

A Study of Job Satisfaction and its Demographic Correlates of Faculty Members at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract

Background and purpose: Job satisfaction has been regarded as a product of harmony of one's positive individual attitudes toward his/her work and the compatibility of the individual with his/her duties and with the working conditions governing the job .

Job satisfaction has shown to affect productivity rate, personal output and their psychosomatic presence The current study has been launched to investigate the faculty members' satisfaction with various components of their academic career, such as nature of work salary, promotion, relations with the managers and colleagues.

Methods : To investigate the relationship between the individuals and various dimensions of job satisfaction, a standard self-administered questionnaire of J.D.I was distributed between 154 respondents. A total of 122 copies of the questionnaire were returned and analyzed.

Results : Distribution of the sample, on the basis of demographic variables of the participants were shown that, 82.1% of the subjects were men, 68.8% of them were over 45 years, 95.1% of the subjects were married, 82.8% of them were assistant professors and instructors and 60% of the subject were permanent official employees.

Conclusion: The highest and the second highest level of satisfaction with the nature of their work and their colleagues respectively, whereas they showed to be least satisfied with their salaries and promotion policies. Satisfaction with career increased as the faculty members promoted to higher academic rank ($P < .05$). Further analysis of the data revealed a statistically significant linear relationship between the following pairs of variables: age and promotion aspects, salary and overall satisfaction score, years of employment and amount of salary, academic rank and promotion variable. Years of employment as a faculty member negatively correlated with all aspects of satisfaction. Also age was shown to be directly related to all dimensions of satisfaction ($P < .05$).

Key words: JOB SATISFACTION, PROMOTION, SUPERVISION, COLLEAGUES

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Introduction

In all societies, work is an activity by which men, make use of their environment, to secure basic and vital needs of their life. Work covers the main part of human life, more than any other

activity. Every society has had its own system of labor- division, either primitive or complicated. But keeping abreast with developing industry, division of labor has become more and more complicated as compared with primitive socioeconomic systems .

Nowadays, division of labor is defined as specialization of labor duties, through which various activities, within a certain socioeconomic system , of various specialized duties.

In modern societies, life would be difficult without having a proper job. Regardless to the type of

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job, men have certain feelings towards their jobs. They maybe satisfied or dissatisfied with some aspects of their jobs, and usually have a general attitude towards their satisfaction with the activity they do.

Job satisfaction has been regarded as harmony of one's positive individual attitudes towards his/her work and as compatibility of the individual with his / her duties and with the working conditions and conjunctures governing the work. In other words, job satisfaction points to general emotional orientation of the individual towards the activity he/she is doing at the present time. Of course, this concept is different from the person's attitude toward individual components of the job (1).

In fact, job satisfaction can viewed as one's general attitude toward his job as an integral whole, rather than its individual components (2). There are two common methods to assay job satisfaction: the summary method and the detailed /one .The latter deals with many aspects of the job whereas in the former the clerk is subjected to "one question" which he/she should answer by providing a circle round one of the choices ranging from 1 to 5. For example, the clerk is asked: "how much are you satisfied with your job, bearing in mind various dimensions of your work?" The detailed method, is more complicated. In this method, essential constituents of the job are identified and they are then subjected to the individual to seek his/her views about them. Examples of the constituents are as follows: nature of the work, supervision, salary, opportunities for promotion, and the manner of behavior toward colleagues (3). These factors are scored and assayed according to a standard scale and then the scores are summed up to identify the degree of the individual's satisfaction with his/her career .The method used in this study is composed of various dimensions as follows:

Nature of work: This term refers to peculiar features of professional duties of the individual.

Salary and payments: That is the rate of fiscal wage one earns and the degree to which he/she regards his/her wage fair and just as compared with the wages of others (5).

Opportunities for promotion: This is used to

refer to opportunities for promotion in the organizational hierarchy of the individual's work place (6).

Control and supervision: That is the method of maintaining relationship between the individual and his/her direct supervisor on the one hand and the supervisor's abilities in providing support and technical aid for the individual (the employee) on the other (7).

Professional colleagues: This term refers to the rate of colleagues' technical efficacy who, from a social perspective, are regarded as a support for the individual (8).

Therefore, job satisfaction can reflect both a general attitude and a peculiar view specific to a particular job (9).

Generally speaking, factors dealing with job satisfaction can be classified into three main groups: extra organizational , organizational and individual factors(10).

Extra organizational factors are applied to every element that lies beyond the boundaries of the organization but possesses the potential capacities to affect members of the organization. Such factors are not the concern of this study. Organizational factors deal with job characteristics of a particular organization while individual characteristics include features such as health, sex, attitude, employment status, race, ethnicity, marital status and so on.

Materials and Methods

The participants in this cross-sectional study were 227 clinical faculty members of whom 33 were not included in the sample for different reasons like retirement, transfer (to other universities) and sabbatical leave. The remaining 154 participants, working in various clinical departments of the university, served as the statistical sample of the study. Then a total of 194 copies of a "standardized job- description inventory" were distributed among them, of which 122 copies were completed and returned back to the researcher. To obtain other necessary information, a self- administrated questionnaire about personal information was also used together with the standardized job-description

questionnaire (11). The job-description inventory whose validity and reliability had already been approved, using Cronbach's reliability formula ($r = 0/84$) was subjected to test-retest procedure on 10 nursing staff of the university, with a time interval of 10 days. The correlation coefficient was 0.90 indicating a very high reliability index. The questionnaire using a five point Likert scale was composed of 30 question formulated to study five dimensions of job satisfaction as follows: nature of work, salary, promotion, managers and colleagues. Five questions were related to each particular dimension.

Included in each question were five options, ranging from "quite agree" to "quite disagree". To avoid any biases the questions were arranged into two groups of homo-directional and anti-directional ones, so that agreement with some of them and disagreement with some others would indicate a high level of satisfaction. Job satisfaction score was supposed to be the score that the participant (respondent) would obtain, by answering the questionnaire. To compute the scores, first the score for each question was obtained, using points 0 to 4, based on a five point Likert's scale. Then the scores for each dimension were added up and divided by the number of questions, in order to have a better picture of scores ranging from 0 to 4. Besides, the scores on all five dimensions were added up and divided by five to obtain the total score of the questionnaire.

In this study the following statistical measures were used:

two sample t-test, one way ANOVA with LSD procedure, Spearman's Rho, correlation coefficient, regression analysis with stepwise method.

The level of significance for statistical calculation was regarded as $P < 0.05$.

Results

The following data were obtained from 122 questionnaires that had been completed by the participants. Distribution of employment status variables are shown in table 1.

Table 1. A comparison of various dimensions of job satisfaction of clinical faculty members based on their employment status

Dimensions of job satisfaction	Employment status *				P- value
	Full-time		Geographic Full-time *		
	X	SD	X	SD	
Nature of work	2.78	0.87	0.46	2.79	0.47
Salary	1.78	0.10	0.56	2.02	0.72
Promotion	1.92	1.00	0.74	1.9	0.83
Managers	2.32	0.38	0.76	2.18	0.75
Colleagues	2.88	0.57	0.55	2.82	0.50
Total	2.34	0.90	0.39	2.35	0.42

t - test

*The term "geographic full-time" refers to the a faculty members who are supposed not to be involved in any profit-making activities, such as working in private clinics, whereas the term "full time" refers to the faculty members who officially may spend fewer working hours in the university and may set up their own private clinics.

As the table shows, among the variables under study, there was no significant difference between the two groups of full-time and geographic full-time members.

Table 2. A comparison of various dimensions of clinical faculty members based on type of employment

Dimensions of job satisfaction	Short-term contract		Probationary		Permanent		P-value
	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	
Nature of work	2.93	.34	2.74	.54	2.80	.45	0.56
Salary	1.77	.75	1.82	.68	1.85	.68	0.92
Promotion	2.14	.80	1.67	.80	2.05	.81	0.04*
Managers	2.43	.72	2.26	.75	2.29	.75	0.83
Colleagues	2.87	.42	2.82	.55	2.86	.50	0.90
Total	2.43	.35	2.26	.44	2.37	.39	0.33

* P- value was significant (ANOVA)

In Table 2, the probationary members and the permanent members were significantly different in terms of the nature of work. The scores for permanent members more than those of the probationary ones.

Table 3. A comparison of various dimensions of job satisfaction of clinical faculty members based on their marital status

Dimensions of job satisfaction	Marital status				P-value
	Married		single		
	X	SD	X	SD	
Nature of work	2.79	0.49	2.94	0.27	0.44
Salary	1.83	0.70	1.89	0.63	0.84
Promotion	1.93	0.81	2.06	1.13	0.73
Managers	2.28	0.76	2.42	0.50	0.66
Colleagues	2.85	0.53	2.75	0.14	0.63
Total	2.34	0.41	2.41	0.36	0.67

There was no significant difference between married and single members in terms of various dimensions of job satisfaction under study.

Table 4. Satisfaction rate in relation to the age of faculty members and each of the dimensions under study

Dimensions of job satisfaction	Marital status				P-value
	Married		single		
	X	SD	X	SD	
Nature of work	2.79	0.49	2.94	0.27	0.44
Salary	1.83	0.70	1.89	0.63	0.84
Promotion	1.93	0.81	2.06	1.13	0.73
Managers	2.28	0.76	2.42	0.50	0.66
Colleagues	2.85	0.53	2.75	0.14	0.63
Total	2.34	0.41	2.41	0.36	0.67

*significant difference (t- test)

In table 4, in terms of the gender of the participants, just the managerial dimension seems to be statistically significant, with females being more satisfied than males.

In table 5, correlation coefficients of Spearman show a linear link between university rank, age, years of teaching on the one hand and some dimensions of satisfaction on the other. Although this relationship fails to be statistically significant, it indicates a positive

linear trend. Of course, only age manifested a significant relationship with promotion, salary and the total score. Years of working as a government employee, which includes teaching experience as faculty member as well, showed no significant relationship with any of the dimensions under study.

After investigating the link between different variables, and of the dimensions under study, an overall investigation of the issues under study was undertaken. In other words, we would like to compare all the variables one by one, using a single table, as is shown in Table 6. The numbers in the table, appearing in the columns are coefficients of \hat{a} . The relationship between dependent and independent variables are shown in Table 6.

As the table 6 indicates, the nature of work showed a 97.2% correlation with years of teaching, university rank and age variables. Of course this relationship positively correlated with age and university rank but negatively with years of teaching as faculty members. A similar picture also seems to have happened in relation to colleagues in which (although less than the others) the overall pattern is more or less similar. Other variables did not show any meaningful relationship, although they manifested a negative relationship with age and years of teaching as faculty members. Other variables like type of employment, employment status and years of working as government employees were also investigated in this model, but none of them met the requirements to be included in the model.

Discussion

The results obtained, from this study showed that faculty members were most satisfied with the nature of their work and their university colleagues followed them in this sense. They were also in favour of activities that were in line with the fields of specialty they had acquired. Such features seem to be in harmony with physicians expectations of their experties (12). Other studies have also referred to the strong link between availability of sympathetic colleagues and job satisfaction (13). The reason

Table 5. Correlation coefficient for job satisfaction dimensions and person features of faculty members

Job satisfaction dimensions	Nature of work		Salary		Promotion		Managers		Colleagues		Total	
	r	P value	r	P value	r	P value	r	P value	r	P value	r	P value
University (educational) rank	0.103	0.263	0.174	0.057	0.218	0.017 *	-0.078	0.394	0.088	0.341	0.173	0.059
Age	0.175	0.054	0.198	0.030 *	0.212	0.020 *	-0.041	0.652	0.135	0.139	0.194	0.032 *
Years of teaching (as faculty members)	0.096	0.294	0.204	0.024 *	0.047	0.611	-0.032	0.726	0.124	0.172	0.121	0.186
Years of working (as government employees)	0.055	0.549	0.141	0.122	0.095	0.298	-0.044	0.633	0.083	0.366	0.087	0.344

* Statistically significant

Table 6. Multi-factorial analysis of job satisfaction dimensions and personal features under study

Dimensions of job satisfaction	R ²	Age	Years of teaching (as faculty members)	University (educational) rank	Type of employment	Employment status	Years of working (as government employees)
Nature of work	0.972	0.075	-0.078	0.214	--	--	--
Salary	0.885	0.052	-0.035	--	--	--	--
Promotion	0.870	0.055	-0.041	--	--	--	--
Managers	0.900	0.059	-0.066	--	--	--	--
Colleagues	0.967	0.074	-0.710	0.235	--	--	--
Total	0.973	0.070	-0.060	--	--	--	--

R² = determination coefficient

is obvious because many useful hours of the employee everyday is spent working in an environment where other colleagues are also present. If the relationship among those who are in close contact every working day is not friendly and intimate then the working condition would turnout to be unbearable. All this indicates the significance of providing a friendly atmosphere the colleagues working together. To achieve this, the cooperation of both colleagues and the authorities involved in such activities is of special significance.

According to the results of this study , the subjects under study were least satisfied with their salary and promotion policies and referred to the significance of observing justice in paying salaries or exerting promotion procedures. Also , the results show that people are more happy with higher wages. although the link between this relationship and its practical aspect remains doubtful. It will be more satisfactory when the salary which an employee obtains is similar to or more than what is paid to others doing a similar work (14).

There was a significant difference between the “full time” and “geographic full- time members”, in terms of employment (probationary and permanent) and the promotion dimension. Some studies show that the employees like to see that their affiliate organization is just in tackling promotion issues, by providing proper opportunities for their career development, which would enable them to accept greater work- related responsibilities. Moreover, it seems that employees tend to be more satisfied with situations offering greater opportunities for promotion (15).

There was a significant difference between full-time and geographic full- time members in terms of gender and satisfaction with managers. Women showed to be more satisfied than men. The reason may be that women seem to be more obedient in following managerial instructions and more responsible in following regulations and disciplines(16).

University (educational) rank and promotion manifested a linear link with job satisfaction. In other words, faculty members got more satisfied as their academic rank improved. The reason may be that in higher ranks, members get more familiar with promotion regulations and, accordingly, tune themselves with such rules. Some studies show that promotion opportunities and salary increases are related to job satisfaction Also our analysis of the link between various factors like age, years of employment (as faculty members), university rank and years of work as government employees showed that age has a significantly linear link with dimensions like promotion, salary and overall satisfaction score. Although in many occasions there was a link between satisfaction and a number of variables like age, years of teaching, salary and promotion, a mute-variable (mute- factorial) analysis of the data indicated a shift in this trend ; that is , years of teaching as a faculty member manifested a significant (but in a reverse order) , with the passage of time , the faculty members expectations of the career, would also enhance , while the affiliated university is not able to properly meet such expectations and needs. Besides , the age variable which , in a

mono-variable analysis , correlated with merely two dimensions, showed a direct relationship with all dimensions under study in a multi- variable analysis.

A multi- variable analysis which seems to have been appropriately in tune with the data could be of special focus. In a multi-variable analysis, another issue which is of special significance is the link between university rank and two dimensions of colleagues and nature of work. This was shown to be related to promotion dimension only in a mono-variable analysis of the data. Such findings are in line with some other investigations which envisage a positive correlation between satisfaction rate and job promotion. Besides, a job can be more satisfactory if it could fulfill the employees enthusiasm and encourage them to carry out more research-oriented work.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the link between years of employment as faculty member could have been misinterpreted as some other unfamiliar (unknown) factor. In this regard age also showed relationship with all other dimensions of satisfaction whereas in a mono-variable analysis it correlated only with two dimensions.

Regression coefficients for age revealed the strongest relationship between age and the two dimensions of colleagues and nature of the work. As for years of work as a faculty member, the strongest negative correlation was shown to exist between this variable and satisfaction with colleagues. The reason may partly be the conferring of some administrative responsibilities to some faculty members with a longer employment background, resulting in some administrative clashes with colleagues during the administration of some regulations. Part of the dissatisfaction could also have been rooted in the differences that the junior and senior members may have in running their daily academic life(17).

Moreover as faculty members get promoted to higher academic ranks they would consider the medical career more significant in fulfilling their needs and desires, resulting in their further satisfaction with their job.

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