



Democratic Leadership and Job Satisfaction: Moderating Role of Age and Gender

BIGUL SAPKOTA | MIJALA KAYESTHA | DEVI RAMAN TIWARI | PUKAR SHRESTHA

*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Bigul Sapkota

Kathmandu Model College

bigulsapkota@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The job satisfaction level of employees in an organization is subject to alteration because of the leadership style of the managers. Different leadership styles can have different effects on the job satisfaction levels. This study attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction, along with the moderating role of age and gender in this impact, through an empirical investigation in Nepalese Commercial Banks where 5 out of the 10 highest profit-earning banks in the second quarter of FY 2079/80 were taken as samples for the study and questionnaires were distributed. It uses a multiple regression model, evaluates the dummy indicator regression of democratic leadership and job satisfaction, and discusses the findings of the analysis, which indicate that democratic leadership had a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction as the coefficient of multiple determination calculated is 0.433. The adoption of a democratic leadership style by the managers led to an increase in the job satisfaction levels of the employees because of the emphasis on participative behavior, motivation, and communication. Similarly, both age and gender played no significant moderating role in democratic leadership's impact on job satisfaction as the adjusted R-square values are 0.402 for females, and 0.506 for males, gender-wise, and it is 0.823 for the age group (22-26) and 0.506 for 26 and above, age-wise. This paper concludes with the implication that a democratic leadership style should be adopted by the leaders to instill a participative environment and satisfy the employees. It also establishes the foundation for additional in-depth research in the future, in line with the limitations of this study.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is evolving at a rapid pace and employees' morale and satisfaction are being given the utmost attention and

significance. Business organizations and leaders have understood that job satisfaction of employees can greatly influence their work productivity and

efficiency. Job satisfaction is the amount of overall positive feelings that individuals have toward their job (Arnold & Feldman, 1986). In light of this, it comes as no surprise that scholarly research has focused on several factors that affect the level of employees' job satisfaction. In the modern era, the impact of a leader's leadership style is considered a significant factor that affects the employees' job satisfaction. Girum and Karunakaran (2022) argued that the democratic style of leadership has a significant statistical association with employees' job satisfaction whereas the autocratic and Laissez-faire leadership styles have no such significant association with the job satisfaction of employees. The relationship between democratic leadership and employees' job satisfaction has been explored by several researchers Bhatti (2012), Lewin et al. (1939), Wilderom et al. (2004), and Bhatti (2012) found that employees under the democratic leadership style were satisfied with their jobs and did not want to change their jobs. This growing body of literature on Democratic Leadership and Job Satisfaction advocates that democratic leadership can have a major impact on the job satisfaction level of the employees.

Different research shows the different effects of the democratic leadership style on the job satisfaction of the employees working in an organization. Lewin et al. (1939) concluded that the democratic style of leadership is the most effective. Similarly, Smith (1998) showed a positive relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction as his findings further revealed that democratic leaders take great care to involve all members of the team in the discussion, and can work with a small but highly motivated team while according to Belias and Koustelio (2014), the main types of leadership that are likely to influence the employee's job satisfaction positively are transformational and servant leadership, with the worker as their primary focus. So, the result is inconclusive and managers often get confused about whether to adopt a democratic leadership style or not. So, the

question arises, does there exist any relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction? In light of this, further investigations may contribute to analyzing the degree of impact of democratic leadership on the job satisfaction of the employees. The study also aims to test the moderating roles of age and gender on the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction. According to Eagly and Johnson (1990), younger workers are more inclined towards the democratic style of leadership than the older ones. In a similar vein, women prefer democratic leadership more than men in the organization (Eagly & Carli, 2007). So, do age and gender significantly moderate the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction? Thus, this study also aims to study this moderating impact.

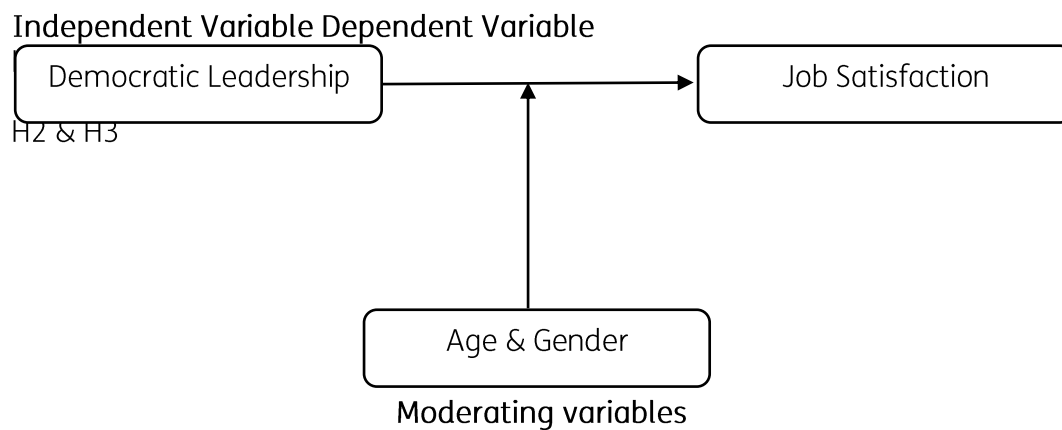
This study contributes to the literature in a multitude of ways. First, this study adds to the existing literature in the field of leadership styles and job satisfaction. Smith (1998) asserts that if the task is highly structured and the leader has a good relationship with the employees, effectiveness will be high on the part of the employees. His findings further revealed that democratic leaders take great care to involve all members of the team in discussion, and can work with a small but highly motivated team. Similarly, Hayers (2000) found that workers who fell under pressure reported autocratic supervision on the part of their leaders. Hence, there are a lot of contradictions when it comes to impact on job satisfaction. In such existing ambiguity due to the contradictory views of different experts, where managers are seeking a solution, this study is both scientifically and socially relevant as it gives insights in the way that whether democratic leadership positively contributes to creating job satisfaction. Second, this study contributes to providing insights into the degree of impact of democratic leadership style on job satisfaction for managers and leaders. An organization's leadership style is considered to have a direct impact on the relationship between superiors and employees, thus affecting performance, job

satisfaction, and total organizational coherence (Wilderom et al., 2004). Third, this study extends previous work in this area by proposing a novel, integrated model of job satisfaction in the workplace. The extent to which a job allows an employee to interact with other co-workers enhances the sense of community at work (Camman et al., 1983). Still, the organizational climate that will pave the way for such interaction is

determined by the leadership style (Buckner, 1988).

Smith (1998) showed a positive relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction as his findings further revealed that democratic leaders take great care to involve all members of the team in discussion, and can work with a small but highly motivated team. Thus, the following theoretical framework is developed.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Modified from Girum and Karunakaran (2022)

Democratic leadership is characterized by participatory decision-making and valuing team input, fostering a sense of involvement and empowerment among employees. Similarly, Job satisfaction is the level of contentment and fulfillment an individual experiences in their work environment. Higher job satisfaction is assumed to be positively influenced by the inclusive and respectful nature of democratic leadership.

1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

1.1.1 DL AND JS

According to Robbins and Judge (2012), job satisfaction is an individual's general attitude toward his or her job. Chiu (2005) proffered, numerous pieces of research have been conducted on job satisfaction as a global concept having two facets including extrinsic (degree of satisfaction the employee derives from organizational policies, work conditions, task identity and appreciations which are

not related to the job) and intrinsic job satisfaction (degree of satisfaction the employee gets from their jobs).

Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates to reach organization goals, a process whereby one person exerts social influence over other members of the group, a process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group of individuals in an effort towards goal achievement in given situations, and a relational concept involving both the influencing agent and the person being influenced (Bhatti et al., 2012). Lewin et al. (1939) identified three leadership styles which are; autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire and concluded that the democratic style of leadership is the most effective, but Smith and Peterson (1988) pointed out that the effectiveness of group leaders is dependent on the criterion that was being used to assess leadership.

The absence of leadership style brings about a lack of direction from the leader resulting in low morale and lack of interest in the work. Hayers (2000) found that workers who fell under pressure reported autocratic supervision on the part of their leaders. The leaders rarely allowed them to participate in the decision-making. Workers benefit from community membership by experiencing a greater sense of well-being and support (Walker et al., 1994). Royal and Rossi (1996) opined that a sense of community is related to engagement in work activities. There is a need for workers to have a sense of connectedness which affects the workers' ability to cope. Lack of connectedness breeds loneliness, low self-esteem, isolation, low achievement, low motivation, and low productivity (Gibbs, 1995). The extent to which a job allows an employee to interact with other co-workers enhances the sense of community at work (Camman et al., 1983). Still, the organizational climate that will pave the way for such interaction is determined by the style of leadership (Buckner, 1988).

An organization's leadership style is considered to have a direct impact on the relationship between superiors and employees, thus affecting performance, job satisfaction, and total organizational coherence (Wilderom et al., 2004). According to Girum and Karunakaran (2022), the democratic style of leadership has a significant statistical association with the employees' job satisfaction whereas the autocratic and Laissez-faire leadership styles have no such significant association with the job satisfaction of employees.

Bhatti et al. (2012) found that employees under the democratic leadership style were satisfied with their jobs and did not want to change their jobs. Although a democratic leader will make the final decision, he/she invites other members of the team to contribute to the decision-making process. Smith (1998) asserts that if the task is highly structured and the leader has a good relationship with the employees, effectiveness will be high on the part of the employees. His findings further revealed

that democratic leaders take great care to involve all members of the team in discussion, and can work with a small but highly motivated team. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) found high submissiveness among workers in democratic organizations, but those in autocratic organizations expressed frustration and anger. Bales (1970) found two different categories of specialists in work groups. These are task specialists and social-emotional specialists. The task specialist is concerned with the achievement of the group goals while the social-emotional specialist is concerned with maintaining positive social relationships within the group and motivating the group members to accept the goals of the group. However, a good leader can combine the two roles. The two categories distinguished two different styles of leadership namely autocratic and democratic.

Younger employees may select democratic or other participative leadership philosophies because they meet their need for autonomy and decision-making. On the other hand, older workers might have different choices due to their experiences and expectations (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). Similarly, the participatory and inclusive characteristics of democratic leadership may better meet women's expectations in the community, which could enhance their perception of their efficacy as leaders and, consequently, their degree of job satisfaction. So, gender plays a crucial role in influencing individuals' perceptions of leadership styles (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Combining the aforementioned observations, the research puts forth the following hypotheses:

H1: Employees' job satisfaction is positively associated with democratic leadership.

H2: Age group would be moderating the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction in Nepalese Commercial Banks.

H3: Gender would be moderating the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction in Nepalese Commercial Banks.

2. METHOD

2.1 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Twenty commercial banks in Nepal constituted the population of this study. Out of these commercial banks, 5 out of the 10 highest profit-earning banks in the second quarter of FY 2079/80 were taken as samples for the study using simple random sampling. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents of the selected banks in total.

After excluding missing data, the responses of 86 out of the 100 respondents were included in the study for analysis. Among the respondents, 53.50% were male and 46.50% were female. Similarly, 14% of the respondents belonged to the age group 22-26 years whereas the rest 86% were above 26 years of age.

2.1 MEASURES

All substantive variables were assessed using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

2.2 DL

The DL scale developed by Bhatti et al. (2012) was used for this study. The scale contains three dimensions which include participatory behavior, motivation, and communication. Participatory behavior includes three items. Sample items: "inclusion of employees in decision-making"; "emphasis on group effort and team spirit". Motivation includes four items. Sample items: "rewards and incentives"; "scope for use of creativity and initiative". Communication includes three items. Sample items: "two-way communication"; "maintenance of sound relationship". The coefficient of alpha was 0.893.

2.3 JS

The JS scale developed by Chiu (2005) was used for this study. The scale contains three dimensions which include remuneration, supervision, and personal

growth. Remuneration includes four items. Sample items: "salary"; "bonus". Supervision includes three items. Sample items: "fair supervision work"; "enough guidance from supervisor". Personal growth includes three items. Sample items: "learning different jobs"; "updating skills". The coefficient of alpha was 0.913.

2.4 CONTROL VARIABLES

Control variables in non-experimental research: proper usage (and potential misuse) were covered by Spector and Brannick (2011) and Atinc et al. (2012). They advised considering prior research and theoretical developments before introducing any unnecessary control variables. Thus, gender and employee age (in years) were adjusted for in this analysis (0=female, 1=male; Kish-Gephart et al. 2010; Umphress et al. 2010; Thau et al. 2015). Male respondents were higher in number than the female respondents (female=46.50%, male=53.50%). Respondents aged 26 and above were around 6 times more (86%) than the respondents aged between 22 and 26 (14%).

2.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS

A correlational research design was adopted to assess the relationship between DL and JS to achieve the first research objective in which regression analysis was performed. The collected data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS statistics version 25. Under the correlation analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient and simple linear regression analysis were performed. Pearson's 'r' has been calculated to test the first hypothesis. Similarly, dummy variable regression analysis was performed to test whether age and gender are moderating the relationship between DL and JS.

3. RESULTS

3.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INTERCORRELATIONS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations. As expected, DL was significantly related to JS. In particular,

DL ($r = .658$, $p < 0.01$) was moderately and positively correlated with job satisfaction. Similarly, the mean of DL and JS are 3.71 (SD=0.73), and 3.78 (SD= 0.74) respectively. The "Discussion" section outlines the ramifications of this.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

| | Mean | SD | DL | JS |
|----|------|------|---------|---------|
| DL | 3.71 | 0.73 | 1 | 0.658** |
| JS | 3.78 | 0.74 | 0.658** | 1 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated by the results in Table 1, democratic leadership had a positive relationship with job satisfaction and the relationship is significant since the p-value is less than 0.05.

3.2 IMPACT OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP ON JOB SATISFACTION

To achieve the first research objective and test the first research hypothesis, a simple regression model was used; the results are presented in the following tables:

The results of the coefficient of multiple determinations (R square) are presented in Table 2. This shows the total variation in JS explained by DL.

Table 2: Variation in JS explained by DL

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .658 | .433 | .426 | 5.46372 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

b. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: SPSS Output

As shown in Table 2, the value of the coefficient of multiple determination was 0.433. This implies that the variation in JS that can be explained by DL is 43.3%.

For the goodness-of-fit of regression analysis, an analysis of variance test was made. The results of this test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Goodness of Fit of Regression

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 1826.813 | 1 | 1826.813 | 61.195 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 2388.175 | 80 | 29.852 | | |
| | Total | 4214.988 | 81 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in Table 3, the alternative hypothesis was accepted since the p-value was significant (0.000). This implies that DL contributes to the JS.

The constant value and regression coefficients for the analysis of regression were calculated; the results of those values are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of DL on JS

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 13.822 | 3.148 | | 4.391 | .000 |
| | Democratic Leadership | .651 | .083 | .658 | 7.823 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in Table 4, the degree of impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction was significant since the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05. The regression equation of democratic leadership on job satisfaction in line with the equation $Y = a + bX$ is given by:

$$\text{Job Satisfaction} = 13.822 + (0.651) \text{ Democratic Leadership}$$

where,

Y= Dependent Variable (Job Satisfaction)

X= Independent Variable (Democratic Leadership)

a= Constant (13.822)

b= Slope of Regression Line (0.651)

3.3 MODERATING ROLE OF AGE ON THE IMPACT OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP ON JOB SATISFACTION

To test whether age plays a moderating role in the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction, dummy or indicator variable regression analysis was performed. The results of this are presented in subsequent tables.

Table 5: Variation in job satisfaction explained by DL (Age-wise)

| Age Group | Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 22-26 | 1 | .916 ^a | .839 | .823 | 2.84418 |
| 26 and above | 1 | .597 ^a | .357 | .347 | 5.63833 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

Source: SPSS Output

As shown in Table 5, the values of the coefficient of multiple determination for age groups 22-16, 26, and above were 0.839 and 0.357 respectively. This implies that the variation in age explained by DL

and JS is different in different levels of age groups.

An analysis of variance test was made for the goodness-of-fit dummy regression analysis. The results of this test are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Goodness of Fit of Regression

| Age Group | Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 22-26 | 1 | Regression | 423.106 | 1 | 423.106 | 52.304 | .000 ^b |
| | | Residual | 80.894 | 10 | 8.089 | | |
| | | Total | 504.000 | 11 | | | |
| 26 and above | 1 | Regression | 1199.503 | 1 | 1199.503 | 37.731 | .000 ^b |
| | | Residual | 2161.768 | 68 | 31.791 | | |
| | | Total | 3361.271 | 69 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in Table 6, the alternative hypotheses were accepted since p-values were significant in all age groups of 22-26 (0.000), 26 and above (0.000)- of employees. This implied that there was no significant difference between age groups when it came to democratic leadership to have impacted the job satisfaction of employees. This didn't show the age group as a moderating variable on the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction.

3.4 MODERATING ROLE OF GENDER ON THE IMPACT OF DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP ON JOB SATISFACTION

To test whether gender is playing a moderating role in the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction, dummy or indicator variable regression analysis was performed. The results of this are presented in subsequent tables.

Table 7: Variation in job satisfaction explained by DL (gender-wise)

| Gender | Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Female | 1 | .644 ^a | .415 | .402 | 5.28576 |
| Male | 1 | .721 ^a | .520 | .506 | 5.35490 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

Source: SPSS Output

As shown in Table 7, the values of the coefficient of multiple determination for genders female and male were 0.644 and 0.721 respectively. This implies that the variation in gender explained by DL and JS is different in different genders.

An analysis of variance test was made for the goodness-of-fit dummy regression analysis. The results of this test are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Goodness of Fit of Regression

| Gender | Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Female | 1 | Regression | 871.891 | 1 | 871.891 | 31.207 | .000 ^b |
| | | Residual | 1229.327 | 44 | 27.939 | | |
| | | Total | 2101.217 | 45 | | | |
| Male | 1 | Regression | 1057.357 | 1 | 1057.357 | 36.874 | .000 ^b |
| | | Residual | 974.949 | 34 | 28.675 | | |
| | | Total | 2032.306 | 35 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Leadership

Source: SPSS Output

As indicated in Table 8, the alternative hypotheses were accepted since p-values were significant in all genders, female (0.000), and female (0.000). This implied that there was no significant difference between genders when it came to democratic leadership to have impacted employees' job satisfaction. This didn't show gender as a moderating variable on the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction.

3.5 HYPOTHESES TEST

The study had proposed to test three different hypotheses. They were tested based on simple and dummy variable regression models.

H1: Employees' job satisfaction is positively associated with democratic leadership.

For testing the first hypothesis, a simple regression model was performed. The regression equation of DL on JS showed that DL has a significant positive impact on JS. This confirmed the proposed hypothesis.

H2: The age group would be moderating the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction in Nepalese Commercial Banks.

Referred to Table 6, the age group was not moderating the impact of DL on JS, which rejected the proposed hypothesis.

H3: Gender would be moderating the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction in Nepalese Commercial Banks.

Referred to Table 8, the gender was not moderating the impact of DL on JS, which rejected the proposed hypothesis.

4. DISCUSSION

This study explored the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction. This study furthermore focused on the potential underlying role of age group and gender as moderating variables in the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction. As per the expectation, a significant positive relationship was found between DL and JS. There is a statistically significant correlation between the adoption of a democratic leadership style and the heightened job satisfaction of employees (Girum & Karunakarun, 2022). Democratic leaders promote open lines of communication and welcome criticism, which enhances the atmosphere at work (Bass, 1999). This shows that when leaders engage in having a two-way conversation with the employees, giving them credits and feedback as per the need and are also open to listening to the employees in regards to the changes to be made, employees are more satisfied at work. Collaboration and inclusivity are valued in a positive organizational culture, which is fostered by democratic leadership styles (Cameron &

Quinn, 2006). This indicates that when a leader shows a democratic style of leadership, team spirit, and a collaborative environment are induced in the workplace, leading to greater satisfaction levels of employees. According to Bhatti et al. (2012), workers under democratic leadership were content with their positions and had no desire to move. This is in line with our findings, which show that democratic leadership has a positive association with employees' job satisfaction. Democratic leaders frequently encourage staff development and offer chances for skill improvement and career advancement (Avolio et al., 1999). So, employees have heightened levels of job satisfaction because of the opportunities for bolstering their personal and professional growth. These discussions fully accepted the proposed hypothesis that democratic leadership is positively associated with job satisfaction.

The disconfirmation of the second and third hypotheses showed that the age group and gender do not moderate the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction. This indicated that the positive relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction was the same in employees of different age groups and genders. It means the age group and gender of employees have no impact on the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction. Because more participative leadership satisfies their need for autonomy and decision-making, younger workers may choose democratic or other participative leadership philosophies. Conversely, given their experiences and expectations, older workers may have different preferences (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). This study implies that since the younger generation is more inclined toward inventiveness and inclusion and wants to work on their own terms rather than being instructed at every step, they prefer democratic leadership styles. On the other hand, older workers might show different inclinations to different leadership styles based on what they have experienced working under different leadership styles

throughout their working experience. This is opposed to our finding that there is no significant difference between age groups when it comes to the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction. This is because along with the younger age group who prefers inclusion and innovation, older groups might also appreciate their expertise being valued and having a say in the decision-making process, which is seen in the democratic leadership style. In the same way, according to Eagly and Carli (2007), gender plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' perceptions of leadership styles and democratic leadership's participatory and inclusive qualities may better suit women's expectations in the community, which could improve their perception of their efficacy as leaders and, in turn, their level of job satisfaction. This finding by Eagly and Carli (2007) might be because of the fact that women have faced historical challenges in getting leadership opportunities and the democratic leadership style provides a platform for their voices to be heard. This is opposed to our finding that there is no significant difference between genders when it comes to the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction which is because, no matter what the gender is, most people prefer a workplace with two-way communication, participative behavior, and inclusivity, which ultimately leads to job satisfaction.

5. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study introduces several new concepts to existing literature. It fills a gap by specifically examining the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction, an area previously overlooked in favor of general leadership styles (Wilderom et al., 2004). This research highlights aspects of democratic leadership like participatory behavior, motivation, and communication, acknowledging diverse perspectives from earlier studies (Smith, 1998; Hayers, 2000) to clarify existing contradictions. Additionally, it presents an integrated model of job satisfaction, which deepens the understanding of how democratic

leadership influences organizational climate and job satisfaction. Finally, this study explores the specific impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction, considering moderating variables such as age and gender, to provide a comprehensive framework for future research on the demographic differences in this relationship.

6. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study can help managers implement positive changes in their practices and within the organization. It suggests that managers prioritize employee participation and involvement in decision-making processes. Adopting a democratic leadership style can foster an environment where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered, leading to improved job satisfaction. The study also recommends that managers provide training and development opportunities to help employees gain skills and knowledge for meaningful participation in decision-making. This can enhance employees' contributions and satisfaction. Managers are encouraged to promote transparent communication to build trust, increase engagement, and boost job satisfaction. Recognizing and rewarding employee contributions is also advised as a motivational strategy. The study suggests that managers cultivate a collaborative culture with open communication to foster job satisfaction. While highlighting the benefits of democratic leadership, it notes that managers should choose leadership styles based on organizational needs and tasks. In the 21st century, employees are integral to decision-making, necessitating two-way communication. Therefore, the study advocates for a democratic leadership style to invigorate and satisfy employees.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

While this study fills gaps in existing literature and offers several managerial implications, it has limitations that future researchers should address. Firstly, it

overlooks important factors like the work environment, promotion opportunities, nature of work, leave policies, and value alignments, which significantly influence both democratic leadership and job satisfaction. Future research should consider these factors for more conclusive outcomes. This study focuses on three aspects of democratic leadership (participatory behavior, motivation, and communication) and three aspects of job satisfaction (remuneration, supervision, and personal growth), but other elements in both areas warrant examination.

Secondly, the study's limited sample size may not accurately represent the broader population, potentially leading to non-representative findings. Small samples can produce inconsistent or "thin" data that do not reflect the diversity of larger populations. Future research should use larger sample sizes and include participants from various demographic groups to enhance data variability and increase the accuracy and generalizability of the findings.

Thirdly, the study's findings may not remain relevant due to the dynamic nature of employee mindsets, perceptions, and job satisfaction factors. The cross-sectional design cannot establish causation, detect changing trends, or capture the evolving nature of these issues. Future research should consider longitudinal and experimental studies to monitor changes over time and test causal links between democratic leadership and job satisfaction.

Lastly, relying solely on questionnaire data may not accurately reflect true job satisfaction levels. Excluding interviews and other data collection methods can introduce variability and reduce the long-term relevance of the findings. A mixed-method approach could provide more comprehensive and reliable insights, increasing the applicability and validity of future research.

8. CONCLUSION

This paper explores the relationship between democratic leadership and job satisfaction in organizations, demonstrating

the degree of changes in job satisfaction levels because of the elements of democratic leadership such as participatory behavior, motivation, and communication.

Previous papers suggest that a democratic leadership style can have a positive effect on the job satisfaction of the employees (Girum & Karunakarun, 2022; Bhatti, 2012). The findings of this research are in line with this study. This research concludes that the democratic leadership style because of the liberty and employee involvement opportunities it provides, leads to an increase in the job satisfaction levels, that is, has a positive association with job satisfaction. Also, this study concluded that moderating variables such as age groups and gender have no significant differences in the impact of democratic leadership on job satisfaction.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

Bigul Sapkota

Student of BBM 4th Semester,
Kathmandu Model College, Kathmandu

Mijala Kayestha

Research Management Cell
Kathmandu Model College, Kathmandu
mijala98@gmail.com

Devi Raman Tiwari

Kathmandu Model College, Kathmandu
aalpagyani@gmail.com

Pukar Shrestha

Kathmandu Model College, Kathmandu
pukarshrestha@kmcen.edu.np

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