

# **Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Job satisfaction and its validity in Sri Lanka Context.**

**(An empirical study on the application of the theory in respect of the Accounting and Engineering Professionals of Sri Lanka)**

**Jayaratne Weerasekara**

## **Abstract**

This is an empirical study on the application of Herzberg's Two Factor Theory among the Accounting and Engineering professionals of Sri Lanka. Motivation is an important basic psychological process in which the micro approach to organizational behavior, is an important element. In understanding human behavior in organization, the concept of motivation plays a vital role. It is a hypothetical construct that is used to help to explain behavior of individual in an organization under a particular situation and under particular environment factors.

The objective of this study is to make an attempt to analyse the relevancy of Herzberg's. Hygiene Theory of Job satisfaction among the Accounting and Engineering professionals of Sri Lanka. Survey method was adopted. Two hundred Accounting and Engineering professionals were taken for the sample study. Of the 200 hundred 120 are male professionals and 80 are female. The data was omission analysis and compact analysis. The study reveals that the theory does not apply to the Accounting and Engineering professionals of Sri Lanka and supports the findings of Dannette, Campbell and Hakel.

## Introduction

The Hersberg Theory of Job satisfaction represents an approach to an understanding of the motivation to work. The theory was first drawn from an examination of behavior trends of 200 engineers and accountants. In this study (1959) <sup>(1)</sup> the investigations concluded that the determinants of job satisfaction, motivators different from the determinants of job dissatisfaction, hygienic factor. These two type of factors are shown in Table 1.

**Table I**

### Hygiene Factors and motivators

Hygiene Factors (Environment)	Motivators (Work itself)
Money	Work itself
Status	Responsibility
Supervision	Recognition
Security	Advancement
Working Conditions	Possibility of Growth
Rules, Policies and Administration	Achievement
Interpersonal relations with peers, subordinates and superiors	

These groups of variables have been labelled at different times with different nomenclature such as satisfiers and dissatisfiers, motivation and hygiene variables, content and

context variables, and intrinsic and extrinsic variables. Motivators which are job content variables are expected to emphasise their role in satisfying the worker's need for self actualization. Job Context variables are to indicate their role in preventing job dissatisfaction.

Herzberg further concluded that motivators affect job attitudes in a positive direction, and "their absence will much less frequently lead to job dissatisfaction".<sup>(2)</sup> On the other hand, hygienes "represent the major job dissatisfiers with little potency to affect job attitudes in a positive direction".<sup>(3)</sup> In other words, satisfaction with a dissatisfier should cause no more overall satisfaction than merely being neutral with a satisfier should not contribute anymore to overall dissatisfaction than being neutral with a satisfier.

From this proposition two implications can be drawn. If different variables contribute to job satisfaction than contribute to job dissatisfaction then Herzberg would argue that satisfaction is qualitatively different from dissatisfaction. A second implication would be that while the presence of a job characteristic will have an effect on a job; the absence of the same characteristic will not have the opposite effect.

With respect of these implications, Ewen Smith, Hulin & Lock: (1999)<sup>(4)</sup> Graen: 1966)<sup>(5)</sup> have presented data which indicate that, contrary to the predictions of the two-factor theory, satisfaction with a dissatisfier does lead to overall satisfaction and dissatisfaction with a satisfier does lead to overall dissatisfaction. The results of these two analysis clearly support the traditional theory of job satisfaction without the assumption, of course, that all variables are equally potential contributors to job satisfaction. Unfortunately, both Ewen and Graen research faced a serious short

coming. They measured overall job satisfaction by means of the General Motors Faces Scale (Kunin; 1955) which assumes that job satisfaction-dissatisfaction is a "Continuum" and job dissatisfaction is merely a low level of job satisfaction. The General Motors Face Scale consists of drawings of faces varying from one with a deep frown through a "neutral" face to one with a broad smile. The respondent is requested to check the face which indicates how he feels about his job most of the time. If, as the two-factor theory suggests, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are qualitatively different, the use of such a continuum could lead some doubt about the conclusions.

### **A Formal statement of the theory**

Herzberg's major hypothesis is that satisfaction - dissatisfaction (S-DS) is a function of the classes of Motivators (M) and Hygienes (H) These assertions imply the following functional relationships between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and motivators and hygieners:

$$S = f ( M + e ) \dots \dots (1)$$

$$DS = f ( H = e ) \dots \dots (2)$$

$$P(MH) = 0 \dots \dots (3)$$

Where -

S = Satisfaction

Ds = Dissatisfaction

M = Motivators

H = Hygienes

e = Other potential factors and / or error

p = Correlation co - efficient

According to these statements, satisfaction (S) is a function of motivators (M) plus other potential factors and / or error of measurement (1) ; dissatisfaction (DS) is a function of hygienes (H) plus other potential factors and/ or error of measurement (2) ; and the correlation ( $\rho$ ) between motivator and hygienes is zero (3)

Conceptually then, Herzberg posits two unipolar continua (satisfaction), dissatisfaction) which are unreleated and states that the variations in satisfaction is due to the presence and/ or level of motivators, and the variance in dissatisfaction is due to the presence and/ or level of hygienes. Expressions (1) through (3) above are formal statements of the relations among the variables of interest as treated by the theory on a conceptual level.

### **A Modification of the Theory with a Bipolar Variable**

The rationale for the adoption of the model of job satisfaction is tested by another research is based on a consideration of the research strategies employed by Herzberg and other investigators, and the assumption that satisfaction is more parsimoiniously conceptualized as a bipolar variable, instead of the unipolar variable.

Using the bipolar assumption, it is suggested that by examining only the extremes of the underlying continuum of satisfaction through the use of instructional sets (satisfied-dissatisfied), Herzberg and other investigators using his methodology have concluded that motivators and hygienes are disjoint, and that satisfaction and dissatisfaction should be conceptualized as two separate continua.

If the Herzbergian conclusions are formalized and translated into a bipolar model of job satisfaction, the following conditions would obtain ;

$$S_{++} = f ( aM + bH ) \dots (4)$$

$$DS_{-} = f ( aH + bM ) \dots (5)$$

Where  $S_{++}$  = High Job Satisfaction

$DS_{-}$  = High Job Dissatisfaction

$a$  = Some Positive co-efficient

$b$  = Zero

$M$  and  $H$  are as defined previously.

Expressions (4) and (5) clearly indicate what is implied by Herzberg's two continua for satisfaction, namely, the relationship of satisfaction to a given antecedent (Motivator, hygiene) is not independent of the other antecedent. In other words, the effects of motivators and hygienes on satisfaction, conceptualized as a bipolar continuum, are non-additive because the co-efficient for the weight of a given antecedent is required to change as the criterion score and the other antecedent change.

### **The test of dual-factor theory**

It would seem that in order to adequately test the two factor theory it must be assumed that satisfaction is qualitatively different from dissatisfaction, and overall satisfaction and dissatisfaction must be measured on different scales. If the Ewen and Grean findings are supported after the separate measurement of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, then much more confidence could be placed in the validity of their conclusions.

In this paper : it a proposed to analyse the contribution of different variables to overall satisfaction and dissatisfaction and to examine the differences between the presence and absence of different (Job attitude) variables in their effects on employees judgments of jobs.

### **Respondents of the present study**

The respondents for this study were the Accountancy and Engineering Professionals who are being served in Government Ministries and Departments and companies. A total of 200 professionals were requested to participate in a job attitude survey on motivation. 120 of the sample were Male and others were female. Professionals were asked to complete the question-naire of their office. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to all respondents and they were assured that their individual responses would not be made known to any authority.

### **Variables\***

Satisfaction with five job aspects (work itself, money, promotional) opportunities, supervision and co-workers) was assessed by means of the Job Description Index. The Job Description Index is a cumulative point adjective check-list which appears to possess high convergent and discriminant validity. All questionnaires contained the five scales.

Overall job satisfaction was assessed by one of three variations at the General Motors Faces Scale (Kunin: 1955). The original scale consisted of five faces with varying smiles, a neutral face, and five faces with varying frowns.

One variation of this scale utilized in this study consisted of the neutral face as its low end and the five faces exhibiting varying degrees of happiness. The Professionals were asked to indicate their feelings of satisfaction with their Job in general (JIG) on this scale. They were asked to check the neutral or unsmiling face if they experienced no satisfaction on their job. A second scale consisted of the neutral face as the high end and the five faces with the varying frowns.

On this scale the professionals were asked to indicate their degree of dissatisfaction with their job in general. The third scale consisted of three smiling faces, the neutral face and two frowning faces. On this scale the officers were asked to indicate their feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction scale used in the present study is identical to the scale used in the Ewen and Graen studies and thus provides a partial replication of their results.

Two other scales were designed expressly for this study to assess the contribution of the presence or absence of various job characteristics to the manner in which they responded to different jobs. Six different working situations were described in terms of six job characteristics (interest and difficulty of work done, working conditions, pay received, promotional opportunities, co-workers, and supervision.) On one of these two scales, each working situation would be described as having five of the characteristics above average (eg., the work is above average in interest and difficulty, the working conditions are above average in comfort and convenience, etc.) and one of the characteristics would be described as being outstandingly good (eg. Your co-workers are very enjoyable to work with) Each




characteristic appeared once as being outstandingly good and five times as being average in the six working situations which are presented. The order in which the characteristics were presented in any description was randomly determined as was the order in which they were the outstanding characteristics. The respondents were asked to indicate on an anchored graphic rating shown in Table 2, how they felt about work on such a job, how they would describe it to their friends.

The assumptions of this scale were that the working situations described by the respondents as being good or desirable would tend to be those which possessed an outstanding amount of an important characteristic. Thus, the determination of those situations which were consistently judged as being good or desirable would enable one to determine the relative importance of those job characteristics whose presence in outstanding amounts has an impact on the way workers react to jobs.

### **Predictions :**

Based on those variables a number of specific hypotheses can be generated where the traditional model of satisfaction and the two-factor theory make antithetical predictions. The two factor theory would predict that satisfaction with work done and satisfaction with promotional opportunities should be related to satisfaction with the job in general but not related to dissatisfaction with the job in general. The traditional model of job satisfaction would predict that satisfaction with

**Table 2 - Graphic rating scale for obtaining  
Judgments of desirability of various working situations**



—	A very good job.
—	A job with many good featured
—	A good job.
—	A good job with some bad features
—	A Job with some good features
—	I can't decide whether it is good or bad
—	A poor job with some good features
—	A job with many bad features
—	A job with absolutely no merit

work done and with promotional opportunities would be related to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the job in general. On the other hand, pay satisfaction should be related only to overall dissatisfaction and not to overall satisfaction according to the two factor theory. The traditional model would predict that pay satisfaction would be related to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The other two areas of satisfaction measured by the JDI do not permit clear predictions. Supervision is supposedly a dissatisfaction, but supervision may contain elements of recognition which is a satisfier, satisfaction with co-workers at times has appeared to be a dissatisfaction, but at other times, has operated as a satisfier.

Therefore no predictions were made for these two variables based on the two factor theory. The traditional model would predict that both these variables would be related to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

In terms of the impact of the six job characteristics used to describe the six working situations on the way employees report they should feel about a job, clearly antithetical predictions can again be generated. The traditional model would predict that if the presence of a variable was related to a job being described as good, then if those variables were absent the job would be described in relatively poor terms (being judged as a bad job) Thus, if the importance or impact of the six job characteristics as computed from the form of the questionnaire where five characteristics were average but one was outstandingly good were plotted against the values computed from the form where five characteristics were average and one was outstandingly bad, a positive linear function should be obtained. The two-factor theory, on the

other hand, would predict that if the work very interesting or if there were good opportunities for advancement on jobs, then these jobs would be seen as very good, others being equal. However, if the work were very uninteresting or if there were no opportunities for advancement these jobs would not necessarily be judged as being bad jobs, other things being equal. They would only be neutral on the scale, low pay, on the other hand, should lead to a job being judged as being judged as being good. Thus, two factor theory would not predict a linear positive junction between the importance of the six characteristics as obtained from the two forms of the questionnaire. The form of the function would be indeterminate from the assumption of the two factor theory.

### **Findings of the empirical test**

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed by the correlational analysis. These results of the correlational analysis for the male professionals are presented in Table 3. Looking only at the three variables for which predictions were made, evidence is found clearly supporting the predictions of the traditional model of job satisfaction and clearly challenging the predictions of the two factor model of job satisfaction. Satisfaction with work done, pay received, and promotional (advancement) opportunities and policies is significantly related to satisfaction, dissatisfaction and satisfaction-dissatisfaction with the job in general. The lower correlations between these variables and dissatisfaction are probably due to the sharply reduced variance on this latter scale. Due to the satisfaction levels encountered in the Engineer Service the dissatisfaction scale was essentially a 3 point scale. Nevertheless, the correla-

tional co-efficients between work and promotion satisfaction (supposedly satisfier) and dissatisfaction were significant as was the correlation between pay satisfaction (essentially a dissatisfier) and JIG satisfaction. These three highly significant correlations are directly opposed to the predictions of the two factor model.

Table 3. Correlations between satisfaction with Different Aspects of the Job and Overall Job Satisfaction for Male-Professionals.

Satisfaction area	JIG Satisfaction	JIG Dissatisfaction	JIG Dissatisfaction
Work itself	.62	.79	.43
Pay (Money)	.34	.47	.26
Promotion	.45	.41	.38
Supervision	.33	.56	.27
Co-workers	.38	.47	.16

The correlations between supervision and co-workers satisfaction and the JIG scales are presented in the interest of hypotheses formulation since no prediction were made for these two variables.

The correlations between work, pay, and promotion satisfaction and JIG satisfaction- dissatisfaction lend but slight support to the generality of the previous results of Ewen and graen regarding the relative protency of the intrin-

insic as opposed to the extrinsic variables. Both work and promotion satisfaction are more highly correlated with JIG satisfaction -dissatisfaction than is pay satisfaction. However, only the work satisfaction/JIG satisfaction-dissatisfaction correlation is significantly higher than the pay satisfaction/JIG satisfaction-dissatisfaction.

The results of the correlation analysis based on data from the female professionals are presented in Table 4. The data from the female professionals are less orderly than those from the male sample. Three results, however, do not support the predictions of the two -factor model since the only variable which is significantly correlated with JIG dissatisfaction is work satisfaction (supposedly a satisfier). Pay satisfaction, contrary to the predictions of the two-factor theory, is unrelated to JIG dissatisfaction. Promotion satisfaction, on the other hand, does fit the prediction of the two-factor theory. Again it should be pointed out that the variance on the JIG dissatisfaction scale was much lower than the variance of either of the other two JIG Scales. This difference could result in attenuated correlations. However, the pattern of correlations which was obtained from the female professionals sample lends little support to the two-factor theory. Again, work satisfaction is more highly correlated with JIG satisfaction-dissatisfaction/ JIG satisfaction-dissatisfaction correlation is not significantly greater than the corresponding value for pay satisfaction.

Neither of these two sets of data support the predictions of the two factor theory. The data from the male sample do support the predictions of the traditional model and the female data partially support these predictions.

**Table 4 - correlations between Satisfaction with Different Aspects to the Job and Satisfaction with Job in General for Female Professionals**

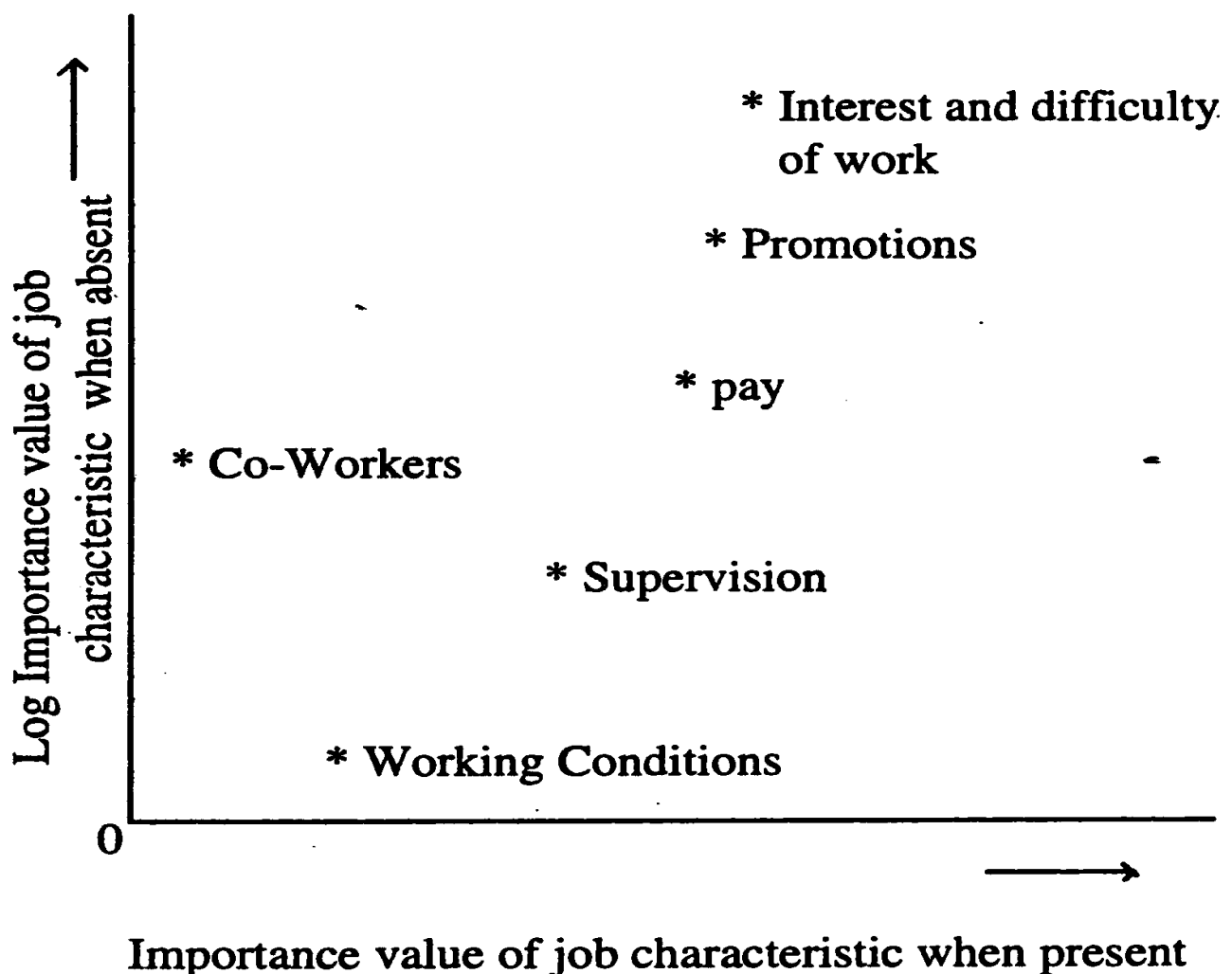
Satisfaction Area	JIG Satisfaction	JIG Satisfaction	JIG Dissatisfaction
Work itself	.72	.56	.54
Pay (Money)	.42	.21	.27
Promotion	.52	.58	.23
Supervision	.57	.58	-.04
Co-workers	.48	.30	-.07

The results of the importance analysis from the two forms of the questionnaire from the male sample are given in Table 5. In both Table 5 and Table 6 the log of the importance or impact value of the job characteristics of absent from the working situation is plotted against the importance of impact value of the job characteristic, if present in the working situation. Using this log Transformation on the scale values of the scale shown in Table 5. The relationships between the two sets of values on table 5 is obviously linear (under the transformation described above) and the fit is good. Thus, these results clearly indicate that, for male officers, if the presence of a variables result in a job being described or judged as good, the absence of that same variable results in the job being described as bad,

other things being equal, This findings, support the traditional model of the job satisfaction and argues against

the two-factor theory. Only the values for satisfaction with co-workers are seriously out of the line with the prediction of the traditional model.

**Table 5 - Importance values of job characteristics when they are present versus importance values of job characteristics when they are absent - Male sample**

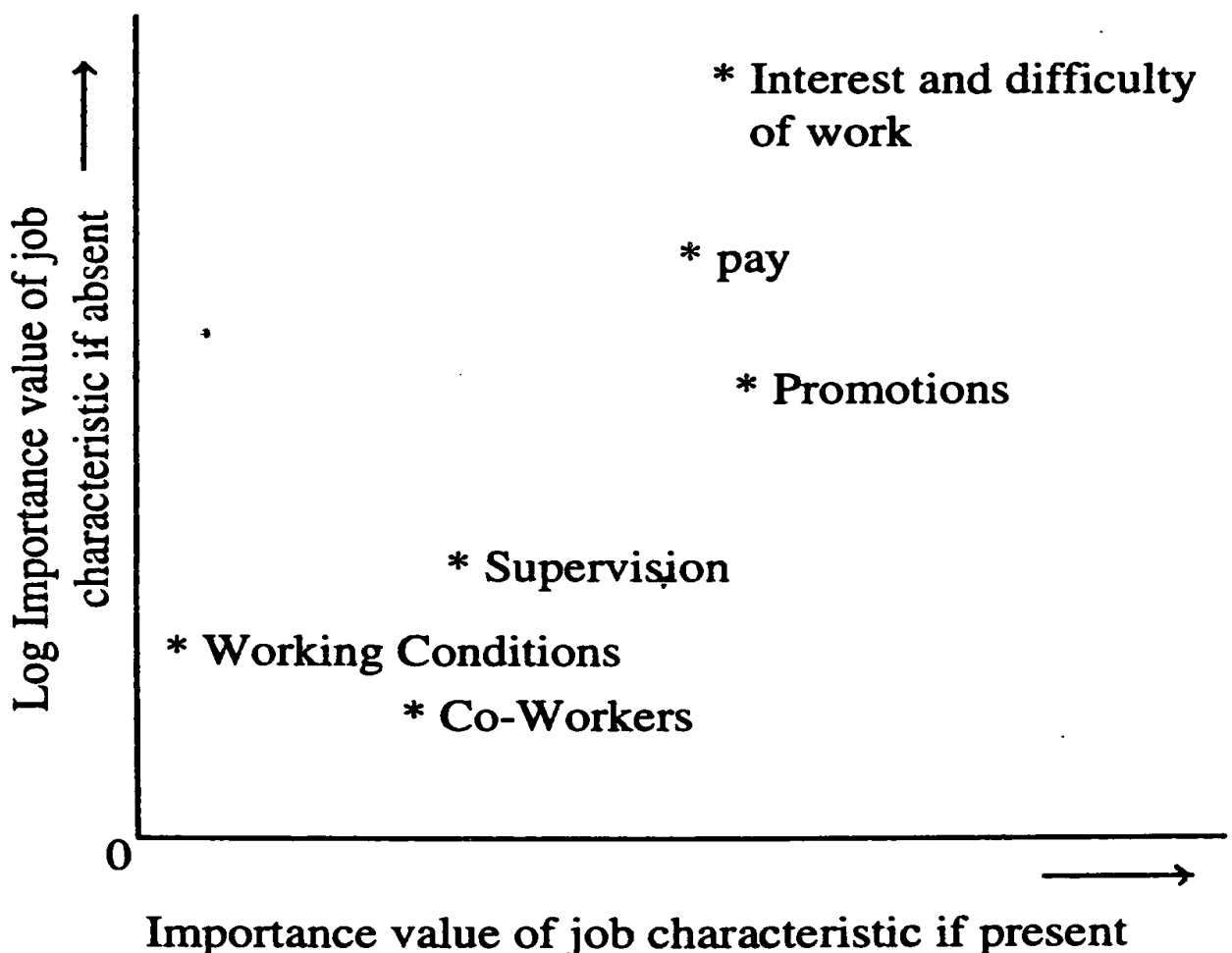


The results of the importance analysis of the sample female officers' sample are given in Table 6. As in the correlational analysis these data from the female respondents are less clear-cut than that of the male data. While a regression line.



through these data points would be positive and linear, there is no scatter about the line than in the male data. It is interesting to note that interest and difficulty of the work, pay level, and promotional opportunities have nearly the same effects if present or absent as they did in the male sample. For the other three variables, the results are more random. Again, these results do not support the two-factor theory and tend to confirm the predictions of the traditional model. Also, satisfaction with co-workers does not appear to fit well with the remainder of the variables.

**Table 6 - Impact Values of job characteristics when they are present versus impact values of job characteristic when they are absent Female Sample,**



The data in Tables 5 and 6 also support the findings of Ewen and Graen in that they clearly indicate differential saliency among the various factors which contribute to job satisfaction. Further, in both the male and female samples the intrinsic aspects of the job are responded to by the employees as being most important. This also supports the conclusion of Ewen; in that a division of the factors into intrinsic and extrinsic is more meaningful than the labels "satisfiers" and "dissatisfiers".

### **Conclusions**

It is obvious that the present results provide no support for the predictions with one would make on the basis of the Herzbergian two-factor theory of job satisfaction. Thus, the following conclusions can be taken with respect of the present study.

- \* The "satisfiers" acted as both satisfiers and dissatisfiers, and the dissatisfiers acted as satisfiers as well as dissatisfiers.
- \* The analysis of the importance (or impact) of various job characteristics on the way people reacted to different job situations was the same whether the characteristic was present or absent.
- \* No evidence was found which would support the argument that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are qualitatively different.
- \* If the differences in the variances between the JIG satisfaction and the JIG Dissatisfaction scales are taken into account, these scales don not give qualitatively

different results than does the JIG satisfaction-dissatisfaction scale in terms of their patterns of correlations with other variables.

- \* I would seem that the traditional model of job satisfaction has been strongly supported at the expense of the two factor theory.

With these results, along with the other failures to replicate Herzberg's original results whenever different research methods are used, it would be reasonable to point out again that Herzberg's (1959,1966) results appear to be method bound and the conclusions appear to pivot on method variance rather than true content or scale variance. A construct which can be generated or supported by only one operation would seem to have little relevance to the behaviour of workers in a organisation. The present research supports Dunnette, Campbell, and Hakel (1967)

The theory is an over simplification of the relationship between motivation and satisfaction" and the sources of Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

### **Bibliography**

1. HERZBERG, F : "One More Time" : How do you Motivate Employees?".  
**Harvard Business Review**, January-February, 1968.
2. HERZBERG, F: **Work and the Nature of Man**. New York World, 1966.

3. HERZBERG, F: MAUSNER, B & SNYDERMAN, B: **The Motivator to work.** New York, Wiley, 1959.
4. Richard, M.H. : **Management Theory, Process and Practices,** pp. 272-275
5. Dunnette, M.D., Campbell, J.P. & Hakel, M.D. : "Factors contribution to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in six occupational groups". **Organizational Behaviour and Human performance,** 1967
6. EVEN, R.B. : Some determinants of job satisfaction : A study of the generality of Herzberg's theory. **Journal of Applied Psychology,** 1964.
7. EVEN, R.B. : SMITH, P.C., HULIN. C. L. & LOCKE, E.A. : "An Emperical Test of Herzberg Two-Factor Theory". **Journal of Applied Psychology,** 1966,
8. GRAEN, G.B.: Addendum to An Emperical test of the Herzberg Two Factor Theory". **Journal of Applied Psychology,** 1966,
9. HULIN, C.L. & SMITH, P.C. : "Sex Differences in job satisfaction". **Journal of Applied Psychology,** 1964.
10. HULIN, C.L. & SMITH, P.C. : A Linear model of Job Satisfaction. **Journal of Applied Psychology,** 1965.
11. VROOM, V. : **Work and Motivation.** (New York, Wiley, 1964.
12. TORGERSON, W.S. : **Theory and Methods of Scaling,** New York, Wiley, 1958.
13. QUINN, R.P. & SAHN, R.L. : "Organizational Psychology", **Annual Review of Psychology,** 1967.

14. KUNIN, T. : "The Construction of a New Type of Attitude Measure", **Personnel Psychology** 1955.
15. MASLOW, A.H. : **Motivation and Personalty** New York, Harper, 1954.
16. LUTHANS, F. : **Organizational Behaviour**, McGraw Hill Book Campany pp 182-194
17. HAROLD RUCH, Behavioral Science, Concepts and applications., **Personal Policy Study** No. 216, N.7 (1969)
18. BRAYFIELD A.H. AND CROCKETT W.H. , "Employee Attitudes and Employee performance" , **Psychological Bulletin**, L 11 (1955)
19. DUBIN ROBERT, JOSEPH E. CHAMPOUX AND HYMAN Porter, "Central Life Interests and Organizational Commitment of Blue Collax and Clerical work ers" , **Administrative Science quarterly** Sept. 1975
20. HULIN CHARLES L. and PATRICIA SMITH "An Empirical investigator of Two Implication of the Two factor Theory of job satisfaction," **Journal of Applied Psychology** L 1. (1967)
21. BCHLING ORLANDS ? GEORGE LABOVITZ and RICHERD KOSMO , " The Herzberg controversy ; A critical Reappraisal " **The Academy of Management Journal** (1967)

## CONTENTS

	Page
Genotypic and Phenotypic Correlations of Yield Components in Rice ( <i>Oriza sativa</i> L.) .. ..	
— <i>S.G.J.N. Senanayake</i> .. .. .	1
Factors Associated With Non Schooling and Dropouts in Sri Lanka .. .. .	
— <i>W. Indralal De Silva</i> .. .. .	9
17- 18 සියවස් හි ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ මුහුදුබඩ පළාත් වල වූ ගණිතමය වෙනස්වීම් හා ඔවුන්ගෙන් මුද්ධ ශාසනයට හා දේශීය සංස්කෘතියට වූ සේවාව — <i>ආම්. සු. ද සිල්වා</i> .. .. .	23
Ecology of shortsighted Entrepreneurialism .. .. .	
— <i>Alawattagoda Pemadasa</i> .. .. .	49
Knowledge System Analysis : Knowledge Utilization in an Agricultural System .. .. .	
— <i>Mahinda Wijeratne</i> .. .. .	97
Political Clientelism and Underdevelopment .. .. .	
— <i>Oscar Amarasinghe</i> .. .. .	112
Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction and Its Validity in Sri Lanka Context .. .. .	
— <i>Jayaratne Weerasekera</i> .. .. .	135

ISSN 1391 - 0701

Printed by Thararjee Prints 506, Highlevel Road, Nawinna, Maharagama.

Phone: 854773, 825107

**National Digitization Project**

**National Science Foundation**

Institute : University of Ruhuna

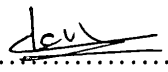
1. Place of Scanning : University of Ruhuna, Wellamadama, Matara

2. Date Scanned : 2017/12/19

3. Name of Digitizing Company : Sanje (Private) Ltd, No 435/16, Kottawa Rd,  
Hokandara North, Arangala, Hokandara

4. Scanning Officer

Name : Chamaka Kanishk

Signature : 

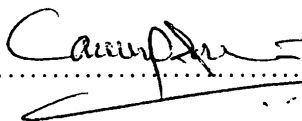
Certification of Scanning

*I hereby certify that the scanning of this document was carried out under my supervision, according to the norms and standards of digital scanning accurately, also keeping with the originality of the original document to be accepted in a court of law.*

Certifying Officer

Designation : Senior Assistant Librarian

Name : Kusala Fernando

Signature : 

Date : 2017/12/19

*"This document/publication was digitized under National Digitization Project of the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka"*