

Determinants of Employee Job Satisfaction: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Although employee job satisfaction has received increasing attention in prior studies, research that systematically synthesizes its determinants across sectors and contexts remains limited. This study aims to systematically review and integrate empirical evidence on the key determinants of employee job satisfaction reported in Scopus-indexed journals. A systematic literature review approach was employed, guided by the PRISMA framework to identify, screen, and analyze relevant studies. The review was based on 20 empirical articles published between 2015 and 2025, retrieved exclusively from the Scopus database using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data were collected through a structured literature search and analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns. The findings indicate that organizational-level and job-related determinants, including leadership practices, perceived organizational support, human resource management systems, workload, job design, and work–life balance are the most influential factors shaping employee job satisfaction, whereas individual-level determinants such as age, tenure, and education exhibit less consistent and more context-dependent effects. These findings contribute to the theoretical development of job satisfaction research by integrating fragmented empirical evidence into a

coherent multilevel framework and by highlighting the structural and organizational conditions under which satisfaction is most likely to occur. The study concludes that organizational systems and job structures play a crucial role in enhancing employee job satisfaction and recommends that organizations prioritize supportive leadership, fair human resource practices, and effective job design. The implications of this research include theoretical contributions to the literature on organizational behavior and practical recommendations for managers and policymakers seeking to improve employee well-being and organizational performance, while also identifying opportunities for future research on longitudinal analysis, cross-sector comparisons, and emerging work arrangements such as remote and hybrid work.

Keywords: Employee Job Satisfaction; Determinants; Systematic Literature Review; Organizational Factors; Job-Related Factors

INTRODUCTION

Employee job satisfaction has long been recognized as a central construct in organizational behavior and human resource management research due to its strong association with employee performance, organizational commitment, productivity, and workforce sustainability. As organizations operate in increasingly competitive and dynamic environments, understanding the determinants of employee job satisfaction has become essential for maintaining organizational effectiveness and retaining qualified employees (Alegre et al., 2016; Hartmann et al., 2017).

Existing literature suggests that job satisfaction is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by a complex interaction of individual, job-related, and organizational factors. Individual characteristics such as age, tenure, education level, and personal expectations have been shown to shape employees' perceptions of job satisfaction, although empirical findings remain inconsistent across contexts and countries (Chaudhuri et al., 2015; Tarvid, 2015). These inconsistencies highlight the need for a more integrative understanding of how individual attributes interact with workplace conditions to influence job satisfaction.

Job-related factors constitute another major group of determinants. Previous studies emphasize the role of workload, job autonomy, task clarity, work environment, and job design in shaping employee satisfaction (Rodríguez et al., 2017; Yuen et al., 2018). Research conducted in manufacturing, service, and maritime industries indicates that employees are

more satisfied when job demands are balanced with adequate resources and when they perceive their roles as meaningful and manageable (Munir et al., 2016; Addis et al., 2018).

In addition to job characteristics, organizational factors play a critical role in determining job satisfaction. Organizational support, leadership practices, compensation systems, and organizational culture have been widely identified as significant predictors of employee job satisfaction (Alegre et al., 2016; Kamaruddin et al., 2018). Studies in both public and private sectors demonstrate that fair human resource practices and supportive leadership not only enhance job satisfaction but also reduce employee dissatisfaction and turnover intentions (Lee, 2020; Bezdrob et al., 2021).

Over the past decade, changes in work arrangements and technological developments have introduced new determinants of job satisfaction. The increasing adoption of telework and flexible work arrangements, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, has significantly reshaped employees' work experiences. Empirical evidence suggests that remote work can either enhance or diminish job satisfaction depending on factors such as managerial support, work-life balance, and job autonomy (Sousa-Uva et al., 2021; Senek et al., 2020). These findings underline the contextual and evolving nature of job satisfaction determinants.

Sectoral differences further complicate the understanding of job satisfaction. Studies conducted in healthcare, education, manufacturing, and public administration reveal that the relative importance of job satisfaction determinants varies across industries. For instance, healthcare employees' job satisfaction is strongly influenced by workload intensity, emotional demands, and managerial support (Senek et al., 2020), whereas employees in education and the public sector place greater emphasis on job security, organizational justice, and intrinsic motivation (Lee et al., 2022; Ravid, 2024). Such variations suggest that no single universal model of job satisfaction determinants can fully capture the diversity of organizational contexts.

Despite the substantial growth of empirical research on job satisfaction, the existing literature remains fragmented and occasionally contradictory. Some studies emphasize intrinsic factors as the primary determinants of job satisfaction, while others highlight the dominant role of extrinsic or organizational factors (Munir et al., 2016; Addis et al., 2018). Moreover, many studies are context-specific, focusing on particular sectors or countries, which limits the generalizability of their findings (Choi et al., 2022; Admiraal et al., 2023).

Given these limitations, a systematic and comprehensive synthesis of the literature is required. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) provides a rigorous methodological approach to identifying, evaluating, and integrating existing empirical evidence on the determinants of employee job satisfaction (Hartmann et al., 2017; Gazi et al., 2024). By systematically reviewing Scopus-indexed studies published between 2015 and 2025, this study aims to consolidate current knowledge, identify dominant determinants, and highlight emerging research trends in the field.

Accordingly, the objective of this article is to systematically review and synthesize empirical evidence on the determinants of employee job satisfaction. The findings of this SLR are expected to contribute to the theoretical development of job satisfaction research and to provide practical insights for organizations seeking to design effective human resource policies that enhance employee satisfaction and organizational sustainability (Lee et al., 2022; Jiang & Yuan, 2025).

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize empirical evidence on the determinants of employee job satisfaction. The SLR method was chosen to ensure transparency, replicability, and methodological rigor in identifying, selecting, and analyzing relevant studies (Aprila et al., 2023). The review process followed the principles of the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework, which is widely applied in management and social science research (Sugiyono, 2024).

Data Sources and Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using the Scopus database, as it is one of the most comprehensive and reputable bibliographic databases for peer-reviewed journals in the fields of management, business, psychology, and social sciences. A systematic search was performed using combinations of keywords related to job satisfaction and its determinants. The search string was applied to the TITLE, ABSTRACT, and KEYWORDS fields to ensure relevance and coverage. The main search string used in this study was: *TITLE-ABS-KEY ("job satisfaction" AND (determinant OR factor OR antecedent))*

To ensure topical relevance and contemporary coverage, the search was limited to:

- **Publication years:** 2015–2025
- **Document type:** Journal articles
- **Language:** English
- **Source type:** Journals

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Clear inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure consistency and objectivity during the screening process. Inclusion criteria:

1. Articles published in Scopus-indexed journals.
2. Empirical studies examining employee job satisfaction as a dependent or key outcome variable.
3. Studies explicitly analyzing determinants, antecedents, or predictors of job satisfaction.
4. Articles published between 2015 and 2025.
5. Full-text articles written in English.

Exclusion criteria:

1. Conference papers, book chapters, editorials, and review articles (non-systematic).
2. Studies not explicitly focusing on job satisfaction (e.g., studies focusing solely on performance or engagement without job satisfaction).
3. Conceptual papers without empirical evidence.
4. Duplicate records across databases.

Study Selection Process

The study selection process was conducted in three stages following the PRISMA guidelines:

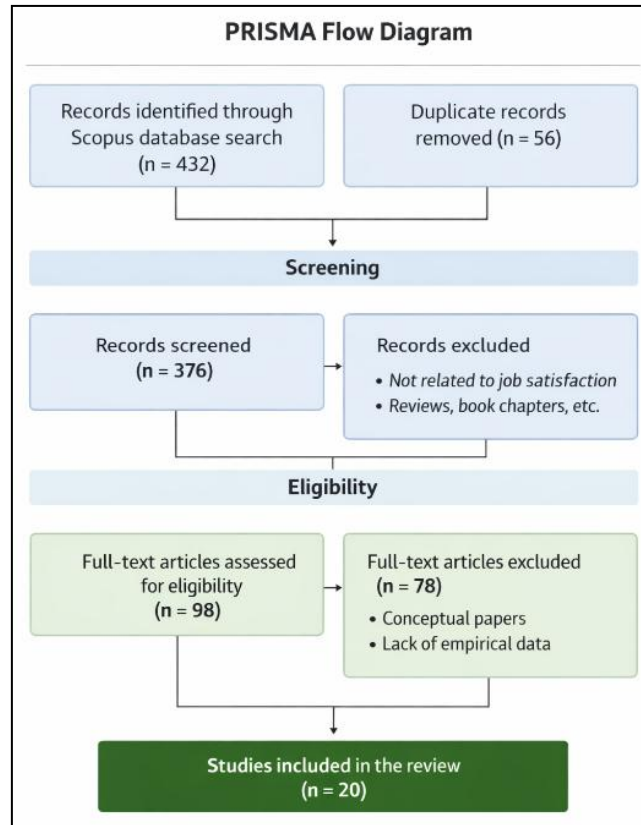


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Based on Figure 1, the study selection process followed a rigorous and transparent systematic review procedure in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. The initial search conducted in the Scopus database identified a substantial number of records, which were subsequently refined through the removal of duplicate entries. The remaining records were then screened based on their titles and abstracts to exclude studies that were not directly related to employee job satisfaction or did not meet the predefined inclusion criteria. Full-text assessments were carried out to evaluate the methodological relevance and empirical focus of the remaining articles, leading to the exclusion of conceptual papers and studies lacking empirical evidence. As a result of this multi-stage screening and eligibility process, a final set of 20 Scopus-indexed empirical studies was included in the systematic literature review, ensuring the robustness and credibility of the synthesized findings.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data extraction was performed using a structured extraction form to ensure consistency across studies. The following information was extracted from each article:

- Author(s) and year of publication

- Country or research context
- Industry or sector
- Research design and methodology
- Sample characteristics
- Determinants of job satisfaction examined
- Direction and significance of relationships

The extracted data were then analyzed using a qualitative synthesis approach. Determinants of employee job satisfaction were categorized into three broad groups:

1. Individual-level determinants (e.g., age, tenure, education, personal characteristics)
2. Job-related determinants (e.g., workload, autonomy, job design, work–life balance)
3. Organizational-level determinants (e.g., leadership, organizational support, HR practices).

This classification enabled a systematic comparison of findings across different contexts and sectors.

Reliability and Validity

To enhance the reliability of the review process, standardized inclusion criteria and data extraction procedures were applied consistently across all selected studies. Validity was strengthened by limiting the review to peer-reviewed Scopus-indexed journals, thereby ensuring the academic quality and credibility of the included articles.

Ethical Considerations

As this study is based solely on secondary data obtained from published sources, no ethical approval was required. All original studies included in this review were properly cited to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of their authors.

RESULTS

The systematic literature review comprises 20 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 in Scopus-indexed journals. The reviewed studies represent diverse geographical contexts and organizational settings, including manufacturing, services, healthcare, education, maritime industries, and the public sector. Most studies employed quantitative research designs, while a limited number adopted mixed-method approaches.

The results indicate that determinants of employee job satisfaction can be grouped into three overarching categories: individual-level determinants, job-related determinants, and organizational-level determinants. Among these categories, job-related and organizational-level determinants were examined more frequently than individual-level factors across the reviewed studies.

Individual-level determinants include demographic and personal characteristics such as age, tenure, education, and career stage. These factors were found to influence job satisfaction in several studies; however, their effects were not consistently significant across different contexts. In many cases, individual-level determinants played a complementary rather than a dominant role in explaining job satisfaction outcomes.

Job-related determinants were prominently identified across sectors. Workload, job autonomy, job design, task clarity, work–life balance, and working conditions were frequently reported as significant predictors of job satisfaction. Studies conducted in high-demand environments, such as healthcare and manufacturing, emphasized workload and job demands, whereas studies in service-oriented and knowledge-based sectors highlighted autonomy and flexibility as key determinants.

Organizational-level determinants emerged as the most dominant group of predictors. Leadership style, perceived organizational support, human resource management practices, compensation systems, organizational justice, and organizational culture were consistently associated with employee job satisfaction across the reviewed studies. These determinants appeared in both public and private sector contexts, indicating their broad relevance.

Recent studies published after 2020 also identified emerging determinants related to changes in work arrangements. Flexible work practices, telework, and remote working conditions were increasingly examined and reported as influential determinants of job satisfaction, reflecting evolving workplace dynamics. To provide a structured overview of

the reviewed studies, Table 1 summarizes the key characteristics and main determinants identified in each article.

Table 1. Summary of Scopus-Indexed Studies on
Determinants of Employee Job Satisfaction (2015–2025)

Author(s) & Year	Sector / Context	Method	Key Determinants Identified
Chaudhuri et al. (2015)	Multi-sector	Quantitative	Age, tenure, job characteristics
Tarvid (2015)	Higher education	Quantitative	Education level, job security
Alegre et al. (2016)	Private organizations	Quantitative	Leadership, organizational support
Munir et al. (2016)	Manufacturing	Quantitative	Job design, work environment
Rodríguez et al. (2017)	Lean organizations	Quantitative	Workload, job autonomy
Hartmann et al. (2017)	Sales organizations	Quantitative	Job facets, reward systems
Yuen et al. (2018)	Maritime sector	Quantitative	Working conditions, compensation
Kamaruddin et al. (2018)	Agriculture sector	Quantitative	HR practices, job security
Addis et al. (2018)	Manufacturing	Quantitative	Work environment, supervision
Senek et al. (2020)	Healthcare	Quantitative	Workload, emotional demands
Lee (2020)	Public sector	Quantitative	Organizational justice, leadership
Sousa-Uva et al. (2021)	Multi-sector	Quantitative	Telework, work–life balance
Bezdrob et al. (2021)	Private organizations	Quantitative	Job stability, organizational climate
Asuyama et al. (2021)	Industrial sector	Quantitative	Job conditions, income stability
Lee et al. (2022)	Public sector	Quantitative	Motivation, job security
Choi et al. (2022)	Healthcare	Quantitative	Work stress, organizational support
Admiraal et al. (2023)	Education	Quantitative	Job demands, job resources
Ravid (2024)	Public sector	Quantitative	Economic conditions, job security
Gazi et al. (2024)	Industrial sector	Quantitative	Job behavior, organizational support
Jiang & Yuan (2025)	Education	Quantitative	Burnout, work pressure

Table 1 provides a concise overview of the empirical studies included in this systematic literature review, highlighting the diversity of research contexts, sectors, and methodological approaches. The table shows that most studies were conducted using

quantitative methods across a wide range of industries, with a strong concentration in manufacturing, healthcare, education, and public sector organizations. Across these studies, organizational-level and job-related determinants appear most frequently, particularly leadership practices, organizational support, workload, job design, and working conditions. Individual-level determinants such as age, tenure, and education are reported less consistently and are often examined alongside job and organizational factors rather than as standalone predictors. Overall, the table illustrates the breadth of determinants examined in the literature and provides a structured foundation for synthesizing patterns and trends in employee job satisfaction research.

DISCUSSION

This systematic literature review synthesizes evidence from 20 Scopus-indexed empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 to identify and interpret the determinants of employee job satisfaction. Overall, the findings confirm that job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction of individual-level, job-related, and organizational-level factors, with organizational and job-related determinants consistently emerging as the most influential across contexts.

A key pattern identified in the reviewed studies is the central role of organizational-level determinants in shaping employee job satisfaction. Leadership practices, perceived organizational support, organizational justice, and human resource management systems were repeatedly found to have strong associations with job satisfaction across sectors (Alegre et al., 2016; Kamaruddin et al., 2018; Lee, 2020; Bezdrob et al., 2021). Studies in both public and private organizations indicate that employees report higher job satisfaction when organizational policies are perceived as fair, supportive, and transparent (Lee, 2020; Ravid, 2024). This consistency across institutional settings suggests that organizational determinants constitute structural foundations of job satisfaction rather than context-specific influences.

Job-related determinants also play a significant role, although their relative importance varies across industries and occupational contexts. Workload, job autonomy, job design, and working conditions were frequently highlighted as critical predictors of job satisfaction in labor-intensive and high-demand environments (Rodríguez et al., 2017; Senek et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2022). In contrast, studies conducted in service-oriented, educational, and maritime sectors emphasized autonomy, task meaningfulness, and work–life balance as

dominant determinants (Yuen et al., 2018; Sousa-Uva et al., 2021; Admiraal et al., 2023). These findings indicate that job-related determinants are highly sensitive to sectoral characteristics and task structures, reinforcing the need for context-aware job design strategies.

In comparison, individual-level determinants such as age, tenure, education, and career stage were found to exert less consistent effects on job satisfaction. While some studies reported significant relationships between demographic variables and job satisfaction (Chaudhuri et al., 2015; Tarvid, 2015), other studies found these effects to be weak or statistically insignificant once job-related and organizational factors were taken into account (Munir et al., 2016; Addis et al., 2018). This suggests that individual characteristics may function as secondary or moderating factors rather than primary drivers of job satisfaction.

Another notable theme emerging from the reviewed literature is the increasing attention to non-traditional work arrangements as determinants of job satisfaction. Studies published after 2020 consistently examined telework, flexible work arrangements, and remote working conditions in response to changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic (Sousa-Uva et al., 2021; Senek et al., 2020). These studies indicate that flexible work practices can enhance job satisfaction when accompanied by adequate organizational support and manageable job demands, but may also generate dissatisfaction in the absence of clear role boundaries and supportive leadership (Gazi et al., 2024).

The reviewed studies also reveal important sectoral distinctions in the determinants of job satisfaction. In healthcare settings, emotional demands and workload pressures emerged as particularly salient determinants (Senek et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2022), whereas in education and public sector contexts, job security, motivation, and economic stability were more prominent (Lee et al., 2022; Ravid, 2024; Jiang & Yuan, 2025). These variations highlight the limitations of universal models of job satisfaction and underscore the importance of sector-specific analysis.

Despite the breadth of empirical evidence, this review identifies several gaps in the existing literature. Many studies examine a limited set of determinants, often focusing exclusively on either job-related or organizational factors, which restricts the ability to capture the full complexity of job satisfaction (Hartmann et al., 2017; Bezdrob et al., 2021). Furthermore, the predominance of cross-sectional research designs limits insights into causal

mechanisms and temporal dynamics of job satisfaction (Munir et al., 2016; Admiraal et al., 2023). Longitudinal and multi-level studies remain relatively scarce.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings of this SLR support and extend established frameworks such as job characteristics theory and job demands–resources models by emphasizing the growing importance of organizational support and flexible work arrangements (Rodríguez et al., 2017; Senek et al., 2020). The integration of emerging determinants related to digitalization and remote work suggests that existing theories require adaptation to reflect contemporary work environments (Sousa-Uva et al., 2021; Gazi et al., 2024).

In sum, this discussion demonstrates that employee job satisfaction is primarily shaped by organizational and job-related determinants, while individual-level factors play a more limited and context-dependent role. By synthesizing findings across sectors and time, this systematic literature review provides a more integrated understanding of the determinants of employee job satisfaction and establishes a foundation for future research and theory development.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review set out to synthesize empirical evidence on the determinants of employee job satisfaction by systematically examining 20 Scopus-indexed studies published between 2015 and 2025. In response to the study's objective, the findings demonstrate that employee job satisfaction is primarily shaped by organizational-level and job-related determinants, while individual-level factors play a more limited and context-dependent role. Across sectors and national contexts, leadership practices, perceived organizational support, human resource management systems, organizational justice, and compensation structures consistently emerged as the most influential determinants. Job-related factors such as workload, job autonomy, job design, and work–life balance also exerted a significant influence, although their relative importance varied depending on sectoral characteristics and work environments.

The synthesis further reveals that employee job satisfaction is not a static construct but evolves alongside changes in organizational practices and work arrangements. Studies published after 2020 increasingly highlight flexible work arrangements, telework, and remote working conditions as important determinants, particularly when supported by effective

leadership and clear organizational policies. Collectively, these findings answer the research objective by demonstrating that job satisfaction is best understood as an outcome of organizational systems and job structures rather than solely individual attributes.

From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the existing literature in several ways. Theoretically, it integrates fragmented empirical findings into a coherent framework that categorizes determinants of employee job satisfaction into individual, job-related, and organizational levels, thereby reinforcing and extending established perspectives such as job characteristics theory and job demands–resources models. Methodologically, this study contributes by applying a rigorous SLR approach guided by PRISMA principles, offering a transparent and replicable synthesis of Scopus-indexed research over a ten-year period. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based insights for organizations, emphasizing that interventions aimed at improving job satisfaction should prioritize organizational policies, leadership quality, and job design rather than focusing narrowly on individual employee characteristics.

Despite these contributions, this review also highlights several gaps that warrant further investigation. Future research would benefit from adopting integrative research designs that simultaneously examine individual, job-related, and organizational determinants within a single analytical framework. Longitudinal and multi-level studies are particularly needed to capture causal relationships and temporal changes in job satisfaction. In addition, comparative cross-sector and cross-country studies remain limited and should be expanded to better understand contextual variations in job satisfaction determinants. Finally, as work environments continue to evolve, future research should more deeply explore emerging determinants related to digitalization, hybrid work models, and artificial intelligence, as well as their long-term implications for employee job satisfaction. Overall, this systematic literature review provides a comprehensive and focused synthesis of the determinants of employee job satisfaction, offering clear theoretical insights, methodological rigor, and practical relevance, while also outlining concrete directions for future research in this evolving field.

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