

# Academicians and Job Satisfaction - An Empirical Analysis of higher education

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## ABSTRACT

It is widely accepted that teachers are the building blocks of a nation. Hence, the extent to which the goals of the educational system of a country are achieved, by and large, depends on its teachers. The way a teacher influences and motivates his students' leads to the formation of the foundation of education amongst the young energetic minds. The success of any educational curriculum depends chiefly on the effectiveness of a teacher. It is said that a happy worker is a good worker. Therefore, the satisfaction of a worker from his job is a prerequisite for effective performance. Moreover, Dissatisfaction amongst employees is perilous in any profession; it is disastrous if it happens to be in a profession like teaching. Further, the grievances of the professionals can be redressed by identifying the factors leading to dissatisfaction, and thereby modifying or reducing the intensity of those conditions ultimately leading to a motivated, performance- oriented staff. The present study attempts to examine the level of job satisfaction of academicians of the select under-graduate institutions of Kashmir region.

**Keywords:** Academicians, gender, higher education, Job Satisfaction.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance and contribution is one of the major factors of success in labour intensive organizations like Higher Education institutions. Academic staff is the pivot around which all the educational programs revolve, such as curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, evaluation, etc, revolve. Effective and efficient academic staff/teachers are the cornerstones of productive and prosperous institutions. Lack of skilled and effective teaching renders even the most of the perfect syllabus ineffective. As it is said, 'a happy worker is a productive worker' (Locke 1970), hence in order to ensure the efficiency of a teacher, one of the key prerequisite is the job satisfaction of the teacher. Therefore, the job satisfaction of teachers is primary for the success of any educational institution especially HE institutions.

Job satisfaction is a central and crucial determinant of job performance, employee retention and well-being. Research has proven that employees with high job satisfaction exhibit high energy, pleasurable engagement and enthusiasm and employees with dissatisfaction show distress, unpleasant engagement and nervousness (Heller et al., 2002). Therefore, it is essential for every organization to strive to maintain a satisfied workforce, especially for labour intensive institutions like the Higher Education.

In spite of the fact that there are a number of studies on job satisfaction, very few research studies have focused on the job satisfaction of academic staff in higher education, particularly in developing countries. This study, therefore, is an effort to fill the gap in this area and provide a new outlook to the conclusions drawn from previous studies on the subject matter of job satisfaction in Higher Education.

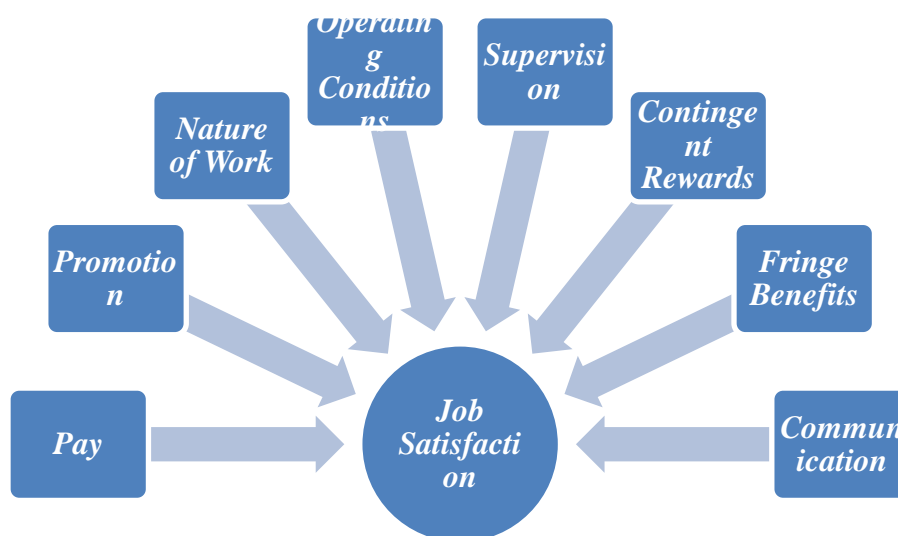
## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction is a key attribute which facilitates an employee to execute his/her work to his full potential. Job satisfaction has been thought to be related to improved performance and productivity while absenteeism and undue turnover have been linked to job dissatisfaction. Numerous definitions of job satisfaction have been put forth by researchers. One of the most widely used definitions in organizational research is that of Locke (1976), who defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". Schaffar (1953) defines "Job satisfaction is a function of the difference between the amount of some outcome provided by a work role and the strength of a related desire or motive on the part of the person". "Job satisfaction is the whole

matrix of job factors that make a person like his work situation and be willing to head for it without distaste at the beginning of his work day”.

According to Spector (1985), “Job satisfaction is employee attitude ,including pay ,promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, nature of work, and communication”. Several research findings have recognised various factors which determine the satisfaction and dissatisfaction level of people in the work place. These factors include working conditions, perceived quality of supervision, reward system in work, status and seniority, age group, marital status, and years of experience (Kuo & Chen ,2004 ; Okpara, 2004; Oshagbemi,2003) . Telman and Unsal (2004) recognized the factors affecting job satisfaction into internal, external and personal. Internal factors include characteristics related to the basic nature of work. External factors are the conditions such as physical work, promotion conditions, relationships with superiors and co-workers, creativity, job security, organizational structure and culture. Personal factors include factors such as demographic characteristics (gender, age, length of service, educational level etc.), personality traits and incentive, knowledge and skills. Santhapparaj and Alam (2005), in their research with faculty from three private universities in Malaysia, found that pay, promotion, working condition and support of research have positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. According to Noordin and Jusoff (2009) the behaviour of the academic staff is affected by the working environment that must be safe and healthy, career progression, administration support, salary, work teams, peers and the job itself.

On the basis of the stated studies, following conceptual framework is achieved and utilized for the study:



**Figure 1: Job Satisfaction Model (Spector, 1985)**

Furthermore, various studies have been carried out to understand the relationship between demographic factors and job satisfaction of academicians.

### 3. GENDER AND JOB SATISFACTION

There is evidence that male and female faculty react differently to stress and strain on the job (Lease, 1999) and have different considerations related to job satisfaction (Olsen, Maple, &Stage, 1995).Santhapparaj and Alam (2005) studied female academic staff in private universities in Malaysia and stated that females were more satisfied than their counterparts in all facets considered in the study including working environment and pay. Further, Ahmadi and Keshavarzi (2012) who studied the Islamic Azad University (Iran) faculty members’ views of the effective factors in job satisfaction found that female teachers are more satisfied with their job compared to men. However, in contrast, Sabharwal and Corley (2009) found that female faculty members expressed lower levels of satisfaction when compared with male faculty members. Moreover, Okpara .et. al. (2005) conducted a study on university teachers ,argue that gender disparity exists in the levels of job satisfaction of teachers. The findings point out that female teachers hold pessimistic perceptions about their pay, supervision and promotion, but were more satisfied with their co-workers while the opinions of their male counterparts were positive regarding facets like pay, promotion policies and supervision , indicating a high level of job satisfaction.

### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has been undertaken with following specific objectives:

- i) To examine the level of job satisfaction of the academicians in the sample under-graduate colleges.
- ii) To evaluate and understand the influence of gender of an employee on his/her job satisfaction.

## 5. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

### The sample

The sample of the study consisted of the respondents from five colleges of Kashmir region i.e., Amar Singh College, Women's College M.A. Road, S.P.College, Women's College Nawa Kadal and Islamia College of Science & commerce. The elements included professors, associate professors and assistant professors of the sample colleges mentioned above. Convenience sampling was utilised for the collection of data. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered to the potential respondents chosen from 5 sample institutions (40 questionnaires in each College), out of which 173 usable responses were received, for a final response rate of 86.5 percent.

### Data Collection Tool

For data collection, Paul E. Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) was used. JSS is a 36 item, nine facet scale to assess employee attitudes about the job and aspects of the job. Each facet is assessed with four items, and a total score is computed from all items. A summated rating scale format is used, with six choices per item ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Items are written in both directions (positive and negative), so about half must be reverse scored. The nine facets are Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Co-workers, Nature of Work, and Communication.

For the 4-item sub-scales, as well as the 36-item total score, a mean item response (after reverse scoring the negatively-worded items) of 4 or more represents satisfaction, whereas mean responses of 3 or less represents dissatisfaction. Mean scores between 3 and 4 represent ambivalence.

### Reliability

Coefficient alpha of the questionnaire used was computed to be .86, indicating a good internal consistency.

Construct	Items	Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Pay	4 (Item no's 1,10,19,28)	.67
Promotion	4 (Item no's 2,11,20,33)	.63
Supervision	4 (Item no's 3,12,21,30)	.78
Fringe Benefits	4 (Item no's 4,13,22,29)	.81
Contingent Rewards	4 (Item no's 5,14,23,32)	.75
Operating Procedures	4 (Item no's 6,15,24,31)	.77
Co-workers	4 (Item no's 7,16,25,34)	.85
Nature of Work	4 (Item no's 8,17,27,35)	.83
Communication	4 (Item no's 9,18,26,36)	.71
Overall Job Satisfaction	36 (Item no's 1-36)	.86

## 6. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

### Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents gender. Out of the total 173 respondents, 95 were male (54.91%) and 78 were female (45.09%).

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	95	54.91
Female	78	45.09

As is evident from the data above, the gender distribution of the respondents is a little higher for males.

### Job Satisfaction Analysis: Sub-scale wise and Cumulative

Mean scores of nine facets of job satisfaction are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Job satisfaction Analysis.**

s.no	Sub-scale	Item numbers	Mean* (N=173)	S.D
1	Pay	1,10,19,28	3.90	.73
2	Promotion	2,11,20,33	2.82	.88
3	Supervision	3,12,21,30	4.73	.84
4	Fringe Benefits	4,13,22,29	2.59	.89
5	Contingent Rewards	5,14,23,32	2.85	1.53
6	Operating Procedures	6,15,24,31	2.91	1.34
7	Co-workers	7,16,25,34	5.08	.53
8	Nature of work	8,17,27,35	4.84	.77
9	Communication	9,18,26,36	3.68	1.13
10	Over-all job satisfaction	1-36	3.71	1.21

\*Mean scores of 4 or more represents satisfaction, whereas mean responses of 3 or less represents dissatisfaction. Mean scores between 3 and 4 are ambivalence (Spector, 1994)

The results from the Table 2 indicate that the mean score of overall Job satisfaction is 3.71, with a standard deviation=1.21. This shows that there are mixed feelings or ambivalence towards the overall Job satisfaction. Further, it is evident that out of the nine facets of the Job, academic members of sample institutions expressed highest satisfaction with Co-workers (Mean=5.08, S.D=.53), subsequently followed by Nature of work (Mean=4.84, S.D=.77) and Supervision (Mean=4.73, S.D=.84). Job facets towards which the respondents expressed highest dissatisfaction include Fringe Benefits (Mean=2.59, S.D=.89), closely followed by Promotion (Mean 2.82, S.D=.88), Contingent Rewards (Mean 2.85, S.D=1.53) and Operating procedures (mean=2.91, S.D=1.34). Findings indicate ambivalence of faculty towards Job facets of Communication and Pay.

### Gender and Job Satisfaction

Group wise mean scores are presented in Table 3

**Table 3: Analysis of Gender and Job Satisfaction.**

s.no	Sub-scale	Item numbers	Mean* (N=173)	Group-wise Mean Female N=78      Male N=95	
1	Pay	1,10,19,28	3.90	3.70	4.10
2	Promotion	2,11,20,33	2.82	2.73	2.91
3	Supervision	3,12,21,30	4.73	5.11	4.35
4	Fringe Benefits	4,13,22,29	2.59	3.49	1.69
5	Contingent Rewards	5,14,23,32	2.85	3.62	2.09
6	Operating Procedures	6,15,24,31	2.91	3.21	2.61
7	Co-workers	7,16,25,34	5.08	5.74	4.42
8	Nature of work	8,17,27,35	4.84	4.45	5.23
9	Communication	9,18,26,36	3.68	4.64	2.72
10	Over-all job satisfaction	1-36	3.71	4.07	3.35

\*Mean scores of 4 or more represents satisfaction, whereas mean responses of 3 or less represents dissatisfaction. Mean scores between 3 and 4 are ambivalence (Spector, 1994).

The results indicate a mean score of 4.14 for overall job satisfaction for female faculty members eliciting that the female academic members of the sample institutions are satisfied with their overall job. However, a Mean score of 3.28 for the male faculty members indicate their ambivalence towards the overall job. Moreover, it can be understood that female academic members are more satisfied having a higher level of overall Job satisfaction than their male counterparts. Further, the findings also have pointed out that the male academic members have reported higher mean scores than their female counterparts, in case of three job facets namely Pay, Promotion and Nature of Work, which is in agreement with past research a study.

## CONCLUSIONS

The general results of this research indicate that the academicians of the sample institutions have mixed feelings towards their overall job. This is a very disappointing picture considering the fact that a satisfied teacher plays a crucial role in developing the future generations and in creating a fruitful and effectual educational setup. In the words of Locke (1970), “the happy worker is the productive worker”. The findings of this study showed that female academic members were generally more satisfied with their job, than male faculty members. However, male academic members reported higher mean scores than their female counterparts, in case of three job facets namely pay, promotion and nature of work. Previous research reveals that faculty job satisfaction varies by their rank, tenure status, gender, and race (e.g., Fraser & Hodge, 2000; Rosser, 2004;). Gender and race/ethnicity have been the most researched variables, yet the evidence remains mixed with respect to their relationship with job satisfaction.

Productive and satisfied faculty is the most important resource for today's higher educational institutions (Gappa et al., 2007). Therefore, attempts need to be made by the administration of the sample Colleges to amend the situation and take care of the internal and external factors that influence the level of job satisfaction. Moreover, Higher education institutions require reviewing their reward structures, procedures and expectations placed on faculty in order to simplify and synchronise the efforts of the faculty, rendering them more productive and satisfied with their jobs, and provide them with the workplace that is more appealing and attractive.

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