

Linking Self-Efficacy and Hedonic Motivation to Job Performance: An Empirical Study of Medical Representatives in South Gujarat

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Abstract:

In today's competitive pharmaceutical industry, the role of medical representatives (MRs) extends beyond sales to relationship management, knowledge dissemination, and long-term client engagement. Their success depends not only on technical skills but also on psychological and motivational factors. This study examines the influence of self-efficacy and hedonic motivation on job performance of medical representatives in the South Gujarat region. Self-efficacy reflects individuals' belief in their capacity to execute tasks successfully, while hedonic motivation represents the pursuit of enjoyment and satisfaction in work-related activities. A structured survey was conducted with 450 medical representatives across major pharmaceutical firms in the region. The data was analyzed using correlation and regression techniques to assess the direct and combined effects of these constructs on job performance. Preliminary findings suggest that self-efficacy strongly predicts job performance, while hedonic motivation significantly enhances workplace happiness, with both variables exerting a combined influence on overall work outcomes. The study contributes to organizational behavior and human resource literature by highlighting psychological and motivational determinants of job performance and well-being, offering practical findings for pharmaceutical companies to design training and motivational strategies.

1. Introduction

The pharmaceutical industry is one of the most competitive and performance-driven sectors in India. Medical representatives (MRs) play a crucial role in promoting products, engaging with healthcare professionals, and ensuring the success of their companies. Their work requires not only technical knowledge of pharmaceutical products but also strong interpersonal skills, resilience, and consistent motivation. In this demanding environment, understanding the psychological and motivational drivers that influence job performance becomes essential. Among these drivers, **self-efficacy** and **hedonic motivation** have emerged as critical constructs in organizational psychology. Self-efficacy, as proposed by Bandura (1997), refers to an individual's belief in their own ability to organize and execute the actions required to achieve specific goals. In the context of medical representatives, higher self-efficacy can translate into confidence during client interactions, persistence in the face of rejections, and the ability to adapt to challenging sales targets.

On the other hand, hedonic motivation refers to the intrinsic pleasure, enjoyment, or satisfaction derived from engaging in a task. Rooted in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), it highlights the role of intrinsic drivers in enhancing engagement and reducing burnout. For MRs, who often face high-pressure environments and frequent travel, hedonic motivation can act as a buffer against stress, improving both performance and happiness at work. While extensive research exists on job performance predictors such as training, incentives, and organizational support, relatively fewer studies have focused on psychological and motivational factors like self-efficacy and hedonic motivation, particularly in the Indian pharmaceutical sector. Moreover, happiness—often overlooked in performance-related studies—forms an integral part of employee well-being and long-term success. A happy workforce is not only more productive but also more committed and innovative. In the context of South Gujarat, where the pharmaceutical industry is rapidly expanding, medical representatives often face intense competition, long working hours, and high sales pressure. Investigating how self-efficacy

and hedonic motivation impact their job performance provides valuable findings for companies seeking to optimize workforce effectiveness while ensuring employee well-being.

2. Objectives of the Study

Following are the key objectives of the study;

1. To examine the influence of hedonic motivation on job satisfaction of medical representatives in South Gujarat.
2. To analyze the impact of self-efficacy on job satisfaction of medical representatives.

3. Literature Review

Çetin and Aşkun (2018) highlighted that occupational self-efficacy significantly influences work performance, with intrinsic motivation serving as a partial mediator, thereby underscoring the relevance of psychological resources in organizational success. Similarly, Bernales-Turpo (2021) found that professional self-efficacy and life satisfaction positively predicted work engagement, which in turn enhanced job performance among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing the importance of psychological resilience in high-pressure environments. Extending this line of inquiry, Morales-García (2024) demonstrated that work engagement mediated the relationship between self-efficacy, depression, job performance, and life satisfaction among nurses, emphasizing the value of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework in health sector studies. Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020) further reinforced the significance of self-efficacy, showing that individuals with higher self-efficacy exhibit stronger motivation and perseverance, which translate into improved job-related outcomes. Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) provided meta-analytic evidence that self-efficacy is strongly correlated with work performance across diverse occupational settings, suggesting its universal applicability as a predictor of employee outcomes. Judge and Bono (2001) also observed that core self-evaluations, which include self-efficacy, were positively related to both job satisfaction and performance, highlighting their role in employee well-being. Deci and Ryan (2000) in their self-determination theory framework argued that intrinsic and hedonic motivations are critical drivers of workplace engagement and long-term performance sustainability. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) extended this with the JD-R model, suggesting that motivational resources like self-efficacy and work enjoyment foster engagement, performance, and reduced burnout. Sweetman and Luthans (2010) found that psychological capital, comprising self-efficacy and optimism, contributes significantly to employee happiness and task accomplishment, further supporting the interplay of cognitive beliefs and intrinsic enjoyment. Lastly, Venkatesh et al. (2012), through the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2), demonstrated that hedonic motivation serves as a vital predictor of behavioral intention and performance outcomes, thus affirming its relevance beyond technology adoption to broader organizational contexts. Collectively, these studies affirm that self-efficacy and hedonic motivation are powerful determinants of both job performance and employee happiness, particularly when mediated through work engagement, motivation, and organizational resources.

4. Methodologies

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to examine how self-efficacy and hedonic motivation influence job satisfaction and subsequently affect employee job performance among medical representatives in South Gujarat. The target population consists of medical representatives employed in various pharmaceutical companies across the region, and due to accessibility constraints, a convenient sampling method was employed. A total of 450 respondents participated in the study, providing a sufficient sample size for statistical reliability. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which included demographic details and standardized measurement scales for the constructs under study: self-efficacy was measured using items from the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), hedonic motivation was measured using items adapted from Venkatesh et al.'s (2012) UTAUT2 scale, job satisfaction was assessed using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), and job performance was measured using Williams and Anderson's (1991) Job Performance Scale. All responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The collected data were analyzed using regression analysis, supported by descriptive statistics, reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha), and factor analysis to ensure validity. The regression technique was used to test the hypothesized direct and mediated effects, with job satisfaction considered as the mediating variable. Ethical considerations were observed by ensuring voluntary participation, obtaining informed consent, and maintaining respondent anonymity and confidentiality. The following hypothesis are formulated for the study;

Hypotheses

- 1) $H_{0.1}$: Hedonic motivation does not significantly influence job satisfaction and, in turn, employee job performance.
- 2) $H_{0.2}$: Self-efficacy does not significantly influence job satisfaction and, in turn, employee job performance.

5. Results & Discussion

5.1 Impact of Hedonic Motivation on Job Performance

Table 1 Model Summary and ANOVA for Hedonic Motivation and Job Performance

Dependent Variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. (ANOVA)
Job Performance	0.572	0.327	0.326	0.772	0.0014

Source: Compiled from SPSS Output

Table 4.2 Coefficients of Regression for Hedonic Motivation and Job Performance

Dependent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
Constant	1.474	0.151	-	9.735	0.000
Hedonic Motivation	0.564	0.038	0.572	14.77	0.000

Source: Compiled from SPSS Output

The regression analysis demonstrates a moderate to strong positive impact of hedonic motivation on job performance among medical representatives in South Gujarat. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.572$) indicates a significant positive relationship between the two variables, while the R^2 value of 0.327 suggests that 32.7% of the variation in job performance can be explained by hedonic motivation alone. The adjusted R^2 (0.326) reinforces the robustness and stability of the model. The ANOVA significance value ($p = 0.0014$) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and not due to random chance. The coefficient analysis reveals a positive unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.564$), meaning that for every unit increase in hedonic motivation, job performance is expected to improve by 0.564 units. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.572$) further underscores the substantial contribution of hedonic motivation to job performance. Moreover, the high t-value (14.770, $p < 0.001$) confirms the reliability of this relationship. These findings imply that employees who experience enjoyment, excitement, and intrinsic pleasure in their work are more likely to perform effectively. In the context of medical representatives, hedonic motivation translates into better achievement of sales targets, proactive problem-solving, improved adaptability to market demands, and effective management of work-related challenges. Hence, hedonic motivation serves as a critical psychological driver of enhanced job performance.

5.2 Impact of Self-efficacy on Job Performance

Table 3 Model Summary and ANOVA for Self-Efficacy and Job Performance

Dependent Variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. (ANOVA)
Job Performance	0.826	0.683	0.682	0.53	0.029

Source: Compiled from SPSS Output

Table 4 Coefficients of Regression for Self-Efficacy and Job Performance

Dependent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
Constant	0.384	0.108	-	3.556	0.000
Self-Efficacy	0.879	0.028	0.826	31.048	0.000

Source: Compiled from SPSS Output

The regression analysis indicates a very strong positive impact of self-efficacy on job performance among medical representatives in South Gujarat. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.826$) reveals a strong relationship, while the R^2 value of 0.683 indicates that 68.3% of the variance in job performance can be explained by self-efficacy. The adjusted R^2 (0.682) confirms the reliability and stability of the model. The ANOVA significance value ($p = 0.029$) shows that the model is statistically valid. The coefficient analysis highlights a high unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.879$), meaning that for every unit increase in self-efficacy, job performance improves by 0.879 units. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.826$) suggests a very strong effect, much higher than that observed for hedonic motivation. The extremely high t-value (31.048, $p < 0.001$) further validates the significance of this relationship. These findings imply that employees with higher self-efficacy — that is, stronger beliefs in their own abilities to accomplish tasks and overcome challenges — demonstrate significantly higher job performance. In the case of medical representatives, strong self-efficacy translates into higher confidence in achieving sales goals, managing client relationships effectively, and adapting to demanding organizational targets. Thus, self-efficacy emerges as a more dominant predictor of job performance compared to hedonic motivation, underscoring its critical role in driving professional success.

The results of this study provide strong empirical evidence that both hedonic motivation and self-efficacy are crucial psychological drivers of job performance among medical representatives in South Gujarat, though their relative influence varies significantly. The analysis revealed that hedonic motivation has a moderate to strong positive effect, accounting for 32.7% of the variance in job performance, indicating that employees who experience enjoyment, excitement, and intrinsic pleasure in their work are more productive, proactive, and better equipped to handle workplace challenges. This finding reinforces the idea that when employees view their tasks as enjoyable and stimulating, they are more likely to maintain high levels of engagement, creativity, and adaptability, which ultimately improve their ability to achieve sales targets and meet organizational goals.

On the other hand, self-efficacy emerged as a substantially stronger determinant, explaining 68.3% of the variance in job performance. The results clearly suggest that employees' confidence in their own abilities and their belief that they can successfully execute tasks play a far more powerful role in shaping performance outcomes than hedonic enjoyment alone. Medical representatives with high self-efficacy not only demonstrate greater resilience in the face of challenges but also show higher consistency in achieving goals, managing customer relations, and adapting to the dynamic and competitive nature of the pharmaceutical industry. The exceptionally strong standardized beta value ($\beta = 0.826$) underscores that self-efficacy has a direct and profound impact on performance, suggesting that psychological empowerment and confidence are indispensable for sustained success in demanding work roles.

From a theoretical perspective, the study supports motivational and psychological frameworks such as Bandura's self-efficacy theory and self-determination theory, highlighting the interplay between intrinsic motivation (hedonic motivation) and self-belief (self-efficacy) in influencing work-related outcomes. While hedonic motivation provides emotional fuel that sustains day-to-day enthusiasm, self-efficacy serves as a cognitive anchor that enables individuals to persist, strategize, and achieve long-term professional objectives.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that while hedonic motivation significantly contributes to job performance by infusing joy and enthusiasm into work, self-efficacy is the more decisive factor that drives sustainable and superior performance outcomes. For medical representatives in particular—whose roles demand persistence, adaptability, and confidence in dealing with clients and meeting rigorous targets—building self-efficacy emerges as a critical organizational strategy. These insights not only add to the growing literature on workplace motivation and performance but also provide actionable recommendations for managers and policymakers in the pharmaceutical industry, who must balance efforts to create an enjoyable work environment with initiatives that enhance employees' confidence in their professional abilities. Future research could expand on these findings by exploring the role of mediating factors such as work engagement, organizational support, or leadership styles, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of how motivation and self-efficacy interact to shape performance across industries and cultural contexts. From a practical and managerial standpoint, the findings carry several important implications. First, organizations should not overlook the role of hedonic factors such as creating an enjoyable work culture, offering recognition, and designing stimulating tasks that bring intrinsic pleasure to

employees. Such strategies enhance morale and contribute to immediate performance gains. However, the results suggest that the greater priority should be placed on strengthening self-efficacy, which can be achieved through structured training programs, mentoring, regular feedback, goal-setting, and providing employees with opportunities to experience mastery and success. By investing in employees' belief in their own competence, organizations can cultivate a workforce that is not only motivated but also confident, resilient, and consistently high-performing.

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