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# Job Satisfaction and Adjustment at Workplace among Retired Army and Civil Employees Working in a Civilian Setting

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## Abstract

The study aimed to compare the connection between work/social adjustment and job satisfaction among retired army and civil personnel working in civilian contexts. The sample of the study consisted of  $N = 150$  employees of which  $n = 75$  employees were retired army personnel and  $n = 75$  were civilians. Cross-sectional research design and Purposive sampling was used to collect data. Generic Job Satisfaction Scale and Work and Social Adjustment Scale were used. The findings showed that retired army employees were significantly more satisfied with their job than civil employees while both types of employees had the same level of adjustment problems. Work/social adjustment problems had a negative significant relationship with job satisfaction among both employees of both groups. Work/ social adjustment problems negatively predicted job satisfaction among retired army employees but there was no significant effect among civilian employees. The research findings will be useful for organizational settings in highlighting certain elements that contribute to the degree of satisfaction and adjustment challenges among retired army and civil personnel who work together.

**Keywords:** army employees, civil employees, job satisfaction, work and social adjustment problems

## Introduction

The study investigates various factors connected to job satisfaction, and workplace adjustment issues of retired army and city employees who work together.

## Adjustment Problems and Job Satisfaction

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the connection of work/social adjustment problems with job satisfaction among retired army and civil employees who are working in civilian settings. The work/social adjustment problems and job satisfaction among civilian and retired army

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employees may be different because of their work conditions, work atmosphere, job resources, performance in the job, and implementation of skills, salaries, designation, and fairness in the job. Job satisfaction is explained in terms of rewards given by the job which can increase satisfaction. Rewards may include earnings from a job, chances of progress, promotion, and appreciation (Gebrekiros Hagos, [2015](#)). Tella ([2007](#)) explained three dimensions of job satisfaction including a person's emotional response towards a job situation, people's positive or negative attitude towards their job, and a person's attitude towards their job characteristics such as good pay, chances for promotions, reasonable position, and relationship with co-workers.

### **Retired Army Personnel and Civilian Employees**

Singer ([1984](#)) suggested that regarding military retirees, a more suitable description was a change of careers rather than the term "retirement". When army personnel leave their services and return to civilian life, it not only creates challenges for them but may also become a cause of conflict for their family. Furthermore, it was found that army personnel believed that civilian society neither understood nor cared about their military experience (Gordon et al., [2020](#)). When army personnel join civilian professional settings, they face a lot of problems including adjustment in the social environment of the workplace. Such adjustment problems affect their satisfaction with their job (Gordon et al., [2020](#)). The career changes of military retirees also lead to adjustment problems (Graves, [2005](#)). A study found that 43% of personnel shifted from one job to another with better suitability and prospects (Johnson et al., [2010](#)). While in an ideal setting, civilians are working throughout in a civil setting and they stay in one job on the basis of their job performance and attractive sources such as salaries, coworker connections, and management, etc. given by any work setting (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, [2015](#)).

### **Civilian Settings and Employees' Problems**

Employees spend a major portion of their daily time in professional work settings as it is an essential constituent in the process of achieving targeted goals and showing the quality of work. While, on the other hand, most professional work settings fail to understand the work environment difficulties and their impact on job satisfaction of the employees. So, problems regarding the workplace create distress and anxiety among

employees (Judge & Klinger, [2008](#)). A research survey of 2000 people in the context of Pakistan demonstrated that one-third of the population (34%) experienced stress due to poor management of workplace issues rather than financial stress (30%) and health-related stress (17%). The study also investigated the common management challenges in professional settings and concluded that pay structure, discrimination, and unequal appreciation were the most significant challenges (Murtaza, [2017](#)).

## Theoretical Background

Many researchers and practitioners used different theories to explain the role of job satisfaction and adjustment in work life of employees. Dawis et al. ([1964](#)) proposed Work Adjustment Theory, which states that a person's degree of satisfaction determines whether they stay or quit their employment. An individual's abilities, organizational requirements, employee performance are interconnected. Six values, i.e achievement (empowers progress and success), comfort (encourages relaxation), status (encourages repute), altruism (encourages coordinating with others), safety (encourages security), and autonomy (encourages control and motivation toward success), are six values enhance employee satisfaction at workplace. The work adjustment theory also suggested that when a person chooses the wrong job or the employer selects the wrong person for a job, it may lead to disturbed coordination between the person and the environment. The theory also discusses the role of flexibility in predicting the amount of tolerance between a person and surroundings. This tolerance varies from person to person and environment to environment. The amount of flexibility is influenced by both personality and alternative superior possibilities. (Dawis et al., [1964](#)). Further, the work adjustment theory also explained two forms of adjustment including active adjustment (person change their environment according to their behavior or mood) and reactive adjustment (person change their own behavior according to their environment's demand). The whole theory explains that there is some relation between adjustment and satisfaction in the job so it is important that person, environment, and flexibility among their mood should be adjusted in situations to ensure healthy adjustment and satisfaction (Dawis et al., [1964](#)).

## Literature review

Work and social adjustment problems and job satisfaction are target variables of the current study and it is important to find how these variables

are used in past research in relation to work conditions. According to previous studies, fear/anxiety over COVID-19 was linked to poor work satisfaction, perceived job insecurity, organizational and professional turnover intentions, and increased future career anxiety. The Work and Social Adjustment Scale scores and the COVID-19 Anxiety Syndrome were linked were significantly correlated. It was suggested to explore these correlations in a range of employment settings (Rajabimajd et al., [2021](#)). In the light of the discussed literature current hypotheses formulated, work and social adjustment would have a negative significant relationship with job satisfaction among retired army and civil employees.

According to prior studies, having a pleasant physical environment at work may have a positive effect on job satisfaction of employees. One such study explored the effects of the physical work environment on nurses' job satisfaction in rural Punjab, Pakistan, and found that it accounts for 43% of the variation in nurses' job satisfaction levels (Nawaz et al., [2022](#)). In another study, the influence of rumination, emotional fatigue, and work environment on nurses' job performance was explored. The results suggested that emotional exhaustion and work environment had a positive impact on job satisfaction while rumination has a negative effect on nurses' work satisfaction (Hussain et al., [2022](#)). In the light of latest literature, present study hypothesized that job satisfaction would have been predicted adjustment at the workplace between the retired army and civil employees working in the civilian settings of Pakistan.

Waqar and Hamid ([2016](#)) revealed that nurses at government hospitals are more satisfied than nurses in private hospitals, and they also experience a high degree of stress as a result of obstacles and distresses that aid in completing goals effectively on time. In the light of mentioned literature current study formulated a hypothesis that job satisfaction would have been significantly different between civil and retired army employees.

The old literature and theoretical framework support the aim and objectives of the present research that employees experienced anxiety and stress in the professional settings of Pakistan so there is a need to find the effect of work/ social adjustment problems and job satisfaction among retired army employees as compared to civilians who worked at civilian settings.

## Rationale

The study was intended to investigate issues with work/social adjustment and job satisfaction among former military personnel and civilian employees who are working in civilian environment. Armed forces retirees and civil employees continue to work in the same places and face the same obstacles after retirement. Transitioning military personnel had some types of concerns and adjustment issues (Graves, [2005](#)) but Civil personnel were already dealing with a variety of problems in civilian settings related to work atmosphere, job resources, performance in the job, application of talents, pay, designation, fairness at workplace, compensation, coworkers' connections, and management. Because of these social and environmental issues, employees were under stress at work (Murtaza, [2017](#); Raziqn & Maulabakhsh, [2015](#)). Therefore, it is necessary to identify those factors that were better used to and let the employees perform well in civilian situations. Research is also intended to look at how work and social adjustment issues and job satisfaction are different for retired military and civil personnel working in civilian environments. Given the existing availability of data, the current study aims to improve understanding of the viewpoints of difficulties connected to employees with two distinct mindsets who are subjected to the same working circumstances and have varying levels of adjustment and satisfaction in the same setting.

## Objectives

The objective of the study is to find out the relationship between work and social adjustment problems and job satisfaction between retired army employees and civil employees who are working in civilian settings.

## Hypotheses

1. There would be a significant negative relationship between work/social adjustment issues and job satisfaction among retired army and civil employees who are working in civilian settings.
2. Level of work/ social adjustment would have significantly predicted job satisfaction in retired army employees and civil employees who are working in civilian settings.
3. Civil and Retired army employees would have been significantly different regarding job satisfaction in civilian settings.

## Method

### Research Design

Cross-sectional research design was used to find out the relationship between job satisfaction and work and social adjustment in civil employees and retired army employees working in civilian settings.

### Sample

Sample of the present study consisted of  $N = 150$  employees working in a civilian setting out of which  $n_1 = 75$  were retired army employees and  $n_2 = 75$  were civil employees. The sample was taken from Lahore, Pakistan. Purposive sampling technique was used because the sample was selected from the population on the basis of specific aims like civilian organizations and retired army employees were approached from societies where retired army employees live.

Mean age of retired army employees was  $M_{age} = 56$  and civilian employees was  $M_{age} = 37$ . 38% of Retired army officers were graduates, 24% had masters and 19% had completed intermediate. 57% civil employees were graduates and 25% were masters. 100% of Retired army were married and 64% of civil employees were married and 36% of civilians were unmarried. 75% of retired army employees had 3 to 6 children and 47% of civil employees had no children in the range of 0-9 and 30 % of civil employees had 3 to 6 children with the age range of 0-9. 70% of retired army employees were in the administration, management, and teaching and 30% were their own businesses i.e. shops keeping and farming, etc. 100% of civil employees were in management and accounts. 60% of spouses' educations of the retired army employees were middle to inter while 15% were uneducated and 35% of spouse's educations of civil employees were inter to masters while 41% were uneducated. The mean monthly income was 67899 among Retired army and civil employees.

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

- Study focuses on retired army and civil employees that worked in civilian environments such as working in management, accounts, administration, business, and educational institutes, etc.
- Study excluded age gaps, education, experience, and gender differences of employees.

## Assessment Measures

### *Demographic Questionnaire*

Demographic questionnaire includes the age of employees, qualification of employees, present job, marital status, number of children, monthly income, and spouse's education.

### *Work and Social Adjustment Scale*

Work and Social Adjustment Scale (Mundt et al., [2002](#)) WSAS was used to measure the level of work/social adjustment and functional impairment in different domains of daily living such as work, social and leisure activities. The Cronbach alpha values of WSAS were in the range of .70 to .94. Its test-retest reliability was .73. It has 5 items and has a 0 to 8 Likert scale. In the present study, its reliability was  $\alpha = .70$ .

### *Generic Job Satisfaction Scale*

Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (Macdonald & MacIntyre, [1997](#)) was used to measure the concept and level of job satisfaction of retired army and civil employees working in civilian settings. It has 10 items and a 1 to 5 Likert scale. The value of Cronbach's Alpha reliability of GJSS was .77. In the present study, its reliability was  $\alpha = .87$ .

## Procedure

Firstly, permission was obtained from the authors of the scales through email for the purpose of data collection. After permission was taken from the author of the scale, retired army employees and city employees who were working in a civilian environment were approached. Data was taken from different organizations in two cities of Pakistan (Lahore and Sargodha) and purposive sampling was used to collect data. Instructions were given to the participants about the study and how to fill out the scale and it was assured that their information would remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

## Ethical Considerations

- First, permission was sought from the author to use scales for data collection.
- Informed consent was used to get permission from the respondent.
- There was no mentally or physically harmful effect of the current study on participants.



## Statistical Analyses

The research used Independent t-Test, Pearson product-moment Correlation, Linear Regression to calculate results.

## Results

**Table 1**

*Psychometric Properties of the Job Satisfaction and Work /Social Adjustment (N = 100)*

Variables	k	M	SD	$\alpha$	Range	
					Potential	Actual
Job satisfaction	10	37.52	7.53	.87	10-50	14-50
Work and social adjustment	5	13.33	8.00	.70	0-40	0-37

Table 1 showed that the reliability of the job satisfaction scale, work, and social adjustment scale was good.

**Table 2**

*Intercorrelation between Job Satisfaction and Work / Social Adjustment (N=100)*

Variables	1	2
1.Job satisfaction	-	-.21*
2.Work and social adjustment	-.38**	-

*Note.* \*p < .05. \*\*p < .01. \*\*\*p < .001, upper diagonal = civil employees, lower diagonal = retired army employees.

In Table 2, the upper diagonal showed that there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and work/social adjustment of civil employees, and the lower diagonal showed a significant relationship between job satisfaction and work/social adjustment of retired army employees working at civilian settings. It was found that the level of work/social adjustment problems has a negative significant relationship with job satisfaction regarding civilian employees and level of work/social adjustment problems has a moderate and negative significant relationship with job satisfaction in retired army employees.

**Table 3**

*Linear Regression Analysis for Work/ Social Adjustment Problems Predict Job Satisfaction among Retired Army Employees*

Variable	Job Satisfaction	
	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>
Work/ social adjustment problems	-.38**	.11
<i>R</i>	.38	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.15	
<i>F</i>	12.97**	
<i>N</i>	75	

Note. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 3 showed that work/ social adjustment problems negatively predicted job satisfaction among retired army employees. Work/ social adjustment problems were predicting a decrease in job satisfaction and vice versa. The work/social adjustment problems account for 15% of the variation in job satisfaction and it means 85% of the variation in job satisfaction cannot be explained by Work/ social adjustment problems alone. (There may be other factors that have been influencing also which was discussed in the discussion chapter).

**Table 4**

*Linear Regression Analysis for Work/ Social Adjustment Predict Job Satisfaction among Civil Employees*

Variable	Job Satisfaction	
	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>
Work/ social adjustment problems	-.21	.09
<i>R</i>	.21	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.04	
<i>F</i>	3.6	
<i>N</i>	75	

Table 4 showed that work/social adjustment did not predict job satisfaction in civilians.

Results of Table 5 showed that there is a significant difference between the retired army and civil employees regarding job satisfaction. The value of the mean showed that retired army employees were significantly more satisfied than civil employees in civilian settings. The value of Cohen's  $d$

also showed that there was a medium effect size between the retired army and civilian employees in job satisfaction.

**Table 5**

*Independent Sample t-test for Difference in Retired Army and Civil Employees Worked at Civilian Settings among Job Satisfaction and Work/Social Adjustment*

Variables	Retired army Employees		Civil Employees		<i>t</i> (148)	<i>p</i>	95% CI		Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Job satisfaction	39.58	7.42	35.45	7.11	3.48	.00	2.57	7.21	0.56
WSAS	13.44	7.58	13.22	8.46	0.16	.87	-	3.80	
							1.83		

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$

Results of Table 5 also showed that there is no significant difference in work and social adjustment between retired army employees and civil employees.

## Discussion

All army personnel have to return to civil life after serving in the armed services till a specified age. This change of job is difficult for army personnel since they deal with individuals of various mindsets, and Pakistani civilian settings already have numerous challenges as discussed above. These concerns induce anxiety and worry among Pakistani employees.

First, the current study sought to evaluate the association between work and social adjustment problems and job satisfaction among former army and civil workers working in Pakistani civilian contexts. Results supported the hypotheses that work and social adjustment-related problems (maladjustment) were inversely related to job satisfaction among both retired army employees and civilians who were working in civilian settings. The relationship revealed that if the level of problems related to work/social adjustment was decreased then job satisfaction was increased in the civilian setting of Pakistan or vice versa. As all social/work adjustment problems are associated with low levels of job satisfaction, the reason for this relationship could be weak and poor management of professional organizations in Pakistan, low salary standards, an unfair environment, and relationship conflicts with coworkers and supervisors (Saeed et al., 2013).

Literature also supports the fact that fear and anxiety of Covid-19 are associated with a greater score on the work and social adjustment Scale which leads to higher future career anxiety and perceived job insecurity, as well as lower job satisfaction and increased organizational and professional role conflict (Rajabimajd et al, [2021](#)). Job satisfaction occurs when the employees like their work environment (supervisor, colleagues, clients, and organization's rules and regulations) and their job (difficulty of the tasks, role, and wages) (Osman et al., [2019](#)). A previous study in Pakistan examined the effects of motivating elements including the work environment, job inspiration, job security, and workplace pleasure, on employees' job satisfaction (Butt et al., [2021](#)). Therefore, it supports the finding of the current research that employees are better contented with their jobs in Pakistan if their adjustment-related promises are accomplished.

The present study also found that work/ social adjustment problems inversely predicted job satisfaction among retired army employees of Pakistan. Work/social adjustment-related problems can account for 15% of the variation in job satisfaction. It means 85% of the variation in job satisfaction cannot be explained by Work/ social adjustment problems alone. There may be other factors that have influenced it as well. The reason behind these results might be the other factors of retired army employees which lead them towards health-related issues, Evidence from previous researches suggests that most of the motivational needs of Pakistani professionals are unsatisfied, and professionals who are mid- and end-career feel somewhat satisfied. It was also revealed that most construction organizations' human resource strategies do not meet the motivating demands of their employees, which lead to work dissatisfaction and, as a result, poorer production. (Bukhari et al., [2021](#)). The present study also reported that the work/ social adjustment problems on civil employees did not predict job satisfaction in civilian settings. According to prior research on District Officers' Job Satisfaction in KPK, Pakistan, personal qualities of employees, such as job expectations and salary, are also responsible for explaining employee job satisfaction in every firm (Khan & Khan, [2011](#)), It supports the results of the current study in a way that other factors like pay and position is also an important factor in the explanation of employee's satisfaction with their job settings.

Thirdly, the study investigated that retired army employees were more satisfied with civilian settings as compared to civil employees. After

retirement, army personnel gets their pension commutation, academic facilities for their children, hospital facilities for them and their families, and reasonable position in civil setting after retirements. As previous research (Khan & Khan, [2011](#)) supported the contributing factors military veterans that they receive government support in areas such as health care, home buying, higher education, retirement, vocational rehabilitation, disability compensation, life insurance, and employment in state and federal government (Birdsall, [2018](#)). So, the reason behind this difference might be better opportunities for army employees in civilian settings with their other resources and facilities acquired by the army after retirement. As reported in the news article in Pakistan, ex-military employees receive pensions and benefits from the army and a salary from the civil service (Manzoor, [2016](#)).

The present study also found that retired army employees and civil employees does not differ in work and social adjustment. Both retired army employees and civil employees face the same physical conditions like load shading and discipline problems etc. Organizational Human Resources Pakistan ignore the encouraging demands of employees, which undermine the effective completion of projects (Bukhari et al., [2021](#)). It is estimated that both are facing the same adjustment-related problems with the civil settings in Pakistan because civil settings take more work with their employee's capacity and did not give good salaries and other recourses so that their work and social adjustment scores are the same.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that retired army employees showed significantly higher job satisfaction as compared to civil employees. Whereas, no differences in the retired army and civil employees were reported in the level of work/social adjustment. The relationship between job satisfaction and work and social adjustment was negatively significant among both groups of employees. Moreover, work and social adjustment problems significantly predicted job satisfaction only in retired army personnel. This study will help authority figures of organizations to work on their relationship building and resolve the adjustment issues of their employees for better performance at their workplace to improve the working environment, increase productivity, and standardized work settings by following these factors.

## Limitations

- The sample of the study was 150 employees out of which 75 were retired army and 75 were civil employees. As the sample size was small so, the sample size could be increased.
- The problem faced in collecting data was that most of the people did not agree to give their personal information. The author got informed consent and explained to the respondents about confidentiality and anonymity of the research respondents.

## Recommendations

- The findings of the study recommend government, the ministry of commerce, and the security exchange commission of Pakistan that they should introduce rules and pass laws for employee satisfaction and adjustment.
- Army employees should also share their learned skills and talent with civil employees and also introduce some disciplines of army settings in civil settings.
- Present research gave an idea to future researchers that they should further work on government retired employees.

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