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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### The Role of Managers' Communication Skills in Employee Job Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis of Previous Research

Meisam Hasanpoor Haskooi<sup>1</sup>  | Mandana Saniee<sup>2</sup>  | Somayeh Tajik Esmaeili<sup>3</sup>  | Leila  
Niroomand<sup>4</sup> 

1. Ph.D. Candidate of Social Communication Sciences, East Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. Email: [meisam.hasanpoor@yahoo.com](mailto:meisam.hasanpoor@yahoo.com)
2. Corresponding Author, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Communication Sciences, East Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. Email: [mandana.saniee@iau.ac.ir](mailto:mandana.saniee@iau.ac.ir)
3. Associate Professor, Department of Social Communication Sciences, Tehran East Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. Email: [stajik@iauct.ac.ir](mailto:stajik@iauct.ac.ir)
4. Associate Professor, Department of Social Communication Sciences, East Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. Email: [ln\\_niroomand@yahoo.com](mailto:ln_niroomand@yahoo.com)

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### EXTENDED ABSTRACT

#### Introduction:

Human resources constitute the fundamental capital of organizations and serve as the primary source of transformation and innovation within them. The progress and sustainability of organizational life depend on managers' comprehensive attention to the role and status of human capital. The flourishing of human resources in organizations necessitates various measures, among which job satisfaction is a critical concern in retaining and maintaining an organization's

workforce. Neglecting job satisfaction in the long term disrupts the organizational social system, leading to dissent, diminished sense of responsibility, and ultimately, employee turnover.

With the increasing volume of research in the human sciences, the need for researchers to employ meta-analysis as a means of obtaining a comprehensive and integrated understanding of a given problem has grown considerably. The present study aims to quantitatively synthesize the findings of prior research on the relationship between managers' communication skills and employee job satisfaction within Iranian organizations. To this end, a total of 36 articles were examined using the meta-analytic method.

### **Method:**

The present research is applied in terms of objectives and quantitative in terms of data. It was conducted using the meta-analysis method, employing SPSS-28 software and the meta-analytic functions available within this program. Only studies meeting the necessary methodological criteria were included in the analysis. Specifically, articles and theses that satisfied the Daron Ganji criteria were utilized. The inclusion criteria for this research were as follows: (1) the study was conducted in Iran; (2) the research examined managers' communication skills and their impact on employee job satisfaction, including all relevant dimensions, as independent or dependent variables; and (3) the study provided sufficient data for the practical extraction of effect sizes (strength of relationships).

A purposive sampling method was employed. Subsequently, studies that quantitatively investigated the issue through survey methods within the field of communication, and which examined the variable of managers' communication skills in relation to employee job satisfaction, were selected. The statistical population initially comprised 20 articles and theses conducted over the past 15 years in the domain of leadership and the role of communication skills in employee job satisfaction. After applying validity and reliability criteria for measurement instruments and sampling methods - in accordance with meta-analysis standards - 13 studies remained eligible for inclusion.

To identify primary research, a preliminary search was conducted across various Iranian information databases, including the Iran Documents and Documents Center, the Academic Jihad database, the Iran Journals Bank private site, the Islamic Sciences Computer Research Center, Sika, and the Research Institute of Humanities. The search yielded 36 full-text articles, theses, and treatises containing the keywords "communication skills" and "employee job satisfaction." Given the specific leadership and organizational management context of the country, the study was limited to research conducted within domestic management systems and focused on the occurrence of employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

### **Results:**

The findings indicated that the measurement of effect size, based on gender subgroup analysis using a random-effects model with inverse variance weighting, demonstrated that gender serves as a moderating variable in the relationship between managers' communication skills and employee job satisfaction, thereby constituting a source of heterogeneity. To determine the final model and confirm the presence of moderating variables, a heterogeneity test was conducted, the results of which are presented in Table 8. In this test, significant heterogeneity indicates the selection of a random-effects model. It is assumed in such studies that the nature of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is influenced by moderating factors.

As shown in Table 8, based on the results of the  $P > 0.000$  test, the Q statistic was 526 for male-only studies and 1741 for combined studies. The sigma values in these studies were below 5%, indicating heterogeneity. However, the subgroup homogeneity test (by gender) yielded a sigma of 0.7, suggesting homogeneity. Furthermore, the findings confirmed heterogeneity in effect sizes and the absence of publication bias among the studies examined. The results of Egger's regression test indicated that the heterogeneity principle was established across all studies, as sigma values remained below 0.5 (both in male-only and mixed-gender research). Based on linear regression results, when the 95% confidence interval corresponds to the t-value, the null hypothesis—that the funnel plot is symmetrical and that no diffusion bias exists—is confirmed.

### **Conclusion:**

The findings demonstrate that as managers' communication skills improve, employee job satisfaction correspondingly increases. Therefore, enhancing managers' communication competencies is effective in promoting employee satisfaction. Given the positive impact of communication skills training on employee satisfaction, managers should devote particular attention to this area, as it can contribute to improving organizational climate and enhancing productivity. This approach not only benefits employees but also supports the overall success of the organization.

In the selection of senior and middle managers, communication skills should be considered a key criterion in evaluating and appointing highly competent managers. These competencies not only improve the quality of intra-organizational communication but also exert a positive influence on overall organizational performance. Attending to communication skills in both the selection and training processes of managers can lead to improved organizational outcomes and enhanced quality of internal relationships.

#### **Data Availability Statement**

Data available on request from the authors.

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#### **Ethical considerations**

Not applicable.

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#### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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