JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue

JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)

An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

STUDY ON THE EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION AMONG NON-ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITIES LOCATED IN THE WESTERN PROVINCE

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Abstract: *This study emphasizes the critical role of job satisfaction in enhancing employee performance and, consequently, organizational success. Employees with higher job satisfaction levels tend to carry out their responsibilities more effectively compared to those with lower satisfaction or high dissatisfaction. This is particularly significant for office workers as their satisfaction levels can influence organizational decision-making and overall success. Understanding the factors affecting job satisfaction allows for the development of policies and practices aimed at improving both employee satisfaction and organizational performance.*

The research focuses on non-academic staff members of universities in the Western Province, assessing job satisfaction as the dependent variable. Various independent variables such as work conditions, job security, salary, supervision, work nature, responsibility, recognition, achievement, length of service, and gender are considered. Job satisfaction, encompassing intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, is evaluated using a self-developed, pre-tested questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics using SPSS.

The study involves seven universities, with a total of 350 non-academic employees participating. The majority of employees were male and had a service period of 10 years or less. The mean scores indicate a level of satisfaction with extrinsic and intrinsic factors, though dissatisfaction is noted with work conditions and pay rewards. The research highlights a significant positive correlation between overall job satisfaction and both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction. Certain factors, such as recognition and pay rewards, demonstrated noteworthy associations with overall job satisfaction. Recommendations include reviewing pay and promotion policies for fairness and implementing performance-based incentive systems to enhance employee motivation and satisfaction.

Index Terms - Job Satisfaction, Non-Academic Employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

The most valuable asset for any organization is its human resource, as the productivity and success of the organization hinge on the effectiveness of its workforce. While physical resources like machines and equipment can be replaced relatively easily, skilled and qualified employees cannot be swiftly substituted. The process of finding suitable replacements is time-consuming, making it imperative for organizations to focus on retaining their qualified employees. Thus, the key responsibility of an organization lies in enhancing the job satisfaction of its employees to achieve this goal.

"Job Satisfaction is an individual's general attitude toward their job" (Robbins, 2001). According to this definition, job satisfaction represents an attitude rather than a behavior. Job satisfaction is crucial for employees to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Employees with a higher level of job satisfaction tend to excel in their roles compared to those with lower job satisfaction or high job dissatisfaction. Therefore, job satisfaction among office workers is of paramount importance, as employees play a vital role in making decisions within the organization, thereby steering it toward success.

Job satisfaction is heightened when employees are able to align their work with their personal interests, values, and personality. Numerous factors influence job satisfaction, and extensive studies have been conducted on motivational and hygiene factors in relation to employee job satisfaction across various sectors. However, literature specifically addressing the job satisfaction of non-academic employees in universities is notably scarce.

This research project is focused on assessing the levels of job satisfaction among non-academic employees working in universities located in the Western Province. The aim is to identify and describe the most impactful factors that contribute to increased job satisfaction among this particular group of employees.

2. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories related to Job Satisfaction

The theories of Motivation are usually divided into two contrasting approaches, such as content theories and process theories (Dunford et al. 1992). Content theories focus on motivation, and are concerned with identifying people's needs and strengths, and the goals they perceive in order to satisfy their needs. Major content theories include Maslow's hierarchy of needs,

Macgregor's theory X and Theory Y, Herzberg's two factor theory. Process theory approaches to motivation mainly focus on the actual process of motivation. The major theories under this heading include expectancy theory, equity theory, Goal theory, attribution theory.

1. Two Factor Theory

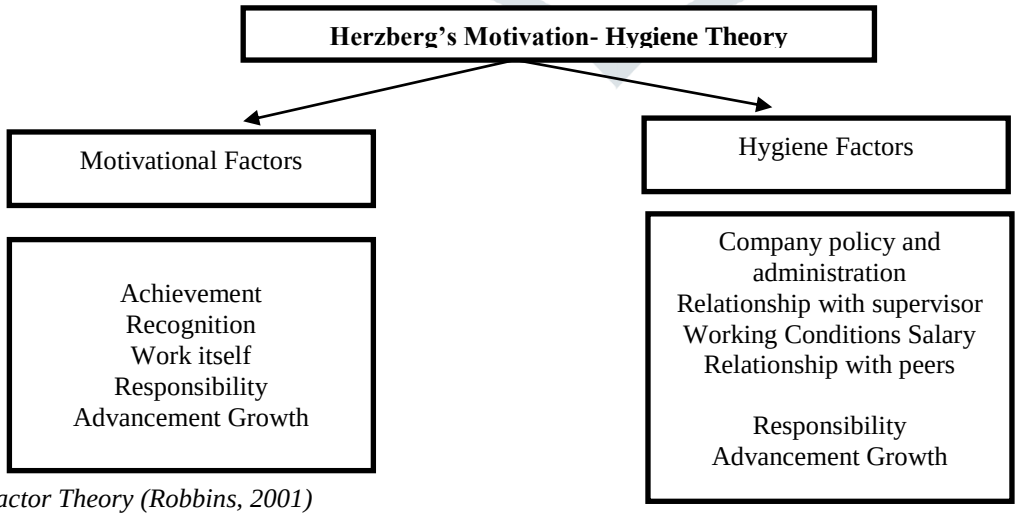
Herzberg, a renowned psychologist, formulated the Two-Factor Theory, a prominent framework in the realm of job satisfaction. The theory emanated from Herzberg's study of job satisfaction among accountants and engineers, where he identified two distinct sets of factors influencing job contentment or discontent. These are widely accepted as motivators (factors that lead to satisfaction) and hygiene factors (factors that mitigate dissatisfaction). This theory, dating back to 1959, stems from extensive research by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman on job attitudes.

Motivators, which significantly contribute to job satisfaction, encompass achievement, recognition, the nature of the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. On the other hand, hygiene factors are associated with job dissatisfaction and include aspects like company policies, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, status, job security, salary, and personal life.

Herzberg's theory emphasizes that job dissatisfaction is not the opposite of job satisfaction but rather the absence of satisfaction, and similarly, job satisfaction's opposite is the absence of dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction stems from environmental or contextual factors, termed as hygiene factors, while satisfaction originates from the job's intrinsic elements, termed as motivators.

Schermerhorn underscores the relevance of Herzberg's theory for managers, emphasizing the critical distinction between job content (what people do) and job context (work environment). Managers should aim to eliminate hygiene factors causing dissatisfaction and incorporate motivators into job content to maximize opportunities for job satisfaction.

In essence, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory highlights those motivators linked to job content drive job satisfaction, prompting increased productivity when present. Conversely, hygiene factors tied to job context led to job dissatisfaction, emphasizing the importance of addressing these elements to enhance overall job satisfaction and productivity.



Two Factor Theory (Robbins, 2001)

When these factors are considered good, or acceptable, workers do not tend to become. "satisfied ", they simply become "not dissatisfied." Productivity is not restricted; it is just held at an acceptable level. When workers become dissatisfied with any of these factors, they tend to restrict output.

2. Hierarchy of needs Theory

This is mostly consisted as a motivation theory, introduced by Abraham Maslow. He stated that there are five needs, which are expected by every human being. This theory can be applied to the career life of an employee. Employees have various objectives in their career life. If they can achieve one objective, they can move to another. After achieving all the objectives regarding the career, the employee can satisfy with the job. So, this theory can apply in both motivation and the job satisfaction. Under mentioned are the general needs of hierarchy of needs.

- Psychological needs: Includes hunger, thirst and shelter.
- Safety needs: Includes security and protection from physical and emotional harm.
- Social needs: includes affection, belongings, acceptance and friendship.
- Esteem needs: Includes internal esteem factors as self-respect, autonomy and external esteem factors as status, recognition and attention.
- Self-actualization: The drive to become what is capable of becoming includes growth, achieving one's potential and self-fulfillment.

3. The Expectancy Theory

This is also a further explanation of motivation introduced by Victor Vroom. Job satisfaction and the motivation are somewhat similar concepts because if someone is motivated to work, he can achieve job satisfaction relating to his career. This theory argues that the strength of a tendency to act in a certain way depends on the strength of an expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome to the individual. This theory highlights the motivation of a person. If a person is highly motivated with his job it leads to the job satisfaction. This theory focuses on three relationships as;

- Effort – Performance Relationship
- Performance – Reward Relationship
- Rewards – Personal goal Relationship

When the employees use their total effort and performance to achieve the organizational goals and objectives, the organization rewards them appropriately; finally, it can help to meet personal goals. When the employee is satisfied with the rewards the result is they are satisfying with the job.

4. Equity Theory

Employees try to compare their job inputs and outcomes with those of others and try to eliminate their inequities. This situation can't be achieved, because it is little bit difficult to compare the details without having clear understanding. However, this theory depicts four comparisons that the employee can do.

- Self-inside: An employee's experiences in a different position inside his/her current organization.
- Self-outside: An employee's in a situation or position outside his/her current organization.
- Other inside: Another individual or group of individuals inside the employee's organization.
- Other outside: Another individual or group of individuals outside the employee's organization.

After comparing the above aspects, if the employee feels that he/she is rewarded or facilitated equally; he/she can satisfy with their job and vice versa. After reviewing the above arguments regarding the link between content theories of motivation and job satisfaction, and the process theories of motivation and job satisfaction, it can be seen that the content theories have been more commonly used in relation to job satisfaction than process theories. The Herzberg two factor theory is essentially a theory of job satisfaction and Herzberg has applied the content theory of motivation in his approach.

This theory provides a direct link between motivation and job satisfaction. The content theories also assume a direct relationship between job satisfaction and improved performance (Mullins, 1996). In contrast the process theories of motivation emphasis the relationships among the variables. For instance, the expectancy theory recognizes the complexity of work motivation and relationship between motivation, satisfaction and performance. Thus, the process theories provide a more indirect weaker link to job satisfaction.

In conclusion, there is no agreement as to which theory best explains a person's level of job satisfaction, it is generally agreed that job satisfaction can be seen as the feeling that the employee has about the job in general. Despite the different approaches suggested by the content and process theories of motivation and their relationship to satisfaction, a general agreement has emerged that intrinsic factors such as recognition, achievement and autonomy tend to have a greater effect on job satisfaction than extrinsic factors (Blou and Boal, 1987).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Variables of the study were identified through the literature review and Job satisfaction is consider as dependent variable and the selected independent variables are work condition, Job security, salary, supervision, work itself, responsibility, recognition, achievement, length of the service and gender. The existing level of job satisfaction in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic is suggested to measure by using self-developed pretested questionnaire.

A descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and be able to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest in a situation. This study follows the research design of deductive approach, and this research is a quantitative study.

Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics using SPSS (Statistical Packages for the Social scientist) statistical package. The level of job satisfaction will be determined using the results of questionnaires in terms of general, intrinsic and extrinsic scores.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.2. The demographic characteristics of the study population

Table 4.1 shows the percentage distribution of the Demographic characteristics of the respondents such as Gender, Length of Service, and Occupational level.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Character	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Male	47
Female	53
Service period	
0-10	77
11-20	13
>20	10
Occupational Level	
Senior Level	77
Middle Level	15
Primary Level	06
Other	02

The total population of three hundred and fifty Non-Academic staff members of the Universities located in Western Province were participated in this study, of which 47% were males and 53 % were females. Seventy seven percent of the population were belonging to the service period of 10 years or less than 10 years. Only 10 % had a service period of more than 20 years. Majority of the Non-Academic staff members were belongs to the senior level category. Only 2 % of respondents had special grade occupational level which indicates as other.

4.3. Analysis the level of job satisfaction in terms of extrinsic, extrinsic & general

4.3.1 Level of job satisfaction in terms of extrinsic factors

Table 4.2 shows the Perceived Level of Extrinsic Satisfaction reported by Non-Academic staff members of the Universities located in Western Province each dimension in the questionnaire.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Level of Extrinsic Satisfaction (N =47)

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Extrinsic Satisfaction	**2.8759**	**.66249**
Company policy	2.8298	.90855
Supervision	2.4043	.77065
Interpersonal relationship	2.3723	.79720
Work condition	3.2411	.79765
Pay and Rewards	3.9574	.96024
Job security	2.6099	.89637
Status Valid N (list wise)	2.7163	.85967

Note: (VS=1) very satisfied, through (S=2) satisfied, (D=3) dissatisfied, and ending in (VD=4) highly dissatisfied.

Table 4.2 indicates that the mean of extrinsic satisfaction was 2.8759, which indicates that the respondents were satisfied about the extrinsic hygiene factors. The company policy, supervision, Interpersonal relationship, Job security and Status variables showed a mean score between 2 to 2.9 which indicates satisfied level. The mean extrinsic satisfaction score for Work condition and the pay rewards variables was 3.2 and 3.9 respectively. It revealed that the respondents were dissatisfied regarding the latter two variables.

4.3.2. Level of job satisfaction in terms of extrinsic factors

Table 4.3 shows the Perceived Level of Intrinsic Satisfaction reported by Non-Academic staff members by each dimension.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Level of Intrinsic Satisfaction

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic Satisfaction	**2.7872**	**.62812**
Achievement	2.8014	.79752
Recognition	2.3830	.83544
Work itself	2.3901	.73003
Responsibility	3.0780	.90146
Advancement	3.1489	.83350
Growth	2.9220	.79616

Note: (VS=1) very satisfied, through (S=2) satisfied, (D=3) dissatisfied, and ending in (HD=4) highly dissatisfied.

Table 4.3 indicates that the mean of intrinsic satisfaction was 2.7872, which indicates that the respondents were satisfied about the intrinsic factors. Variables of Achievement, Recognition, work itself, Growth showed a mean score between 2 to 2.9 which indicates a satisfied level. The mean intrinsic satisfaction score for responsibility and advancement variables was 3.0 and 3.1 respectively. It revealed that the respondents were not satisfied regarding those two variables.

4.3.3. Level of overall (general) job satisfaction

Table 4.4 shows the Perceived Level of General Satisfaction reported by Non-Academic staff members by each dimension.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Level of General Job satisfaction

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job Satisfaction	2.7801	.66039
Valid N (list wise)		

Note: based on scale: (VS=1) very satisfied, through (S=2) satisfied, (D=3) dissatisfied, and (HD=4) highly dissatisfied.

Table 4.4 indicates that the mean of general job satisfaction was 2.7. It is revealed that the respondents had a satisfied level. As an overall the results are positive. Respondents were satisfied regarding the intrinsic, and extrinsic satisfaction.

4.4. The Correlation analysis between General and Intrinsic, Extrinsic satisfaction

According to the literature the level of job satisfaction is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the quality of supervision, social relationship, with the work group and the degree to which individual succeed or fail in their work (Armstrong.2009). Therefore, the author tried to find out the relationship between general and intrinsic, extrinsic satisfaction using the Pearson correlation test.

Table 4.5 shows the results of correlation between the general job satisfaction and the extrinsic, intrinsic satisfaction levels.

Table 4.5: Correlation analysis between Intrinsic & Extrinsic satisfaction

Variable		Overall Job Satisfaction	Extrinsic Satisfaction	Intrinsic Satisfaction
Overall, Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**	.588**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	47	47	47
Extrinsic Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1	.819**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	47	47	47
Intrinsic Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.588**	.819**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	47	47	47

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

Table 4.5 indicates that there is a significant positive linear correlation between Overall job satisfaction and extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction. The magnitude of the correlation coefficient gives the strength of the relationship, which varies from -1 to + 1. This table shows that there was a positive moderate (0.3-0.7) linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It was also revealed that the extrinsic factors influence the overall satisfaction than the intrinsic factors in this study population.

Table 4.6: Correlation between Job satisfaction and different independent variables of Job satisfaction

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
General job satisfaction	***1.000***	
Company policy	.488**	.001
Supervision	.549**	.000
Interpersonal relationship	.489**	.000
Work condition	.584**	.000
Pay and Rewards	.139	.351
Job security	.591**	.000
Status	.679**	.000
Achievement	.534**	.000
Responsibility	.346*	.017
Recognition	.570**	.000
Work itself	.332*	.023
Advancement	.364*	.012
Growth	.573**	.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.6 indicates that the independent variable, Pay and rewards did not have a significant linear relationship since it's' correlation coefficient was closure to zero. Work itself, responsibility, advancement, company policy, and interpersonal relationship showed a weak relationship with job satisfaction. Supervision, work condition, job security, status, achievement, recognition and growth showed a moderate level correlation with job satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the research on job satisfaction among non-academic staff members of universities in the Western Province of Sri Lanka and offers recommendations for improvement and future research. The study

found that employees generally expressed satisfaction with extrinsic and intrinsic factors, though they were notably dissatisfied with their work environment and the existing reward structure. Dissatisfaction was also observed regarding responsibilities and opportunities for advancement. However, overall job satisfaction was reported as relatively satisfactory.

The research revealed a positive moderate linear relationship between independent and dependent variables, indicating that extrinsic factors had a more pronounced influence on overall job satisfaction than intrinsic factors. Factors such as supervision, work conditions, job security, status, achievement, recognition, and growth were found to have a moderate correlation with job satisfaction. Notably, recognition emerged as a significant intrinsic factor positively linked to job satisfaction, while pay rewards were negatively associated with general job satisfaction.

One major area of dissatisfaction was the working conditions, suggesting a need to enhance facilities, including basic technology, to improve productivity and job satisfaction. Recommendations encompass revising organizational structures to include more horizontal categories with increased individual-level responsibilities. Additionally, updating the service minute to create better career advancement pathways was suggested.

Recognition was underscored as a pivotal element in job satisfaction, prompting the development of leadership qualities among top-level bureaucrats to enhance employee recognition and service satisfaction. Succession planning with a long-term focus was also recommended to ensure sustained satisfaction and organizational success.

Maintaining or increasing employee satisfaction was deemed crucial, given its positive impact on organizational performance. Periodic employee surveys and subsequent remedial actions were recommended to achieve this goal. The study acknowledged its limitations, including its focus on a specific sector and geographic location, encouraging further research in various occupational categories and across different provinces in Sri Lanka. The questionnaire used in this study was deemed adaptable and applicable to other sectors, suggesting the potential for a broader nationwide study on job satisfaction and productivity across government and private organizations.

In conclusion, the study sheds light on job satisfaction among non-academic staff in universities and provides valuable recommendations for enhancing job satisfaction and, consequently, organizational effectiveness. Future research opportunities are highlighted to deepen understanding and drive sustainable improvements in employee satisfaction and productivity across diverse sectors in Sri Lanka.

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