

# Job Satisfaction of Backyard Manufacturing Small to Medium Enterprise Workers in Mucheke Suburb, Masvingo, Zimbabwe: Status and Way Forward

Takupiwa NYANGA<sup>1</sup>, Tumo P. KELE<sup>2\*</sup> and Samson MTISI<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

<sup>2</sup>Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

<sup>3</sup>National University of Science and Technology, Zimbabwe

*Job satisfaction is one of the key antecedents to organizational competitiveness and growth. The main objective of this paper was to explore the status of job satisfaction and strategies for increasing job satisfaction for backyard manufacturing small to medium enterprises (MSMEs) workers in Mucheke suburb in Masvingo urban. The study utilized a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interview being used as the main data collecting tool. Snowballing and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 11 backyard manufacturing SMEs and 40 participants who participated in the study. The study established that the level of job satisfaction for employees in backyard MSMEs was extremely low. The main precipitators of low job satisfaction were inappropriate tools, inadequate raw materials, inappropriate plant layout, unpaid overtime, failure to supply protective clothing, poor salaries, congested workstations and poor leadership. It was also established that low job satisfaction had devastating effects on the performance, growth and survival of MSMEs since it propels the production of poor products, high labour turnover and absenteeism, pilferage of tools and raw materials, stress induced accidents and emergency of more competitors as workers start their own businesses. The strategies that can be employed to increase job satisfaction are by providing counselling services for employees, establishing beneficial cafeteria benefits for all categories of employees, establishing in-house health centres, establishing flexible work arrangements and also providing social services to all categories of employees, training and developing managers and giving workers living wages. The study is essential in that it provides new insights and knowledge on approaches and strategies of improving job satisfaction for backyard industry workers.*

**Keywords:** job satisfaction, backyard manufacturing SMEs, workers, entrepreneurs, organizational performance

**JEL Classification:** G21, G41, J30, J50

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\*Corresponding Author:

Tumo P. Kele, Tshwane School of Business and Society, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa  
ORCID: 0000-0002-4118-5262

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## 1. Introduction

For the past decade studies on job satisfaction have been on the surge as evidenced by the research output on the subject (Hartika et al 2023, Amoo & Adam 2022, Nyanga 2022, Tara and Linda, 2018; Abdelmegeed et-al 2022; Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Nyanga et al., 2012; Barnova and Krasna, 2018; *Ganiyat & Adesina*, 2017; Lambert et al., 2018; Papavasili et al., 2019; Nyanga, 2020). Job satisfaction has received a lot of attention from researchers and academics mainly because of its contribution to organizational performance and growth. Studies have persistently shown that the human capital is the most important resource that gives an organization a competitive edge. For an organization, especially emerging manufacturing organisations to be successful, require highly satisfied, competent, entrepreneurially skilled workforce who are enthused to realize organizational goals. Job satisfaction is one of the key organizational performance antecedents that is propelled by wages and salaries, relationship with co-workers and supervisors and working conditions (Nyanga et al., 2012, Nyanga 2022). All the job satisfaction antecedents are adversely affected by both micro and macro business environments.

Over the past two decades backyard businesses have established themselves as essential business partners that have the potential of contributing to economic growth, poverty alleviation and employment creation. As such several studies and debates on the subject has significantly increased (Kumbhar et al 2023, Strydom et al 2023, Vidya 2023, Mula et al 2014, Chiloane-Tsok 2015, Asem-Bansah et al 2012, Zhang 1999). Backyard manufacturing SMEs are enterprises which manufacture or make goods at the owners' residential place or rented residential place. Studies have also shown that backyard businesses throughout the world have penetrated in various sectors of the economy such as agriculture (Asem-Bansah et al 2012), motor mechanics (Chiloane-Tsok 2015) and manufacturing. Zimbabwe, just like several other countries has over the years witnessed a surge in the number of backyard businesses especially in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. For the past decade, operational costs for SMEs in Zimbabwe, Masvingo City in particular have been increasing mainly due to persisting economic challenges which have been affecting the country. The persisting economic challenges and the increase of operational costs have resulted in a sharp increase in the number of manufacturing Small to Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) relocating their businesses from designated industrial areas to operating from their backyards. Backyard manufacturing strategy was employed for purposes of reducing the soaring costs and remaining competitive.

There is an unprecedented proliferation of backyard MSMEs in Mucheke suburb in Masvingo city. Backyard manufacturing enterprises in Masvingo city mainly produce goods such as building materials, food items, clothes, furniture and many others. The goods which are usually made by backyard MSMEs include peanut butter, doors, doorframes, window frames, wheelbarrows, shovels, peak, beds, wardrobes and others. The other items that are commonly produced by MSMEs include small agricultural equipment such as hoes, garden folks, rakes, mattock, peaks and many others. Some of the backyards MSMEs are registered while others are not, but the most important thing to note is that all backyard MSMEs in Masvingo urban operate illegally because they operate in areas that were not designated by the local authority as industrial areas. The law in Zimbabwe requires that all manufacturing activities be done in industrial areas set aside by local authorities for that purpose. In a study carried out by Nyanga (2022a) on managerial strategies of curbing workplace related accidents in SMEs in the construction industry, it was observed that all enterprises in Zimbabwe were compelled to operate within the confines of national laws and local authority by-laws.

Owing to the number of activities and the amount of work involved in backyard manufacturing activities, most MSMEs were compelled to hire a significant number of artisans, semi-skilled as well as unskilled workforce. Since job satisfaction is one of the principal antecedents to organizational performance and growth, it is prudent for backyard MSMEs to develop strategies and approaches that propel job satisfaction among their workers. Most of the backyard manufacturing workers are informally employed, which implies that they do not have employment contracts which explicitly define their obligations and their employers' obligations. Informally employed workers are vulnerable to various abuses by their employers. Despite the exponential growth that has been witnessed in the number of workers of backyard manufacturing industry, literature on job satisfaction of workers in this sector has remained limited. The aim of this study is therefore to establish the level of job satisfaction, causes of low job satisfaction and its consequences on both the organization and workers.

## 2. Literature Review

This study is guided by Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristic Model (JCM) which states that job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon comprising lots of issues that ignite worker satisfaction. The theory mainly focuses on analysing the individual tasks designed in the job description instead of the job as a whole. Hackman and Oldham are of the view that the operationalization of the key job traits in job design positively influence worker satisfaction. The model consists of five key elements which influence job satisfaction. The key elements include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Incorporating the five characteristics in the job design leads workers to experience positive psychological states such as experiencing meaningfulness and responsibility. There are a number of aspects of the job and the workplace that can either enhance or hinder job satisfaction among backyard manufacturing SME workers. The several studies that have been done, have established that job satisfaction is very essential to organizational performance and building a strong competitive advantage for the organisation. Job satisfaction enthralls employees to escalate their effort towards meeting set organizational goals.

Sharma and Manani (2012) argue that job satisfaction is the professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays towards the achievement of individual and group goals in a given situation. It is a state of mind, a feeling, a mental and emotional attitude. Job satisfaction refers to the enthusiasm and attitude developed by employees over a period of time towards their works. Nyanga (2022a) viewed job satisfaction as the extent to which employees like/dislike their work or the attitude workers have about their work. Employees evaluate their employment conditions, relations with co-workers and management, remuneration and other job facets and then develop either a positive or a negative attitude towards their work. The extent to which employees like/dislike their work determines the effort they exert towards meeting set goals. Human capital occupies important and influential positions in transforming manufacturing backyard enterprises. Nyanga (2020) argues that employees for backyard MSMEs are expected to champion financial resuscitation, growth of MSMEs, re-construction of the manufacturing industry in the country, employment creation and restoration of societal norms and values programs put in place by government and other key stakeholders.

Nyanga et al (2018) investigated the extent to which job satisfaction affects financial growth and stability of organisations in South Sudan. The study established that job satisfaction is a key antecedent to financial growth and stability of any organization and the national economic revival. Another study by Barnova and Krasna (2018) observed that job satisfaction is a significant factor that determines the quantity and quality; efficiency and effectiveness of personnel of any organization irrespective of size, location and complexity. Employees play a critical role to the productivity of an organization and the general economic revival of a country. It therefore implies that job satisfaction is a work construct which needs to be reflected on regularly by organizations especially those which are at infancy level. Regularly reflecting on job satisfaction of workers in MSMEs helps to build a strong and constructive working atmosphere, which propels workers to expend their energy towards meeting set targets and objectives.

While the concept of job satisfaction has been extensively explored (Amoo & Adam, 2022, Hartika, et al 2023, Zin et al 2023, Zheng et al 2023, Abdelmegeed et al 2023), there is paucity of literature on strategies of improving job satisfaction among backyard manufacturing SME workers in developing countries. The main objective of this study is to interrogate the consequences of backyard work environment on job satisfaction and establishing strategies that can be utilized to increase it. It is very essential for owners and managers of backyard manufacturing SMEs to pay as much attention as possible to job satisfaction since it is the heart and soul of organizational performance and growth. Employee performance at individual and/or group level is dependent on worker's satisfaction, hence, organizations must put in place systems and policies that address workers' job satisfaction challenges.

The intention of this study is to provide answers and solutions to job satisfaction challenges experienced by workers for backyard manufacturing SMEs. Furthermore, this study aims to explore the strategies that can be employed to propel job satisfaction among workers in backyard manufacturing SMEs in Mucheke suburb in Masvingo. There is a considerable difference of job demand factors for workers working in home industries and those working in traditional industries. The change in variables of job satisfaction also requires a change in the strategies of propelling it. The study's research questions are classified as follows; what is the state of job satisfaction of workers in backyard manufacturing SMEs in high density suburbs? what strategies can be employed to propel job satisfaction of backyard manufacturing SME workers? It would be interesting to explore the effort which employers have put to boost job satisfaction of their workforce. There is dearth of research regarding job satisfaction of backyard manufacturing SME workers in high density areas.

### **3. Research Methodology**

A qualitative research approach underpinned by an interpretivist philosophical stance (Polit and Beck, 2010) was utilized with semi-structured interviews being utilized to solicit data from participants (Cohen and Ariel, 2011). The researchers opted to use the qualitative approach because the study envisioned getting detailed intricacies of the strategies that can be used to propel job satisfaction among backyard MSMEs workers. Polit and Beck (2010) argue that the qualitative approach is very helpful because it uses an interpretive and naturalist approach to research. The naturalist approach to research works very well for the current study since data was collected from employees with varied skills. The researchers also based their decision to utilize the qualitative approach on the fact that Nyanga et al. (2012) successfully used the same approach when he carried out research on job satisfaction in Masvingo urban. Furthermore, the qualitative approach was preferred because it generates data on the participants' attitudes, feelings, perceptions and lived experiences (Patton, 2015) which is the thrust of the current study.

#### **3.1 Participants and Settings**

The exact population of the study could not be established because most backyard MSMEs were not registered so the researcher could not find the exact figure of the population. It was, however, approximated to be 120. The population of the study comprised workers working for various backyard MSMEs in Mucheke Suburb in Masvingo urban. The study employed two non-probabilistic sampling techniques, namely; snowballing (Cohen and Ariel, 2011) to choose 11 backyard MSMEs in Mucheke suburb in Masvingo City and purposive sampling (Verleye, 2019) to select the 40 participants for the study. Snowballing sampling method was the most preferred technique in choosing organizations to participate in the study because it was the easiest method of identifying backyard manufacturing SMEs. The decision on selecting the sampling technique was based on Kvale (1996) who argued that snowballing sampling technique was the most suitable method to utilize to choose participants who are not easy to identify. The researchers started by identifying four backyard MSMEs and invited them to participate in the study. The identified participants were then requested to recommend other backyard MSMEs which fit in the recruitment criteria. Polit and Beck (2010) assert that when choosing participants using the snowballing technique, it should always be made sure that only those people who fit well in the criteria should be chosen.

Purposive sampling method was used to select 40 (male -23; female-17) participants from the 11 identified backyard MSMEs. Participants comprised only employees who had been working in backyard MSMEs for more than six months. All the chosen participants had a full comprehension of the concept of job satisfaction. The age range of the participants was 17-63 years.

#### **3.2 Procedure and Data Collection**

A 14 item semi-structured interview guide was largely utilised to solicit data from all the 40 participants. The interview guide was divided into 3 sections namely; section A, which mainly covered biographical data of participants; section B, which had questions that sought to establish the state of job satisfaction; and section C, which comprised of questions that focused on strategies of boosting job satisfaction. The researcher interviewed all the participants individually at their work stations during working hours. The interview sessions for each participant generally took between 20-25minutes. Interviews covered the level of job satisfaction of workers working for backyard manufacturing SMEs; impediments of job satisfaction and strategies of increasing the job satisfaction of backyard manufacturing SMEs workers. All the participants gave individual consent.

#### **3.3 Data Analysis**

Being an interpretivist, qualitative study, the data was analyzed using the thematic data analysis method (Clarke and Braun, 2013). Thematic data analysis technique is one of the most relevant and frequently used data analysis tools for qualitative research. The approach was opted for because it is simple and easy to interpret and comprehend. Furthermore, the chosen data analysis approach was preferred because it makes it easy to systematically organize and interpret data. The other reason for opting to use thematic data analysis technique was that it gives researchers room to adjust themes and sub-themes in light of new emerging themes.

Cohen and Ariel (2011) argued that data should be grouped and coded according to the identified themes and sub-themes. Themes and sub-themes were identified as the researcher was recording the participants' responses. Some selected verbatim quotes from respondents were presented.

#### **4. Analysis and Results**

Results showed that job satisfaction was extremely low among backyard MSMEs in Masvingo urban. Participants registered and expressed concern over the low job satisfaction level at backyard MSMEs. Below are some of the remarks which were made by participants: participant 19 remarked, *"There is extremely low job satisfaction among workers in backyard MSMEs in Masvingo urban."* Participant 3, *"Workers are depressed and do not like their work, supervisors, managers and their organisations chiefly because of various factors."* Participant 31, *"All the workers in backyard MSMEs have developed a negative attitude towards their work."* Participant 6, *"Most workers in backyard MSMEs do not like their work due to a host of varied factors."*

Participants showed that there are a host of factors that negatively affect job satisfaction among workers in backyard MSMEs in Masvingo city. Below are some of the verbatim quotes made by participants; participant 24, *"There are a number of factors that propel low job satisfaction among workers working for backyard MSMEs. Some of the factors include working in a congested workstation, inappropriate plant layout, low salaries and wages due poor liquidity and use of inappropriate tools."* Participant 1, *"The level of job satisfaction for workers working in backyard MSMEs is astronomically low due to a host of micro and macro factors."* It implies that low job satisfaction is propelled mainly by a number of institutional related factors.

Results further showed that low job satisfaction breeds high labour turnover, pilferage, production of poor-quality goods, vandalism of employer property and many other effects. Below are some of the remarks which were made by participants regarding the effects of low employee satisfaction among MSME workers; participant 18, *"Disgruntled workers steal from their employer as a way of punishing the employer for the alleged failure to create a favourable work environment."* Participant 6, *"Due to low job satisfaction, workers for backyard MSMEs vandalise the property of their employers, produce poor quality products and frequently get involved in work related accidents."* Participant 11, *"Low job satisfaction ignites high labour turnover, impedes organizational growth and motivate workers to start their own backyard manufacturing ventures."*

Participants indicated that backyard MSMEs can employ a number of strategies to reduce low job satisfaction among their workers. One of the participants remarked, *"The best strategies to propel job satisfaction among workers for backyard MSMEs is for employers to give their employees basic food items."* Respondent 3 remarked, *"Workers in backyard MSMEs require a lot of counseling services so as to manage the trauma and the psychological disorders they experience due to operating in areas that are inappropriate for the type of manufacturing activities which they do in backyard MSMEs. Psychological disorders reduce job satisfaction, hence, removing or managing the disorders improves employee happiness and the extent to which they like their jobs."* Respondent 8 said, *"Counseling services are essential elements for propelling job satisfaction among workers for backyard MSMEs. Some employees work in incomplete or dilapidated houses which are not safe and expose them to various bad weather conditions, hence workers need to be counseled for them to improve job satisfaction."*

Participant 7, had this to say, *"Employees for backyard MSMEs expect their employers to give them good salaries and wages which are commensurate with the sacrifice of working in hazardous environments. Good salaries and wages boost workers' morale and job satisfaction among backyard manufacturing workers."* One participant remarked, *"I fulfill my 48 hours per week in 4 days and use the other 3 days to do other income generating activities and also take care of my chronically ill relatives. Such an arrangement has given me the opportunity to attend to my brother who is chronically ill and at the same time do my duties to the expectation of the employer."*

#### **5. Discussion and Conclusions**

##### **5.1 Discussion of Results**

The study revealed that job satisfaction is excessively low among workers working for backyard MSMEs. The main precipitators of low job satisfaction among workers were the perennial economic challenges that have been affecting the country for the past two decades, poor wages and salaries, unsuitable

work environment, disruption of work activities by other residents who were not employed, inappropriate tools, failure by organisations to provide workers with protective clothing, inappropriate plant layout, unpaid overtime, work related stress and poor leadership and management styles. The findings are consistent with Markovits et al. (2013) who investigated the impact of economic crisis on job satisfaction, employee commitment and self-regulation at work. The findings of the study on the antecedents of job satisfaction are consistent with findings from previous studies (Bal-Taştan, 2018; Mostafa et al., 2018; Nyanga et al., 2012; Zafar et al., 2014; Moslehpour et al., 2022; Nyanga, 2022b).

Employees become devastated for working in inappropriate work stations characterized by limited working space and inappropriately plant layouts. The study revealed that the congested layouts posed a threat and risk of being involved in accidents. The findings are consistent with Nyanga (2022a) who observed that a congested workplace is one of the major precipitators of accidents at workplaces. The low job satisfaction experienced by employees generates devastating effects to organizational performance, growth and survival. There is a strong relationship between low job satisfaction and organizational performance and growth (Nyanga et al., 2012). Furthermore, the study by Nyanga (2022a) also revealed that worker safety is a key antecedent to employee performance and any lack of it causes despondence and the development of a negative attitude towards work.

The study also established that low job satisfaction among workers in backyard MSMEs result in a number of consequences which are usually unfavorable to the performance of an organization. The most prominent consequences of low job satisfaction among backyard MSMEs were pilferage of tools and materials, production of poor-quality products, stress related accidents, high labour turnover, stifled growth of MSMEs, emergency of more new startups in the same business line and low production. The findings are consistent with Nyanga (2022a) who observed that there was a strong relationship between job satisfaction and accidents at workplaces and job satisfaction with slow growth of SMEs. Studies (Nyanga et al., 2012; Nyanga, 2022b) have also persistently shown that low job satisfaction propel labour turnover, pilferage and many other issues which are unfavourable to organizational performance.

On strategies of increasing job satisfaction among workers for backyard MSMEs, the study revealed that one of the strategies of improving job satisfaction for backyard MSMEs is by providing employees with basic commodities such as meal-mealie, sugar, flour, rice, salt and others. Backyard MSMEs experience a lot of liquidity challenges which are propelled by poor performance and the general economic downswings that have been affecting Zimbabwe for over a decade. The economic downswings have resulted in the increase in prices of basic commodities beyond the reach of most MSME workers. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, the unavailability of basic commodities such as food and shelter reduces the level of worker satisfaction and engagement. To ignite performance and job satisfaction, employers can provide workers with basic food items such as maize, rice, sugar and salt so as to reduce the impact of the economic downswings on workers. Giving employees basic commodities make them develop a positive attitude towards their work because they view their employer as a caring and supporting employer. When operating a business in an economically distressed environment, the provision of food to employees becomes a job satisfaction booster and enhancer. Employees need food to feed themselves and their families, but they cannot afford to buy the food items because most of the prices of foodstuffs are beyond their reach due to the low salaries they get from their employers. The economic situation in Zimbabwe led to poor remuneration because most small enterprises could not afford to meet their financial obligations. The runaway inflation has not made things any better either as it has resulted in soaring basic commodity prices. The findings of the study are consistent with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, which views basic needs as the first and critical stage of worker motivation and satisfaction. Consistent to the findings are also the results of a study that was done by Nyanga (2022b) which viewed provision of food as a key element of job satisfaction.

Mostafa et al. (2019) opines that excessive stress impairs performance and reduces productivity of employees in organizations. Working in backyard MSMEs is characterized by excessive stress caused by the pressure of working in congested workstations. The stress levels of workers are further increased by the unavailability of adequate tools of the trade and the inconsistent supply of raw materials. Employees also suffer from excessive stress because of the ever-rising cases of job-related accidents at their workstations. Stress impairs job satisfaction and significantly reduces worker performance at individual and group levels. One of the strategies that can be used to increase job satisfaction is to establish counseling platforms and systems in organizations. Counseling reduces stress, which consequently imply that it directly or indirectly increases job satisfaction. Studies (Sharma and Manani, 2012; Sun and Xia, 2018; Tara and Linda, 2018; Mostafa, 2019) have established that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and stress. To reduce stress among

workers, organizations can engage and hire counseling services from counseling consultancy companies or establish before-work and after-work safety talks. Stress is an enhancer of low job satisfaction, hence, managing it impels job satisfaction.

Giving employees living wages and benefits is another strategy which backyard manufacturing organizations can employ to impel job satisfaction among workers. Employees' job satisfaction is dependent on remuneration and benefits. Operating in residential places make employers incapacitated to heftily remunerate their employees which in turn reduce worker satisfaction. Failure to lucratively remunerate employees adversely affects workers' job satisfaction and the financial growth of organizations (Nyanga et al, 2018). It therefore implies that giving workers' salaries that are commensurate with their needs has the potential of boosting their job satisfaction. The findings are in sync with preceding studies (Tara and Linda, 2018; Lambert et al, 2018) which viewed remuneration as one of the strategies of increasing job satisfaction. Remuneration can be used as a strategy of impelling job satisfaction for backyard MSMEs workers. Employees need to be given remuneration that addresses their needs and wants. Employers should give employees "individual based remuneration" so as to ensure that employees get compensation which addresses their specific and individual needs. A well-designed compensation system boosts workers' job satisfaction and impels them to expend their energy towards meeting set goals and targets.

The study also established that the other strategy that can be employed to heighten job satisfaction among backyard MSMEs workers is by embracing flexible work arrangements across all levels of employees. Operating a backyard business require employers to provide employees with a cafeteria of flexible work arrangements which give employees room to choose those that best suit their situations. Flexible work arrangements propel worker satisfaction and motivation since workers are given room to attend to both their work and social issues. The most favoured flexible arrangements for backyard MSMEs workers would be flextime, compressed work week and target setting. The three flexible work arrangements promote work-life balance, which is essential for workers in informal employment. What makes flexible work arrangements arouse workers' job satisfaction is the opportunity it accords workers to simultaneous do their employment duties and also attend to their social problems. Employers should design flexible work arrangements that are appropriate to their workers. The findings are in sync with Nyanga (2022b) who argued that all flexible work arrangements increase job satisfaction. The only difference of the findings by the other scholars and the current study is that the current study limited the flexible arrangements to three; flextime, compressed work week and target setting.

Employers can also amplify job satisfaction among workers in backyard MSMEs by simply treating employees with respect and dignity. There is a general tendency for employers involved in backyard manufacturing activities to ill-treat workers and also make decisions that are inconsistent with the provisions of labour laws and other laws that govern the relationship between the employer and employees. Most backyard MSMEs deprive workers the right to form or join trade unions of their choices. The restrictions to join trade unions could be well pronounced or subtle or implied. Workers are also deprived of their right to contribute to social protection funds such as pension, medical aid, funeral policies and others, which consequently lead to low job satisfaction. Studies on job satisfaction (Nyanga et al., 2012; Nyanga, 2018) have shown that worker satisfaction is heavily influenced by the way workplace industrial relations are managed. Employers should respect workers' rights such as the right to form and join unions of their choices as outlined in International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions. Employees in backyard MSMEs are exposed to various forms of unfair labour practices which in most cases relegate them to the level of poor and uneducated villagers. Employers should ensure that employees' rights are not violated and also that the conditions of service for workers meet the minimum required by local and international labour laws and instruments. Provision of shelter, social security, education services to workers and their next of kin clearly demonstrates that the employer values and respects his/her employees. Employers who demonstrate that they value their employees make employees develop a positive attitude towards their work and value their work and employers. Nyanga et al. (2012) observed that treating and respecting workers boost workers' motivation and organizational performance and reduce the rate of brain drain.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The study made the following conclusions; firstly, that job satisfaction was extremely low among backyard MSME employees. Despite being a key performance factor in backyard MSMEs, employers find it difficult to maintain a high and sustainable job satisfaction level among workers. Low job satisfaction was prevalent among workers for backyard MSMEs. Secondly, the study concluded that there are numerous factors that propel low job satisfaction among backyard manufacturing enterprises workers. Some of the factors include working in inappropriate work stations, congested workstations, inappropriate plant layout, inadequate raw materials and tools of the trade, unpaid overtime, poor salaries and wages, application of inappropriate leadership and management styles. Thirdly, it was concluded that low job satisfaction among workers in backyard MSMEs breed devastating consequences on organizational performance, growth and survival of backyard manufacturing enterprises. Low job satisfaction leads to pilferage of raw materials and tools, production of poor-quality products, increased workplace induced accidents, high labour turnover, high intentions to leave and conflicts between employers and employees. Higher job satisfaction level changes the complexion of an organization by making it more vibrant and successful while low job satisfaction reduces its competitive advantage and slows down its growth. Fourthly, it was concluded that the strategies that can be employed to increase job satisfaction are inhouse and outsourced counseling services, flexible work arrangements, treating workers with dignity and respect, compensation and providing employees with basic needs such as food, shelter and security. Furthermore, creating an appropriate plant layout that is commensurate with the size of the working space also increases job satisfaction among workers. The availability of raw materials and tools also boost worker satisfaction.

## 5.3 Original Contribution to Theory

The study contributes to the body of knowledge in that it covers an expanse which has not been covered by previous studies on job satisfaction and backyard SMEs. The study addresses the question; why workers for backyard MSMEs register low job satisfaction; what are the hitches of job satisfaction for backyard MSMEs workers and how the low job satisfaction they experience can be addressed? Most studies that were done on job satisfaction among SMEs workers, concentrated on the sources and consequences of job satisfaction among workers in well-established organizations (Tara and Linda, 2018; Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Nyanga et al., 2012, Nyanga, 2022a) and this study addressed job satisfaction issues of backyard MSMEs workers in developing countries. This research thus contributes to the body of knowledge by providing information concerning strategies of propelling job satisfaction among workers for backyard MSMEs.

## 5.4 Managerial Implications

The study established a number of issues regarding the state of job satisfaction of workers in backyard manufacturing SMEs. The study also established the strategies employers and employees can put in place to boost the job satisfaction levels of workers. The managerial implications of the study are that it increases organizational performance and make SMEs more competitive since their workers will be more satisfied with their work and prepared to expend their energy towards meeting set targets and organizational goals.

## 5.5 Future Research

Future studies should focus on a wider geographical area such as Masvingo province or the whole country. Covering a larger geographical area would provide a holistic picture of the state of the subject under investigation. Furthermore, researchers should carry out a comparative study of the state of job satisfaction of workers in backyard manufacturing SMEs and SMEs operating in designated business areas.

### Author Contributions

Takupiwa Nyanga: Conceptualization, Data curation, Writing- Original draft preparation. Tumo P. Kele: Writing- Reviewing and Editing, validation, Methodology. Samson Mtisi: Methodology, Visualization, Validation.

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