Moderating Effect of Socioeconomic Variables on Job Satisfaction of Academic Staff in Visakhapatnam Colleges

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to assess the job satisfaction levels of academic staff in higher-education institutions with specific reference to UG and PG colleges in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Teachers are the most important group of professionals who mould the minds of future generations. A satisfied teacher is an asset to an Institute. The participants of the study were 534 academic staff teaching in UG and PG colleges affiliated to Andhra University at Visakhapatnam. The data used in this paper is primary in nature. The Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was administered to a sample of 650 academic staff, and 534 usable responses were received. In this analytical study, significant associations were found between personal variables of academic staff and their levels of job satisfaction. Research shows socioeconomic variables of the respondents did have an impact on their job satisfaction levels.

Keywords : **job satisfaction, higher education, employment, academic staff, socioeconomic variables**
JEL Classification: I23, J28, J21

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India's higher-education system is the third-largest in the world, next only to United States and China. Education in India is seen as one of the ways to upward social mobility. Good education is seen as a stepping stone to a high-flying career. The education system in India currently represents a great paradox. On the one hand, we have IIMs and IITs that rank among the best institutes in the world, and on the other hand, there are a number of institutions in the country that do not even have the basic infrastructure. The educational structure in India, which operates at all conceivable levels, from pre-school to the post doctoral level, is of monumental proportions. According to a World Bank report, there are more than 7,40,000 formal schools, more than 175 Universities offering under graduate and post graduate courses, and about 6000 colleges affiliated to these universities. More than 3.6 million teachers are working on a full time basis (Highereducationinindia.com, (n.d.)).

Objectives of the Study

The present study is an attempt to investigate the general job satisfaction level of academic staff in Visakhapatnam district as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). It also determines the influence of the personal variables such as gender, age, education, experience, and salary on teachers' general satisfaction level.

Literature Review

Today, higher education is confined not only to the development of the individuals' physically, mentally, intellectually, and spiritually, but it is also meant to equip them with necessary skills for their well-being as well as for the socioeconomic development of the society at large. Thus, the main goals of higher education are the dissemination of knowledge, use of information networks and mass media technologies, helping in the improvement of

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productivity, which can be defined as a way of ensuring the prospect of employability and employment. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It is influenced by many factors such as the working conditions, work itself, supervision, policy and administration, advancement, compensation, interpersonal relationships, recognition, and empowerment. This definition suggests that employees form their attitude towards their jobs by taking into account their feelings, beliefs, and behaviours. Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) and Robbins (2005) on the other hand defined job satisfaction as a personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job. Job satisfaction thus, has to do with an individual's perception and evaluation of his job, and this perception is influenced by the person's unique circumstances like needs, values, and expectations. People will ,therefore, evaluate their jobs on the basis of factors which they regard as being important to them.

Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe, and Avci (2003) reflected in the study that job satisfaction is an essential factor to develop the employees' service ability and still strongly affected the quality of service. Working environments strongly affect the job satisfaction level of employees of any organization (Mulige & Mueller, 1998). Many researchers found that intrinsic factors effect job satisfaction more than extrinsic factors except for the rewards or aspects gained. Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic, and Baddar (2006) expressed that job satisfaction back-up is the role to keep employees in long-term employment. The factors such as teachers' low salaries and low status, growing class sizes, and changes in the education system have all contributed as causes of what has been interpreted as endemic of dissatisfaction within the profession. Mercer and Evans (1991) said that job dissatisfaction in the education sector is a worldwide tendency. Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997) maintained that high attrition rates amongst teachers can be attributed to job dissatisfaction. They concluded that a lack of recognition, few opportunities for promotion, excessive paperwork, loss of autonomy, lack of supplies, low pay, and stressful interpersonal interactions all contributed to teachers' decisions to leave educational institutions. Satisfaction within teaching is associated with teacher effectiveness, which ultimately affects students' achievement.

Research in Canada (Ball & Stenlund, 1990) revealed that teachers indicate that success in their work was a major reason for being satisfied in their choice of profession. Canadian teachers also expressed satisfaction with their salaries, colleagues who were said to be helpful and cooperative, and the respect accorded to teachers. Among Albanian teachers, job satisfaction was associated with job security and respect accorded to teachers (Kloep & Tarifa, 1994). In both Albania and South Africa, teachers' experienced job satisfaction despite some of the unfavourable working conditions that prevailed, such as shortage of learning resources. Some researchers reported that teacher-pupil relations served as a source of job satisfaction among the teachers.

Methodology

In 1967, Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist developed the short version of the MSQ - Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, a 5-point Likert-type scale with 20 items. This scale has been used widely in the literature being a well-known and stable over the time instrument with previous researches yielding excellent coefficient alpha. The underlying theory is based on the assumption that work fit is dependent on the correspondence between the individual skills and the reinforcements that exist in the work environment (Weiss et al., 1967). Data for the study was collected through a questionnaire survey on job satisfaction (MSQ) from 26 UG and PG colleges affiliated to Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. 650 questionnaires were distributed among the teaching staff, and 534 valid questionnaires were received from the respondents, making a response rate of 82%. The 20 MSQ-short version items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 - *"very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job,"* 2 - *"dissatisfied with this aspect of my job,"* 3 - *"can't decide if I'm satisfied or dissatisfied with this aspect of my job,"* 4 - *"satisfied with this aspect of my job,"* and 5 - *"very satisfied with this aspect of my job"*). Item responses were summed or averaged to create a total score - the higher the score, the higher the level of job satisfaction. The statistical tools used in the study are *t* -test, ANOVA, and percentage analysis.

A pilot survey through questionnaire was conducted for a period of 2 months from January 17, 2012- February 28, 2012. This was to assess the feasibility of the study and to identify the difficulties which could be faced by the respondents regarding the simplicity and understanding of the questionnaire. The final collection of the data was initiated in the month of November 2012 and was completed by the end of February 2013.

Table 1. Demographic Details of the Respondents

Demographic variables		No of respondents	
		N = 534	%
Gender	Male	256	47.9
	Female	278	52.1
Age	22-30 years	163	30.5
	31-40 years	176	33.0
	41-49 years	93	17.4
	50-59 years	102	19.1
Religion	Hindu	422	79.0
	Christian	85	15.9
	Muslim	25	4.7
	Others	2	0.4
Caste	Forward	223	41.8
	Backward	109	20.4
	OBC	152	28.5
	SC	46	8.6
	ST	4	0.7

Source : Primary Data

Results and Discussion

The Table 1 depicts the demographic details of the respondents who participated in the study. The sample respondents consisted of 4.9% of the Principals and 95.1% of the academic staff from 26 UG and PG colleges affiliated to Andhra University, Visakhapatnam district in the state of Andhra Pradesh. 47.9% of the respondents were male and 52.1% of the respondents were female. The highest percentage of the respondents (33%) belonged to the age group of 31 - 40 years, followed by 30.5% of the respondents, who were in the age group of 22- 30 years, and the lowest being 17.4 % of the respondents in the age group of 41- 49 years. Well experienced teachers in the field of education between the age group of 50 - 59 years were also included in the study and their percentage was 19.1%. It was observed that 79% of the

Table 2. Employment Details of the Respondents

Variables	Category	No of respondents	
		N = 534	%
Type of College	Government	50	9.4
	Aided	184	34.5
	Private (SF)	300	56.2
Occupation	Principal	26	4.9
	Teaching Staff	508	95.1
Education	Doctorate	99	18.5
	Masters & MPhil	435	81.5
Monthly income	< ₹ 10000	240	44.9
	₹ 10000 - ₹ 20000	154	28.8
	₹ 20000 - ₹ 50000	42	7.9
	> ₹ 50000	98	18.4

Source : Primary Data

Table 3. Occupational Details of the Respondents

Variable	Category	No of respondents	
		N = 534	%
Teaching Experience (Years)	1-5	290	54.3
	6-10	107	20.0
	Above 10	137	25.7
Number of Papers Taught	1	55	10.3
	2	125	23.4
	3	139	26.0
	4	215	40.3
Weekly Workload (Hours)	5-10 hours	68	12.7
	11-20 hours	169	31.6
	21-30 hours	277	51.9
	More than 30 hours	20	3.7
Administrative Responsibilities	Yes	227	42.5
	No	307	57.5
Administrative experience in years	NIL	295	55.2
	2 - 5 years	123	23.0
	6 - 10 years	65	12.2
	11 - 15 years	22	4.1
	Above 16 years	29	5.4
Member of any association	Yes	130	24.3
	No	404	75.7

Source : Primary Data

respondents belonged to the religious group of Hindu community followed by Christians (15.9%), and 5.1% of the respondents belonged to other religious communities.

The Table 2 provides the employment and professional details of the respondents.The participants of the study were from 3 types of colleges namely, government colleges (9.4%), aided (34.5%), and self- financing colleges (56.2%). There are many self-financing colleges as compared to government and aided colleges affiliated to Andhra University. 81.5% of the respondents possessed the Masters and M.Phil degree as the highest educational qualification as against 18.5% Ph.D. holders. The study reveals that 44.9% of the respondents earned less than ₹ 10, 000 as their monthly salary followed by 28.8% of the respondents, who earned between ₹10,000 - ₹ 20,000. These academic staff were recruited and paid by the management of the college. 18.4% of staff earned more than ₹ 50, 000 per month. These respondents were paid as per the government's pay scale.

The Table 3 gives an account of the percentage analysis on occupational details of the respondents. Out of 534 respondents, 54.3 % of the respondents had a teaching experience of 1 - 5 years followed by 25.7% of the respondents, who had more than 10 years of teaching experience, and 20 % accounted for 6 to 10 years of teaching experience in their educational institutions. It was found that 40.3% of the staff taught more than 4 papers followed by 26% and 23.4% of the respondents, who taught 3 and 2 papers respectively. Only 10.3% of the teachers just taught 1 paper, and it was observed that most of the respondents in this category had administrative responsibilities in their respective educational institutions. The statistics show that 51.9% of the staff had a weekly work load between 21- 30 hours. 31.6% of the staff had a weekly workload of 11- 20 hours, followed by 12.7% of the respondents, who worked for 5 - 10 hours per week. Only 3.7% of the respondents clocked in more than 30 hours of weekly workload.

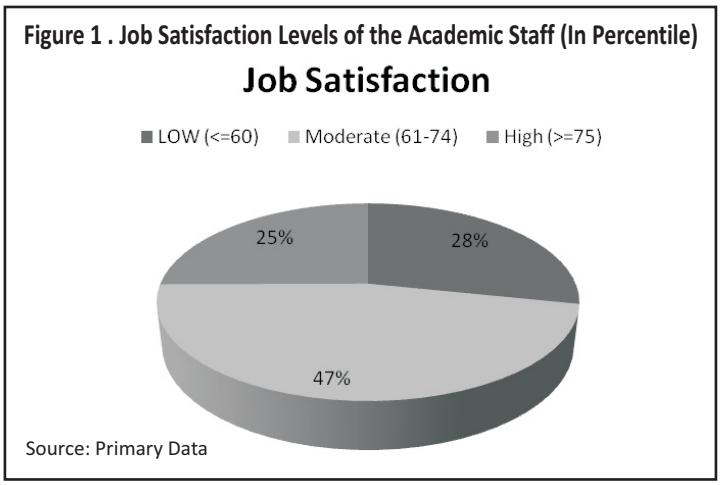
42.5% of the respondents were also fulfilling administrative responsibilities in their respective colleges in addition to their teaching profession, whereas 57.5% of the respondents concentrated mainly on effective teaching in their areas of specialization. Out of 534 respondents, 55.2% of the respondents declared that they did not have any

Table 4. Level of Job Satisfaction of the Respondents

Details		Number of Respondents	%
Job Satisfaction-General	LOW (<=60)	151	28.3
	Moderate (61-74)	249	46.6
	High (>=75)	134	25.1
Total		**534**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Figure 1 . Job Satisfaction Levels of the Academic Staff (In Percentile)



Source: Primary Data

administrative responsibilities in their institutions. 23% of the respondents had less than 5 years of administrative experience, and 9.5% of the respondents had more than 11 years of experience in handling administrative duties in addition to teaching responsibilities.

24.3% of the participants were the members of other associations outside the college, and 75.7% did not associate with any other social or professional activities.

Measurement of Job Satisfaction among the Teaching Staff (Based on 25th and 75th percentile values) : The general job satisfaction level of the teaching staff was measured using percentile values. Those who scored less than 60 were considered having a low level of job satisfaction and those who scored more than 75 were considered having a high level of job satisfaction in their teaching profession. The Table 4 gives the details of the respondents' level of job satisfaction.

Out of 534 respondents, 28.3 % of the respondents scored low (<=60) on the level of job satisfaction in general. 46.6% of the respondents expressed that their satisfaction was moderate with respect to their profession. Only 25.1% of the respondents scored high on the job satisfaction level. Based on the statistics, we come to a conclusion that 74.9% of the teaching staff (respondents) in higher education had low or moderate levels of satisfaction with their job. It may be due to personal, social, or intellectual differences and changing environments, which are highly volatile or unpredictable. A graphic representation is given in the Figure 1. Some of the factors which influenced job satisfaction among the teaching staff are as follows :

- Good leadership in the Institute,
- Good relationship with their superiors and colleagues,
- Recognition for their achievements (monetary and non- monetary benefits),
- Advancement in their careers (promotion),
- Feedback and support,
- Better working environment,
- Job security,

- Constructive feedback and support,
- Culture of the Institute.

- **ANOVA and *t* -test Values of Significance Between Job Satisfaction and Selected Demographic Variables of the Respondents :** The general level of job satisfaction of the teachers were compared against their demographic variables. ANOVA and *t* -test were applied to find whether there is any significant difference between demographic variables of the respondents and job satisfaction levels. If the calculated value of ANOVA and *t* -test were less than the table value, it was inferred that there is no significant difference between the variable and job satisfaction. If the calculated value of ANOVA and *t* -test were greater than the table value, it was inferred that the variables differ significantly. Null hypothesis was framed in order to test their significance.

- **Hypothesis :** The null hypothesis is tested :

H_0 : There are no significant differences between demographic variables and job satisfaction of academic staff in higher education institutes.

H_1 : There are significant differences between demographic variables and job satisfaction of academic staff in higher education institutes.

Table 5. General Job Satisfaction Levels Versus Selected Demographic Variables of Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutes

Demographic Variables	*N* = 534	Mean Score	*S.D.*	*t* value	Significance
Gender	Male	66.78	10.97	0.245	NS
	Female	66.54	11.77		
Education	Doctorate	68.78	10.21	2.061	Sig*
	Masters & M.Phil	66.17	11.59		
Administrative Responsibilities	Yes	67.26	10.83	1.055	NS
	No	66.21	11.77		
Member of any association	Yes	69.12	10.49	2.851	Sig**
	No	65.86	11.56		

NS = Not Significant, * = Significant at the 0.05 level, ** = Significant at the 0.01 level.

Source : Primary Data

The Table 5 shows that the mean score of male and female participants are 66.78 and 66.54 respectively. The *t*-test applied on this variable reveals that there is no significant difference between gender and job satisfaction. The calculated *t* - value 0.245 is less than the table value, which reveals that there was no significant difference in the job satisfaction levels of male and female staff. The highest educational level of the respondents revealed that for those who held a doctorate degree, the mean score of general job satisfaction was found to be 68.78 than those who held a M.Phil or Master's degree, which accounted for a mean score of 66.17. The calculated *t* - test value is 2.061, which is greater than the table value of 1.964 that is significant at the 0.05 level. So, it is inferred that the mean job satisfaction scores differ significantly between Doctorate, M.Phil, and Master's degree holders. Hence, there is a constructive association between promotion and satisfaction with the job. Chances of promotion are higher for those who hold a doctorate degree as their highest qualification.

It was observed that the administrative responsibilities of the respondents did not differ significantly with respect to job satisfaction among the academic staff. The *t* - test was conducted to find whether there is a significant difference between the variable and job satisfaction. The test revealed that the calculated value 1.055 was less than the table value, so it was concluded that there is no significant difference between administrative responsibilities and the level of job satisfaction of the respondents. The mean score of the respondents who were members of other associations is 69.12, and the *SD* is 10.49. 65.86 is the mean score of those who were not the members of other associations. The

Table 6. General Job Satisfaction Levels Versus Selected Demographic Variables of Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutes

Demographic variables	*N* = 534	Mean Score	S.D.	*F* value	Significance
Age	22-30 yrs	64.98	12.66	9.275	Sig**
	31-40 yrs	65.72	10.12		
	41-49 yrs	65.68	10.47		
	50-59 yrs	71.84	10.75		
Teaching Experience	1-5 years	65.76	11.78	3.981	Sig*
	6-10 years	66.07	11.26		
	Above 10 years	69.00	10.34		
No. of papers taught	1	71.49	10.57	4.334	Sig**
	2	65.59	12.53		
	3	67.16	10.27		
	4	65.71	11.31		
Weekly Workload	5-10 hours	65.40	11.70	0.910	Ns
	11-20 hours	66.08	11.38		
	21-30 hours	67.41	11.53		
	> 30 hours	65.35	7.63		
Administrative experience in years	NIL	66.42	11.82	4.185	Sig**
	< 5	64.41	10.27		
	6 - 10	68.25	12.02		
	11 - 15	69.36	8.78		
	> 16	72.97	8.71		
Monthly income	< ₹ 10000	64.19	11.92	12.449	Sig**
	₹ 10000 - ₹ 20000	66.41	9.89		
	₹ 20000 - ₹ 50000	69.10	9.72		
	> ₹ 50000	72.03	11.01		

NS = Not Significant, * = Significant at 0.05 level, ** = Significant at 0.01 level.

Source: Primary Data

calculated *t* - test value shows that the membership of associations has an impact on job satisfaction. The *t*-test value is 2.851, which is greater than the table value of 2.585, which is significant at the 0.01 level. So, it is inferred that the mean job satisfaction scores differ significantly among those who had and those who did not have membership of other associations. The study reveals that those respondents who were members of other associations had more job satisfaction as compared to their counterparts. This means that the need to socialize and network with the individuals of one's own field plays an important role in the professional life of every individual.

The Table 6 shows the age wise distribution and general job satisfaction level of the respondents. The study indicates the mean score between the respondents in the age group of 50-59 years of age and job satisfaction level is 71.84 as compared to the other age groups. The mean score between the respondents in the age group of 31-40 years of age and job satisfaction level is 65.72. The mean score between the respondents in the age group of 50-59 years of age and job satisfaction level is 65.68. The lowest mean score (64.98) between age and job satisfaction level was found for the respondents in the age group of 22- 30 years. The ANOVA results show that the calculated *F*-ratio value is 9.275, which is greater than the table value of 3.819 at the 0.01 level of significance. Since the calculated value is greater than the table value, it is inferred that the job satisfaction scores differ significantly among the different age groups. Respondents who were advanced in age were more satisfied with their jobs as compared to their younger counterparts.

The average satisfaction scores are 69 for those who had more than 10 years of teaching experience in the colleges

followed by the respondents who had a teaching experience between 6 -10 years (mean score is 66.07). The lowest mean score (65.76) was observed for those respondents who had a teaching experience of less than 5 years. The beginners in the teaching line showed less satisfaction when compared to those who had dedicated many years to their profession. One way ANOVA was applied to find whether the mean job satisfaction scores differed significantly among different years of teaching experience groups. The result show that the calculated *F*- value is 3.981, which is greater than the table value of 3.013 at the 0.05 level of significance. Weekly workload of the respondents did not have any significant effect on the job satisfaction levels. The *F*-test was conducted to find whether there is a positive relationship between this variable and job satisfaction. The test revealed that the calculated value is less than the table value. So, it was concluded that there is no significant relationship between weekly workload and the job satisfaction levels of the respondents. Hence, it is clear that the level of job satisfaction of the respondents does not depend on the workload.

The mean satisfaction score of the respondents who taught 1 paper is 71.49, which was found to be higher than those who taught more number of papers. A mean score of 65.59 was observed for those who taught 2 papers. The mean scores were compared across number of papers taught by the respondent groups by framing the hypothesis which was described statistically. The ANOVA results show that the calculated *F*-ratio value is 4.334, which is greater than the table value of 3.819 at the 0.01 level of significance. So, it is clear that the satisfaction level of the respondents differs significantly with respect to the number of papers taught by them.

The respondents who had more than 16 years of administrative experience were found to have a higher mean score, that is, 72.97 followed 69.36 by those who had 11 - 15 years of experience. The lowest mean score was found for those who had less than 5 years of administrative experience, which accounted for a mean score of 64.41. One way ANOVA was applied to find whether the mean job satisfaction scores differed significantly among those who had administrative experience. The ANOVA result shows that the calculated *F*-ratio value is 4.185, which is greater than the table value of 3.355 at the 0.01 level of significance. The respondents who had more years of experience in the educational institutions had a higher level of job satisfaction than those who had less number of years in the administrative field.

The statistics show that the respondents who earned more than ₹ 50,000 per month got a mean score of 72.03, the mean score of 69.10 is the average score of those who earned between ₹ 20,000- ₹ 50,000, followed by those whose salary was between ₹10,000 - ₹ 20,000 that accounted for a mean score of 66.41. Those who earned less than ₹ 10,000 per month scored the lowest in the average satisfaction level with their job, the value being 64.19. *F*-test was applied to find whether the mean job satisfaction scores differed significantly among different income groups, and results show that the calculated *F*-ratio value is 12.449, which is greater than the table value of 3.819 at the 0.01 level of significance. Hence, it is inferred that the job satisfaction scores differ significantly among different income groups. The findings reveal that those who earned more had greater levels of job satisfaction.

The analysis on job satisfaction reveals that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and personal profile of the respondents. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Material rewards are essential elements of job satisfaction. According to many researchers, a constructive relationship exists between salary and satisfaction with one's job. Increase in one thing must enhance the other. Salary is a forecaster of work satisfaction.

Conclusion

Job satisfaction of the teachers is quite significant for the growth of the higher education sector. The saying goes that a "A satisfied worker is a productive worker". Satisfied teachers will create a pleasant atmosphere within the institutions in which they are employed. When teachers are satisfied with their job, they can perform their responsibilities with more concentration, devotion, and competence. The analytical study reveals that the personal variables of the teachers such as age, education, membership in other associations, number of papers taught, monthly income, and administrative experience do have a positive impact on their job satisfaction levels. The study reflected that many respondents in higher-education institutions in Visakhapatnam are not highly satisfied with their job. It is high time for us to reflect on the yester years of education (*Gurukula* system) where the teachers found a lot of satisfaction in moulding the minds of the young in the right direction of life. Satisfied teachers have positive attitudes

towards their profession. To a greater extent, it is the function of the management to keep the teachers happy, so that they are more productive in the given environment.

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