

Work Satisfaction among Academicians in Public Universities in Terengganu

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Abstract: Job satisfaction is one of the ways people can feel something or be positive about their work. Academic staffs' satisfaction can motivate them to continue their effort in improving teaching skills, generate better learning environments and improve student achievement. Starting from 2015, the service circular seven implementations of "Exit Policy" for low-performing officers in the civil service has started. Employees may be subjected towards professional retirement or retrenched work if the performance rating indicates a percentage less than 60%. At public universities, various efforts have been made by the administration of the university's management department to meet the satisfaction of its employees and ensure the academic workforce continues to be competent. This study on job satisfaction explains on the individual's view of his or her work. The dimensions of job satisfactions vary between individuals. The dimensions are related to work, salary, promotional opportunities, supervisors and supervision and the support of colleagues. The objective of this study is to identify the level of job satisfactions and the relationship between work environment, promotions, salary, supervisions and co-workers with job satisfaction among academicians in Terengganu Public Universities. The study used questionnaires which is divided into three sections; Section A involving respondents' demographic information, Section B, questions on the level of job satisfaction developed by the researcher and Section C consists of questionnaires that are related to job satisfaction factors translated from Job Descriptive Index (JDI) by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969), based on Herzberg Two Factors Theory. The results of the pilot study show that the instruments are meaningful to use and has a reliability rate of .85 for job satisfaction and .93 for Job Descriptive Index (JDI). The findings hopefully will help to identify the factors of job satisfaction of academic staff and to increase their level of competence towards work.

Key words: Job satisfaction • Academic staff • Public universities

INTRODUCTION

Jobs are able to provide the individual economic and social needs of the people and assist the development of the country. Job satisfaction is one way that people will feel something or be positive about their work. A profession as an academic practitioner cannot be regarded as a career that anyone can engage in because only those who possesses the qualities, skills, credentials, qualifications, interests, commitment and mentality of the educator are qualified to be an academic practitioner[4]. In addition to the demanding sincerity and responsibility in facing the challenges of work due to globalisation, the welfare and career strengthening of academic staffs should be given emphasis. The increase in job

satisfaction is able to motivate them to continue their efforts to improve teaching skills, generate better learning environments and improve student achievement. Job satisfaction is also closely linked to influential decision-making, high autonomy in the workplace, workplace environment and overall progress in students' achievement.

There are many definitions of job satisfaction. Psychologist. E.A. Locke (1976) defines it as a result of one's interaction with its environment. Job satisfaction factors arise when individuals want recognition, improve self-esteem and build self-esteem. Desire also fluctuates according to the needs and circulation of time. Individuals with high job satisfaction will give full attention to their career with no tediousness, diligence, high motivation and

will endeavor to improve work performance. Individuals who feel uncomfortable with work will also show symptoms of withdrawal, lack of motivation and no effort to improve work performance. The dimensions of job satisfaction vary between individuals. The dimensions in this study are related to the work itself, salary, promotional opportunities, supervisors and supervision and lastly support of colleagues.

Research Problems: The Ministry of Higher Education recorded a total of 31, 877 academic staff at all Public University in Malaysia. With this growing number, future academic workforce at the Institute of Higher Education (IPT) should be prepared to face the challenges of globalisation, intense competition and the latest technological changes. Labor in IPT will always face the challenge and be guided by the country's aspirations as well as the strength of existing policies [15]. Quality academic staffs at universities are the most important institution-based factor in determining student outcomes. Given the role of academic staff is important in improving the quality of education, the main focus of the Higher Education Ministry (KPT) is to continue efforts in empowering the Institute of Higher Education (IPT). 10 main aspects have been outlined, one of which is the quality strengthening of academic staffs [15]. In this respect, KPT has taken a thorough study on the factors that could contribute to the effectiveness of the academic preparation. The action and planning motion will be set in 2010 and subsequent years.

Determining job satisfaction among academic staffs is a complicated effort. Their job satisfaction is positively related to the issues that are often prevalent in the workplace namely professionalism, decision making engagements, career development, decision-making abilities, administration perceptions, familiarity between worker and the environment at work [18]. Ma and MacMillan (1999) also found that the working environment had a great impact on job satisfaction. Among the factors that cause academic staff to be dissatisfied with their profession are promotion, pay factor, unequal task load that does not adhere with their qualifications with other similar position staffs, the opportunity to increase knowledge and experience is limited, supervisory work and clerical duties [7]. In relation to this, certain mechanisms need to be studied and formed to strengthen the profession of academic staffs and motivate experienced academic practitioners to continue contributing in this profession. This is because the

success of the educational mission depends on the way academic staffs handle the issues of their profession and their satisfaction with the job [4]. Starting 2015, the 2015 service circular number 7 implementation of the Exit Policy for low-performing officers in the civil service has commenced. Through this exit policy, employees may be subjected to professional retirement or retrenched work if the performance rating indicates less than 60%.

Low-performance officers indicates that the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (LNPT) for the Commonwealth Service Officers and Implementing Group Members (AKP) including Education Service Officers (PPPs) are housed in cadres (positions belonging to a Ministry or Department created by various Agencies based on its requirements but its filling is done and controlled by the Head of Service), loans, transfers and the equivalent of less than 60% or the Score of the Integrated Assessment of Education Service Officers (PBPPP) for Education Service Officers (PPPS) is less than 60%; or Key Performance Indicator (KPI) achievement under the target of the KPI performance evaluation (Service Circular Number 7, 2015). In line with the wishes of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013-2025; to ensure the delivery of educational services are not affected, the Ministry of Education will take action to certify the termination of the profession for low-performing officers through procedures based on the facts of each case. This is in line with Regulation 49, Public Officers (Conduct and Discipline) Regulations 1993 (PU (A) 395/1993) which is after the Government takes the performance, conduct, usefulness of officers to service, the terms of service and all other matters determined by the Government into consideration.

Considerations are also made in implementing this policy, whether the disciplinary action is more appropriate to be taken on an officer based on misconduct or through the Exit Policy. According to this circular, officers who are currently under disciplinary action proceedings and low scores (59.99% and below) of the implementation of the Exit Policy shall be conducted on the officer in view of any action made under the Circular (Circular No. 7/2015). It does not prevent the Disciplinary Authority from taking any disciplinary action or surcharge on such officer.

The implementation of this separation policy will be able to maintain a committed and high performing civil servant to enable education services improve its service quality and competitiveness in facing the current environmental challenges to meet with the requirements of the Malaysia Education Development Plan (PPPM)

2013-2025. Exit Policy introduced through the 11th Malaysia Plan (RMK-11) is aimed at rationalising the public sector and justifying the size of public civil service in the organization. However, this policy is not intended to reduce the workforce in the organisation, but to ensure civil servants remain competent in carrying out their duties in the department.

At the Public University, various efforts are undertaken by the administration of the university's management body to meet the satisfaction of its employees and ensure that the academic workforce continues to be competent and strives to improve its performance. However, there is still conflict among workers such as young academicians and senior academic staffs on issues of job dissatisfaction. Among them are the opportunity to attend training programs and courses, the opportunity to pursue higher education at home or abroad, promotional opportunities as well as other facilities provided such as medical facilities and vehicle loans. However, whether this incentive affects job satisfaction among academicians is still a problem.

In addition, wage issues are also one of the causes of dissatisfaction with academic work. The Public Service Department (PSD) stated that it will review all issues relating to the allegations of 35,000 academic public academic staff not renewed for the last 15 years in a press statement (The Straits Times, 5 March 2017). Malaysian Academic Association of Malaysia (MAAC) president Prof Datuk Dr MohdIdrusMohdMasirin claims that academic staff is less attentive than teachers who often enjoy new incentives. He also noted that the quality of academic services was feared to be affected when the service schemes and salaries had not changed over the last 15 years and were lagging behind other civil servants. Herzberg (1959) stated in his theory that job satisfaction is the positive attitude and feeling that employees have on their work. This job satisfaction depends on several factors and varies greatly between one employee and another. The measurement of the level and the job satisfaction factor in this study was based on the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) instrument established by Perie et.al (1997) and was modified for local use by Mohd.MajidKonting (1990). This study will try to identify the level and relationship between job satisfaction factors as stated in JDI such as working conditions, promotional opportunities, salaries, supervision and colleagues with job satisfaction at academic staff at Public University. This study will also identify the demographic characteristics of workers such as gender, age, marital status and length of service, rank and salary.

Research Questions: The research questions are as follows:

- What are the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, length of service, rank and academic salary in Public University?
- To what extent is the level of job satisfaction among academic staffs at Public University?

Research Objective: The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To identify the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, length of service, rank and academic salary in Public University.
- To identify the level of job satisfaction among academic staff at Public University.

Hypothetical Studies: The hypotheses to be tested in this study are based on questions and objectives of the study. The hypotheses are as follows:

General Hypotheses:

- H1: The academic practitioners' satisfaction at Public University is at a high level.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between working atmosphere, promotional opportunities, salary, supervision and colleagues with the satisfaction of academic staffs of the Public University.

Research Methodology: This study is conducted quantitatively and involves the use of job satisfaction questionnaires. This quantitative study aims to identify significant variables and link with the objectives of the study. This study uses descriptive and inferential statistics to identify the characteristics of the respondents' demographics, the level of job satisfaction and the factors that relate to the level of job satisfaction.

Respondents are comprised of teachers in three Public Universities around Terengganu covering Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin and UniversitiTeknologi MARA Kuala Terengganu. Therefore, 297 respondents will be selected as the sample of the study. Sample selection is made by random sampling to ensure that all members in the population have the same opportunity to participate. They are randomly selected ranging from various faculties, types of posts and ranks within the university. Among them are lecturers, assistant lecturers, lecturers, senior lecturers, Associate Professors and Professors.

Table 1.0: Alpha value of item B: job satisfaction scale

job satisfaction items	minimal scale if item is dropped	scale variance if item is dropped	item correlation scale with number of scores corrected	alpha value of cronbach should item be dropped	the overall cronbach alpha value
b1 i love my work right now	37.0333	20.033	.591	.830	.846
b2 i am satisfied with my work	37.1333	19.292	.695	.821	
b3 i appreciate my work	36.9333	19.651	.668	.824	
b4 i am happy with my work assignment	37.2333	18.392	.711	.816	
b5 i'm proud of my current achievement	37.3667	19.689	.460	.839	
b6 i am confident with my future career	37.2333	19.978	.481	.837	
b7 i'm confused with my work assignment	37.4667	20.051	.381	.847	
b8 i am stressed out with my work	38.0000	17.448	.611	.826	
b9 i thought to look for another job	37.3333	19.333	.340	.859	
b10 the present scale of my job satisfaction scale is high	37.4667	18.602	.783	.812	

Research Instruments: This study uses questionnaires divided into three sections, part A involving respondents' demographic information, part B questions on the level of job satisfaction self-developed by the researcher and part C comprises of questionnaires related to job satisfaction factors that were translated from 'Job Descriptive Index (JDI) by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969), based on Herzberg Two Factors Theory.

Information from part A comprised of 8 characteristics of the respondents' demographic. This includes gender, age, marital status, educational information, status of position, service period, rank and salary. Meanwhile, part B discusses on the level of job satisfaction and have provided 10 questions and uses 5 points of the Likert scale which is 'very disagreeable', 'disagreeable', 'uncertain', 'agreeable' and 'strongly agreed'. For part C, the question consists of a breakdown of job satisfaction factors translated from 'Job Descriptive Index' (JDI) by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) which include factors of working environment, promotional opportunities, salaries, supervision and co-workers. The questionnaire also uses 5 points of the Likert scale which is very 'disagreeable', 'disagreeable', 'uncertain', 'agreeable' and 'strongly agreed'.

Findings: The questionnaire was distributed to 30 respondents comprising lecturers at Sultan Zainal Abidin University. As a result of the pilot study, the Alpha Cronbach coefficient of the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was 0.846. This shows that the items in this questionnaire have high reliability and are suitable for use in the study. As such, all the questions in this questionnaire have been retained and no items have been removed. The reliability of this instrument is very important in maintaining the accuracy of the instrument from being exposed to defects. Here is a table of the

findings of the alpha values for each job satisfaction scale and the Job Descriptive Index (JDI).

Table 1.20 shows the alpha cronbach value for the scale of job satisfaction. For this scale, there are 10 questions that identify their level of job satisfaction. The overall value of alpha cronbach obtained is 0.846. The reliability of a data occurs when a test measures the same thing repeatedly and produces the same result at each test[21]. The reliability that is less than 0.61 is weak, 0.61 to 0.79 is acceptable and the value of 0.8 is high.

CONCLUSION

Employees who are dissatisfied with their work can leave a variety of negative effects. Problems often associated with satisfaction levels include low productivity, high turnover rates, dubious loyalty and high absence among employees. Dissatisfaction with workplace environment, colleagues, supervision may result in discomfort that can motivate employees to not contribute their best service to their employer. Identification of the factors that influence job satisfaction will provide a necessary and meaningful information organisation to enhance employee satisfaction [11]. Therefore, such a study is very important to be implemented in order to identify the employee's.

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