations establish a working environment that gives employees the ability to think and get involve in activities. It causes promoting job satisfaction among the employees at the workplace. It is vital to establish a working environment that promotes a regular and constructive feedback to employees, so the effective feedback should be timely and clear, moreover it should give recognition they deserve for their contributions towards achieving strategic objectives. By providing timely, clear, regular and constructive feedback, employees' job satisfaction will be increased. Thus, these factors can be considered as good indicators for measuring the influence of performance feedback on job satisfaction.

**Job security:** Meltz (1989) defined job security broadly as "an individual remains employed with the same organization with no diminution of seniority, pay, pension rights, etc". Similarly, Herzberg (1968) defined job security as the extent to which an organization provides stable employment for the employees. Lately, the major concern of most managers is on how to attain a logical satisfaction level of job security for their employees. Organizations need to make available working environment which is safe and secure for their employees. Employees will be able to perform and focus well on their work if the working environment is highly secure compared to those who often live in fear of losing their jobs or due to the unsafe working environment. In such

situation organization performance and employees' job satisfaction will increase. Job security is concerned about work environment security and employees' confidence in their current job. Organizations should try to reduce unsafe conditions by using personal protective safety training, using poster and other propaganda and encouraging worker participation (Rosow and Zagaer, 1985). They also provide training program for employees to acquire new skills and knowledge about their jobs which protects employees against layoffs and provisions for a comfortable standard of living (Wood *et al.*, 2004). Organizations can increase job security with reduce unsafe condition; provide safety training and employees' perception towards their current job security. These elements can be helpful to measure the influence of job security on job satisfaction in organizations.

**Reward:** Rewards as determined by Zigon (1998) meant "something that increases the frequency of an employee action". Encarta dictionary (2009) defines reward as "something given or received for worthy behavior, or compensation given as an inducement to cause a desired act or circumstance to occur. A reward usually offers a tangible, specific goal that a person can work toward". The fundamental purpose of a reward system is to reward and retain good employees, motivate them to perform at their best and attract the right applicants to the job (Tan and Torrington, 2004). In addition, the reward program is to establish a payment system and connect this system to employees' performance which ultimately leads to employees' job satisfaction. Supportive work environment that encourages the employees to improve their performance can definitely be created if there is an efficient implementation of rewards within the system or organization as according to Freedman (1978). Recognition is taken by the employees when they feel the sense of appreciation and value. It will later increase the employees' level of morale which indirectly adds to a quality of services. Managers are constantly searching for ways to create a motivational environment where employees can work at their optimal levels to accomplish company objectives. Using monetary and non-monetary rewards programs are appropriate methods to create a motivational environment for employees. Non-monetary is referred as benefit which is given by an employer or job to an employee that is over and beyond the compensation package. It consists of more enjoyable job duties and an improved responsibility in decision making. As according to Gavin and Vinten (2005), organizations must set up particular non financial reward for better performance which resulting to job satisfaction among employees. This claim is supported by Stolovitch and Keeps (1999) who inventioned non-monetary recognition can be very motivating, helping to build feelings of confidence; and benefits, bonuses, or stock option are given to employees for meeting sales goals, achieving quality, outstanding performance in a given situation, or delivering a special

project. A reward program must comprise of both benefits of monetary and non-monetary. Stroh (2001) agreed that the rewards given must be suitable and meaningful for employees and organization who gives the reward. Apart from that, the reward has to be in line with employees' effort and only leads to job satisfaction. Nel *et al.* (2004) supposed that the job satisfaction level is heavily affected by employees' discernment of reward fairness. Besides, in order to let the employees' job satisfaction level to increase, the rewards given must be relative, fair and ought to be desired by them. These characteristics can be considered as suitable indicators for measuring the influence of reward on employees' job satisfaction.

**Job description:** According to Encarta dictionary (2009), job description is a document that states what duties have to be performed by a worker holding a particular job and what place that worker holds within the organization. There are some points in job description that are explained as follows: using job description will help an organization better understanding the experience and skill needed to enhance the success of the company. A job description typically outlines the necessary skills, training and education needed by a potential employee. It will spell out duties and responsibilities of the job. The job descriptions of employees which are not well written will bring to confusion of workplace and hurt communication. A strong job description should be clear and accurate which encompasses required skills, knowledge and training for specific job position. In addition, it should determine employees' responsibilities, duties and the level of authorities (Dessler, 2011). All the employees like to know what is expected of them, who is their supervisor, who is their subordinate and their authorities in decision making. When the organization provides this information in job description forms, employees will have a clear insight toward their jobs and finally their satisfaction will increase. Identification of clear and comprehensive job description is one of the main aspects of the work environment. Clear job description should identify responsibility of specific job, tools, equipment used, knowledge and skills required, relationships with others, positions and information about working conditions. The four segments of job description are as follows (Clark, 2008):

**A job summary:** This is an outline of particular position with a summary of description in terms of roles and functions.

**A list of job function:** This describes the details descriptions of each duty.

**A requirements section:** This includes the education, certification, licenses and appropriate experiences compulsory for doing the job.

Table 1: Planned and actual sample population

Department	Population	Planned sample size	Actual sample population
Maintenance	55	30	16
Airport services	51	28	15
Ticket reservation	40	22	14
Information technology	39	21	11
Accounting	48	26	18
Training	52	28	19
International affair	37	20	9
Total	322	175	102

**Other information:** This part will provide other important factors about the position, such as location, working hours, travel requirement, reporting relationships and so on.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative method is chosen for this research in data analyzing. Quantitative method is mainly chosen to be implemented for any technique of data collection like questionnaire or data analysis procedures like the statistics or graphs that produce or apply numerical data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

**Sample and data collection:** The participants are selected from group of employees who are working at Mahan Airline Company that locates in Iran. The respondents are the top managers and employees of different departments such as maintenance, air port services, ticket reservation, information technology, accounting, training and international affair. The researcher target group is from various academic skills (such as PhD, master and bachelor). The advantage of selecting respondents from different departments is to make the result precisely. The total numbers of respondents as showed in Table 1 are 322. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) the appropriate sample size for this amount of population is 175 people. The cluster sampling method is implemented in this particular research. Saunders *et al.* (2009) claimed that this sampling technique will be applied when the "natural" groupings in a statistical population are obviously seen. The name of this method simply tells that the participants who participate are those who actually are part of the group or cluster for cluster sampling. In this method, the total number of population is separated into several groups (clusters) which followed by the selection of a sample of groups. The necessary information will then be gathered from the elements within each of the group selected as described by Gay (1999). This may be performed to all elements within these groups or the selection of the elements subsamples may be performed within each of these groups. So questionnaires were handed over manually to respondents and 102 questionnaires were returned. So, 102 respondents were analyzed for this

Table 2: Work environment factors and job satisfaction classification

Construct	Category	No. item	Total No. of items
Work environment factors (part B)	communication employee	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	7
	participation performance	8, 9, 10, 11	4
	feedback	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	6
	job security	18, 19, 20, 21, 22	5
	reward	23, 24, 25, 26, 27	5
	job description	28, 29, 30, 31	4
	total		31

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha reliability value for part B of questionnaire

Work environment factors	Reliability
Communication	0.84
Employee participation	0.76
Performance feedback	0.70
Job security	0.74
Reward	0.83
Job description	0.72
Total	0.76

study and the response rate was approximately 58%. The sample size is shown in the Table 1.

**Research instrument:** The aim of this research is to determine the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction. Therefore, data collection concerns how information will be gathered to meet the research aim. In this research questionnaire has been chosen as the main instrument. The designed questionnaire consists of two parts: part A and part B (Appendix). Part A of the questionnaire consists of all demographic information of the respondent. There are seven items to demographic information which are gender, age, marital status, academic qualifications, years of work experience in company, position and department. Part B consists of 31 questions which are divided to 6 categories (work environment factors) to determine the influence of work environment on employees' job satisfaction and define the most important factors for employees. The measurement type that used is based on the Likert scale with responses ranging from 1(Never) 2(Seldom) 3(Sometimes) 4(Often) 5(Always). Table 2 shows the classification of work environment factors and job satisfaction.

**Reliability and validity:** In this research the Cronbach's alpha was applied to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire through checking by 10 employees of Iran National Airline (Iran Air Company). The Cronbach's alpha was calculated by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The results show the questions for part B are reliable ( $\alpha = 0.76$ ). According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), an alpha value between 0.65 to 0.95 is considered as satisfactory. Table 3 shows the Cronbach's alpha value for part B of the questionnaire.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents' gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid male	42	41.2	41.2	41.2
Valid female	60	58.8	58.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

Table 5: Frequency distribution of respondents' marital status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid Single	47	46.1	46.1	46.1
Valid married	55	53.9	53.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

Pilot test is applied for the validity of the survey. In this research, the researchers did a pilot test to a group of 10 employees in National Airline of Iran (Iran Air). Iran Air is a national airline and offers a similar service. In that airline respondents chosen comprise of three top managers and seven employees. The respondents have got similar characteristics with actual respondents in the target population. The pilot test carried out prior the process of gathering data by using the questionnaire. The questionnaire checked and refined to avoid any ambiguity which fits the pilot test purpose.

**Data analysis:** In this research first descriptive statistic was applied for simple summaries of demographic information of all the respondents. Then, simple regression was used to explore the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company. In addition, for determining the most important work environment factors for Mahan Air employees multiple regression was applied.

**Analysis of respondents demographic:** The first part of the questionnaire (part A) included general questions about the respondents who completed the survey. The demographic information like gender, age, marital status, academic qualification, work experience at Mahan Air, department and their positions are the items asked in this part. The information about each of the demographic data is followed:

**Gender:** From 102 respondents of research, 60 employees are female and 42 of them are male. Table 4 shows the majority of the respondents are female (58.8%) while male accounts for 41.2% of total respondents.

**Marital status:** In this research marital status categorized into two categories of single and married. From 102 respondents of the research, 47 employees are single and 55 of them are married. Table 5 shows the majority of the respondents are married (53.9%) while 46.1% of total respondents are single.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of respondents' age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid <30Y	55	53.9	53.9	53.9
Valid 30-40	41	40.2	40.2	94.1
Valid 41-50	4	3.9	3.9	98.0
Valid >50	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

Table 7: Frequency distribution of respondents' academic qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid Diploma	17	16.7	16.7	16.7
Valid Associate degree	22	21.6	21.6	38.2
Valid Bachelor degree	53	52.0	52.0	90.2
Valid Master degree	10	9.8	9.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

Table 8: Frequency distribution of respondents' working experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid <3 Y	19	18.6	18.6	18.6
Valid 3 to 6 Y	51	50.0	50.0	68.6
Valid 7 to 10 Y	23	22.5	22.5	91.2
Valid >10 Y	9	8.8	8.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

Table 9: Frequency distribution of respondents' position

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid employee	72	70.6	75.0	75.0
Valid manager	24	23.5	25.0	100.0
Total	96	94.1	100.0	-
Missing	6	5.9	-	-
Total	102	100.0	-	-

**Age:** As shown in Table 6, around half of the respondents, who agreed to participate in the survey are in category of less than 30 years old that constitute exactly 53.9% of the sample. 40.2% of the respondents are between 30 to 40 years old. 3.9% of the respondents represent middle aged group that is defined as 41 to 50 years old in this research. In addition, only 2% of the employees belong to the category of more than 50 years.

**Academic qualification:** Among all the respondents, a majority of them are bachelor holders and only 10 of them have master degree. According to our data which has shown in Table 7, the composition of the respondents is 52% bachelor holders, 21.6% have associate degree, 16.7% have diploma and only 9.8% of them have master.

**Working experience:** According to the information derived from Table 8, frequency distribution of the respondents' experience shows that 9 of 102 respondents (8.8%) have more than 10 years of professional experience and 18.6% less than 3 years work experience. Fifty persons have work experience between 7 to 10 years.

**Position:** The respondents' position level assigned in the questionnaire for this study is divided into two groups:

Table 10: Frequency distribution of respondents' department

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid Maintenance	16	15.7	15.7	15.7
Valid Airport services	15	14.7	14.7	30.4
Valid Ticket reservation	14	13.7	13.7	44.1
Valid IT	11	10.8	10.8	54.9
Valid Accounting	18	17.6	17.6	72.5
Valid Training	19	18.6	18.6	91.2
Valid International affair	9	8.8	8.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	-

employee and manager. According to Table 9, among 102 participants 70.6% (72 people) are employees and 23.5% (24 people) are managers. Six respondents did not fill out the position level question.

**Department:** Table 10 shows the respondents categorization based on their departments. They are classified to seven departments, which are maintenance, airport services, ticket reservation, accounting, information technology, training and international affair. According to Table 10, training department with 19 participants has the highest portion of research respondents.

**Influence of work environment factors:**

**Regression:** In this research job satisfaction consider as dependent variable and communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description as independent variables. So, regression can be used in order to:

- Determine the influence of work environment factors (communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description) on Mahan Air employees' job satisfaction.
- Determine the most important work environment factors which influence employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air.

Before performing regression test, to ensure accuracy and validity, the regression assumptions should be tested. The assumption for using regression which was tested in this research is normality. The results of the test are followed:

**Normality:** There are several methods to test normality. One of the most accurate and useful method is Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006). In this research the mentioned test was applied to test normality of the data. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test simply

Table 11: One-sample kolmogorov-smirnov test

		Communication	Employment participation	Performance feedback
N		102.00000	102.00000	102.00000
Normal parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	mean	3.02100	2.75080	2.88160
	*Std. deviation	0.67082	0.87176	0.72608
	Most extreme differences			
	absolute	0.08200	0.07000	0.08500
	positive	0.05900	0.07000	0.08500
	negative	-0.08200	-0.05800	-0.06800
Kolmogorov-smirnov Z		0.82700	0.70800	0.86100
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)		0.50100	0.69800	0.44900
		Job security	Reward	Job description
N		102.00000	102.00000	102.00000
Normal parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	mean	2.93820	2.08300	2.89170
	*Std. deviation	0.77375	0.82861	0.93627
	Most extreme differences			
	absolute	0.12200	0.12800	0.13400
	positive	0.08800	0.12800	0.08700
	negative	-0.12200	-0.09600	-0.13400
Kolmogorov-smirnov Z		1.23400	1.29400	1.35600
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)		0.09500	0.07000	0.05100

\*a! Test distribution is normal; b: Calculated from data

calculates the probability of the sample with its distribution assuming that it has been down from a normal distribution. According to Field (2006) when the p-value is more than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ) data is normally distributed. Table 11 shows the result of Kolmogorov-Simirinov test.

The result of test shows p-value for all independent variables is more than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ). It confirms normal distribution of all the data.

To determine the influence of work environment factors, simple regression test for each variable is performed. They are explained as follows:

**Influence of communication on employees' job satisfaction:** Communication is one of the factors that supposed to have influence on employees' satisfaction significantly. In this analysis the null hypothesis and hypothesis related to communication factor are:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Communication in organization has no significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Communication in organization has positive significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The instrument for data analyzing in this research was the software known as "Statistical Package for Social Science" (SPSS) version 18. The R-square measures how much of dependent variable (job satisfaction) is explained by the model. In this case, the R-square value is 0.446. This means that the regression model explains 44.6% of the variance in job satisfaction. The analysis of regression ANOVA shows that independent variable (communication) contributed to the prediction of job satisfaction. The calculated f-value of 80.652 was

significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$  level. Standardized  $\beta$ -value for communication is 0.668, meaning that the level of job satisfaction would be change 0.668 for every unit increase in communication, when the independent variable is held constant. Moreover when the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. In this case, p-value is less than 0.05, which indicates communication made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction. Based on the result, it can be concluded that communication has significant influence on job satisfaction. Thus, H<sub>1</sub> is accepted.

**Influence of participation on employees' job satisfaction:** Participation is one of the factors that supposed to have influence on employees' job satisfaction significantly. The null hypothesis and hypothesis related to employee participation factor are as below:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Participation in organization has no significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Participation in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The R-square value for the regression model is 0.480, which means that employee participation accounts for 48% of the variation in job satisfaction. The F-test is significant, which means that the model is statistically significant because of the  $p \leq 0.05$ . The standardized  $\beta$ -value for employee participation is 0.693 which indicates a change of one standard deviation in participation will result in a change of 0.693 on job satisfaction. Moreover when the p-value is less than 0.05, the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. In this case, p-value is less than 0.05, which indicates participation made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction. Based on the result, it can be concluded that participation has significant influence on job satisfaction. Thus, H<sub>1</sub> is accepted.

**Influence of performance feedback on employee's job satisfaction:** Performance feedback is another work environment factors that supposed to have influence on employees' job satisfaction significantly. The null hypothesis and hypothesis related to performance feedback factor are as below:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Performance feedback in organization has no significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Performance feedback in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The R-square value for the regression model is 0.509, which means that performance feedback accounts for 50.9% of the variation in job satisfaction. Anova assesses the overall significance of the regression model. The calculated F-value is 103.792 When the  $p \leq 0.05$  which shows regression model is significant. The standardized  $\beta$ -value for performance feedback is 0.714 which indicates a change of one standard deviation in performance feedback will result in a change of 0.714 on job satisfaction. Moreover when the p-value is less than 0.05 and a big absolute t-value shows independent variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. In this case, p-value is less than 0.05, which indicates performance feedback made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction. Based on the result, it can be concluded that performance feedback has significant influence on job satisfaction. So,  $H_1$  is accepted.

**Influence of job security on employees' job satisfaction:** Job security is one of the factors that supposed to have influence on employees' job satisfaction significantly. The null hypothesis and hypothesis related to job security factor are:

$H_0$ : Job security in organization has no significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

$H_1$ : Job security in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The standardized R-square for job security is 0.485, which means that job security accounts for 48.5% of the variation in job satisfaction. This is quite a respectable result. The analysis of regression Anova shows that independent variable (job security) contributed to the prediction of job satisfaction. The calculated F-value of 94.313 was significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$ . The standardized  $\beta$ -value for job security is 0.697 which indicates a change of one standard deviation in job security will result in a change of 0.697 on job satisfaction. In regression model job security statistically has significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction, because the p-value is less than 0.05. So it can be concluded that job security has significant influence on job satisfaction. Thus,  $H_1$  is accepted.

**Influence of reward on employees' job satisfaction:** Reward is one of the factors that supposed to have influence on employees' job satisfaction significantly. The hypotheses that related to reward factor are:

$H_0$ : Reward in organization has no significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

$H_1$ : Reward in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The R-square for reward is 0.455, which shows reward accounts for 45.5% of the variation in job satisfaction. This is quite a respectable result. The F-test is significant, which means the models are statistically significant because of the  $p \leq 0.05$ . The standardized  $\beta$ -value for reward is 0.674 which indicates a change of one standard deviation in reward will result in a change of 0.674 on job satisfaction. Moreover when the p-value is less than 0.05 and a big absolute t-value shows independent variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. In this case, p-value is less than 0.05, which indicates reward has a significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction. Based on the result, it can be concluded that reward has significant influence on job satisfaction. Thus,  $H_1$  is accepted.

**Influence of job description on employees' job satisfaction:** Job description is one of the factors that supposed to have influence on employees' job satisfaction significantly. The null hypothesis and hypothesis related to Job description factor are as below:

$H_0$ : Job description in organization has no positive influence on employees' job satisfaction.

$H_1$ : Job description in organization has positive influence on employees' job satisfaction.

The R-square value for the regression model is 0.506, which means that job description accounts for 50.6% of the variation in job satisfaction. The analysis of regression Anova shows that independent variable (job description) contributed to the prediction of job satisfaction. The calculated F-value of 102.326 was significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$ . The standardized  $\beta$ -value for job description is 0.711, which indicates a change of one standard deviation in job description will result in a change of 0.711 on job satisfaction. In regression model job description statistically has significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction, because the p-value is less than 0.05. So it can be concluded that job description has significant influence on job satisfaction. Thus,  $H_1$  is accepted.

**The most important work environment factor for mahan air employees:** In this part the researcher wants to investigate which ones of the environment work factors are the most important for Mahan Air employees. For this reason multiple regression is performed. The R-square value is 0.780 which means that regression model explains 78% of the variance in job satisfaction. This is quite a respectable result. The analysis of variance shows

all independent variables contributed significantly to the prediction of job satisfaction. The calculated F-value of 56.274 was significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$ . The standardized Beta Coefficients give a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model. In the regression model value of Beta for communication is 0.182, employee participation is 0.207, performance feedback is 0.173, job security is 0.188, reward is 0.198 and job description is 0.179 which indicate a change of one standard deviation in communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description will result in a change of 0.182, 0.207, 0.173, 0.188, 0.198 and 0.179 on job satisfaction, respectively. In regression model all factors statistically have significant contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction, because the p-value is less than 0.05. So, all the factors have significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. The Beta Coefficient value determines which independent variables have a greater influence on the dependent variable; the highest standardized  $\beta$ -value is employee participation (0.207). Moreover, a big absolute t-value and small p-value suggest that employee participation has a greatest influence on job satisfaction in compare to other factors. When the P-value is less than 0.05, the variable is making a significant contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. The lowest amount of Standardized Beta Coefficient is 2.385 for performance feedback factor, which indicates performance feedback has the least influence on employees' job satisfaction. The other important factors after employee participation are respectively reward, job security, communication and job description.

## DISCUSSION

**Demographic information about the sample:** The sample consisted of 102 employees who work in seven departments of Mahan Air Company in Iran. They are from departments of maintenance, airport services, ticket reservation, accounting, information technology, training and international affair. Female workers made up the greater number of respondents that participated in the study ( $n = 60$ ). 53.9% of participants are married. Most of the participants ( $n = 55$ ) of employees are less than 30 years old. Most of the respondents have bachelor degree ( $n = 53$ ), while less than 10% of participants have master degree. The majority of the respondents are employees ( $n = 72$ ) and the rest are managers.

**Influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction:** Factors such as communication, employee participation, performance feedback, reward, job security and job description are work environment

factors that have significant influence on employees' job satisfaction (Bailey, 1989; Smith, 2006; Becker, 1982; Ayres, 2005; Slack *et al.*, 2004). So the hypotheses were developed to determine the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction. The results of the research suggest that all of these six work environment factors have statistically significant and positive influence on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company. They are explained in below:

**Communication:** The results of this study indicated that there is statistically significant relationship between communication and job satisfaction of employees at Mahan Air Company ( $\beta = 0.668$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It means that communication has positive and significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. So organization leaders should encourage open communication in the workplace that allows employees to make suggestions and promote constructive criticism. In addition it's helpful for organization to establish a cohesive environment, communicating with all employees so that they have a common understanding of activities taking place in the company. Beyerlein *et al.* (2003) stated it is management responsibility to align support systems in the strategic design so that employees can communicate their needs and frustrations, as this will maintain organization's activities effectively. Creating a working environment that encourages employees to come forward to raise concerns and needs which will increase employees' job satisfaction.

**Employee participation:** It was found that there is a statistically significant relation between employee participation and job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company. This suggests that the more participation in organization activities will result to more satisfaction among employees. Base on the results from regression analysis employee participation has significant and positive influence on employees' job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.693$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The research shows organizations are able to increase the level of job satisfaction by adopting policies and providing a work condition that employees have chance to participate in organization activities more than what is status quo. In addition, management must guide employees in order to achieve desired outcomes and gain the confidence to participate in other aspects of the business.

**Performance feedback:** The results of the study indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between performance feedback and job satisfaction of employees at Mahan Air Company. Base on the results performance feedback has significant and

positive influence on employees' job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.714, p < 0.05$ ). It is imperative for organization leaders to provide technical and social support for employees, creating a secure environment and providing feedback to employees to maximize their performance and help them to achieve organizational goals. Requesting feedback from employees regarding the effectiveness of new and existing policies and procedures can be useful for increasing employees' job satisfaction and organization performance.

**Job security:** The research result signified that there is a statistically important relationship between job security and job satisfaction among employees at Mahan Air Company. This suggests that job satisfaction among employees will increase if there is more job security in work ( $\beta = 0.697, p < 0.05$ ). Job security is an essential perceptual factor of employees to determine their job satisfaction and plan to stay with the company (Blanchflower, 2001; Spector, 1999; Nobile and Cormic, 2008).

**Reward:** The result of the study indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between reward and job satisfaction of employees at Mahan Air Company ( $\beta = 0.674, p < 0.05$ ). Company leaders should compliment employees for their effort and contribution towards achieving company objectives. In addition, company leaders and managers should establish a culture that acknowledges employees on a more personnel level and on a regular basis.

**Job description:** The result of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between job description and employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company ( $\beta = 0.711, p < 0.05$ ). It is imperative for the leaders of the company to place a lot of emphasis on defining individualistic job descriptions that promote job satisfaction.

**The most important work environment factors for mahan air employees:** It is important for management to know and understand the different elements within the work environment that have an influence on an employee's job satisfaction. So, the work environment can be designed to satisfy the needs of their employees and accomplish strategic goals. As mentioned the six work environment factors that have influence on employees' job satisfaction are communication, employee participation, performance feedback, job security, reward and job description. Among these six factors, employee participation has the highest importance. On the other

hand, performance feedback has the least important influence on employees' job satisfaction at Mahan Air Company. The other important factors after employee participation are respectively reward, job security, communication and job description.

## CONCLUSION

Regarding to the hypotheses of the research the following specific empirical findings emerged: Communication in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Employee participation in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Performance feedback in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Job security in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Reward in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. Job description in organization has significant influence on employees' job satisfaction. The result of this research can be useful to increase managers' knowledge about the influence of work environment on employees' job satisfaction to improve job satisfaction among employees. Also it is helpful for Mahan Air Company or other airline companies to obtain a better comprehension of the various components of work environment and the influence of these factors on employees' job satisfaction.

## LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though research on the notion of job satisfaction of employees has proceeded significantly for several decades, it is found out that many areas in this field are still needed to survey. Future research might have to be done in order to investigate more on the other factors that influence the job satisfaction of employees in organizations. The factors of work environment are the main concern of this particular research. This study disregarded several external factors that might have influence over job satisfaction of the employees, for example the external environmental characteristics and the technical environment factors. Furthermore, the target group of this research is restricted to only the people working in Mahan Air Company because it is carried out only in one company in Iran. Therefore, the responses might be influenced by the characteristics of the company that could be unique for only Mahan Air Company and the results could not be generalized to other organizations or employees in other industries. For this reason, a larger target group from different firms and different industries would be appropriate to be chosen in carrying out similar studies in the future.

**APPENDIX**

**SECTION A: (Demographic Information)**

- Gender Male -----
- Female-----
- Marital Status Single-----
- Married-----
- Current Age <30 years old-----
- 30-40 years old-----
- 41-50 years old-----
- >50 years old-----
- 4. Academic Qualification Diploma-----
- Associate Degree-----
- Bachelor Degree-----
- Master Degree-----
- Work Experience at Mahan Air <3 years-----
- 3-6 years-----
- 7-10 years-----
- >10 years-----
- 6. Position Employee-----
- Manager-----
- 7. Department -----

**SECTION B:** The purpose of this survey is to identify the influence of work environment factors on employees' job satisfaction and define which factors are the most important factors.

<b>Communication</b>	N	SE	So	O	Al
1. The company promotes open communication with others and share information well.			1	2	3
					4
					5
2. I receive information that is needed to do my job on time.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The attitudes toward communication in the company are healthy.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The amount of time managers spend for communicating with employees is enough.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Supervisor listens and pays attention to me when I am talking to him.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The company's communication makes me feel like a vital part of the company.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Informal communication is active.		1	2	3	4
					5
<b>Employee participation</b>					
8. The company encourages employees to participate in decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The company involves me in decision making.		1	2	3	4
					5
10. The company gives me autonomy to make a decision.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel greater trust and a sense of control when I am involved in decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
					5
<b>Performance feedback</b>					
12. The company provides constructive feedback to enhance performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The company gives me regular and timely feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I usually receive clear performance feedback.					
15. My line managers encourage and support my feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
16. It is important for me to be recognized for my good work.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I get information about my progress in my job.		1	2	3	4
					5
<b>Job security</b>					

18. I am worried about my job security.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The company provides training programs for employees to enhance their technical skills and knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The company reduces unsafe act by providing safety training.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The company uses personal proactive tools to reduce unsafe condition.	1	2	3	4	5
22. The company will give me adequate retired pay in future.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Reward</b>					
23. The company's reward system is fair.	1	2	3	4	5
24. The company reward system is meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The company rewards align with performance.	1	2	3	4	5
26. The company delivers my reward as soon as I am entitled to receive it.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I am satisfied with my department's current nonfinancial reward.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Job description</b>					
28. The company provides employees clear information to how they should contribute to achieve organizational goals.		1	2	3	4
29. I have a clear understanding of what company expected from me.	1	2	3	4	5
30. The company provides me an accurate job description.	1	2	3	4	5
31. My current occupation adequately reflects my education and training background.	1	2	3	4	5

N: Never; SE: Seldom; SO: Sometimes; O: Often; AL: Always

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