



## Job Satisfaction Level among Dental Faculty Members Based on Their Specialty

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### Abstract

**Background:** Job satisfaction has been defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job. It can be influenced by many factors such as nature of the work, salary, job opportunities, work environment, supervision, mental conditions, and job security. We aimed to compare satisfaction among academic members of dentistry faculty based on their specialty.

**Methods:** 98 Faculty members of Shahid Beheshti dentistry school (n=114) were surveyed during 2016 to assess their job satisfaction level. We used two questionnaires, the first one assessed demographic and personal data (academic position, teaching experience) and the other questionnaire was for evaluating job satisfaction.

**Results:** The level of satisfaction of our samples was moderate and the average score was  $2.77 \pm 0.5$ . The nature of work that is maintaining an academic position plays the most important role in job satisfaction. Mental conditions and job security ranked moderate satisfaction. The opportunities for promotion and personal growth were ranked the most dissatisfied domains. There was significant difference among academic members' level of satisfaction, about salary ( $P \leq 0.02$ ), nature of the work ( $P \leq 0.007$ ) and physical condition ( $P \leq 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** In general, prosthodontists were the least and the dental material specialists were the most satisfied dental specialists among faculty members. To increase job satisfaction of faculty members and their maintenance in academic position we suggest considering resource allocation and strategies in a direction that provide equal opportunities for promotion and members flourish.

**Keywords:** JOB SATISFACTION, DENTAL FACULTY

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## Introduction

Job satisfaction has been defined as "a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job". Studying job

satisfaction is important since it influences a person's physical and mental well-being. Job satisfaction can lead to better organizational commitment of employees which in turn can enhance the overall organizational success and progress. Moreover, it lowers the employee's intentions to leave the organization (1). Job satisfaction is the most important factor for successful practice (2, 3).

Job satisfaction can be affected by motivational

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factors such as recognition, work tasks, responsibilities and hygienic factors such as security, working conditions or salary (4). Also, it was shown that personal determinants (such as age, race, sex, educational level, and tenure) and organizational factors (such as nature of work, remuneration/pay, supervision, promotion opportunities, relationships with co-workers, job status, and job level) contribute to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (5). Universities are the most important centers for educational and research activities in every community (6). The credibility of every academic organization greatly depends on faculty members and distinction of each institute is determined by their talents and abilities. The increased demand for participation of academic members in scholarly activity and the competition for grants should not serve as deterrents (7). So, job satisfaction of the academic members is very important because dissatisfied faculty members may leave universities (8).

Over the past years some changes have taken place in universities, as follows: ambitious objectives, greater frequency of novel, unprecedented problems and more time spent dealing with difficult people. The nature of academic job has been changed in recent years; faculty members are spending more time in committee and other professional meetings and experiencing more forced change and more travel. These changes make faculty members experience greater stress in their position (8, 9). Dental academic careers not only determine the future of dental education by their knowledge and abilities but also they are role models for future dentists (7, 10). In addition to the changing nature of academic dentistry, income difference between academic and private practice in dentistry can also lead to dissatisfaction (7).

Job satisfaction is different among various dental specialists in their private practice, but there is no data about possible differences among dental specialists with academic position (11). There is a great diversity in dental

education programs for specialists training because dentistry specialties are different in nature. Dental professionals earn a wide range of income according to their specialty practice. We aimed to compare satisfaction among academic members of dentistry faculty, based on their specialty.

## Methods and Materials

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Shahid Beheshti dental school (code: IR.SBMU.RIDS.REC.1396.559). We prepared a list of academic member from personnel office of Shahid Beheshti Dental School. At the time of our survey, 114 academic members with different specialties were employed in 12 departments of the faculty including: oral and maxillofacial surgery, periodontics, endodontics, restorative dentistry, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, prosthodontics, oral medicine, oral radiology, oral pathology, dental material and community oral health.

To collect data, participants were asked to fill in two questionnaires which were sent by email. The first one was designed for demographic information including sex, academic degree, years of teaching experience, and their specialty. The other was the Persian version of the Smith-Kandal-Hal Questionnaire for job satisfaction (12). This questionnaire consists of 44 questions in six domains: salary and benefits (5 questions), opportunities for promotion and personal growth (5 questions), supervision and communication (15 questions), mental conditions and job security (7 questions), physical conditions (3 questions), nature of the work (9 questions). These items were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale (very dissatisfied=1, dissatisfied=2, moderately satisfied=3, highly satisfied=4, and very highly satisfied=5).

Data were analyzed using SPSS, software 21. Kruskal-Wallis test was used for comparison of the level of satisfaction among faculty members working in various departments. Average score

of the level of satisfaction in each domain and in total was calculated for each person. As in Sotude's study it was considered that scores below 1.5 as very low satisfaction, between 1.5-2.49 low satisfaction, 2.5-3.49 moderate satisfaction, 3.5-4.49 high satisfaction and over 4.5 very high satisfaction (12).

## Results

From 114 questionnaires, 98 (56 women and 42 men) were returned. The average age of responders was  $44.8 \pm 9.8$  years. They worked in 12 departments including: 16 (16.3%) prosthodontics, 8 (8.2%) oral radiology, 7 (7.1%) oral medicine, 7 (7.1%) periodontics, 9 (9.2%) oral and maxillofacial surgery, 8 (8.2%) restorative dentistry, 11 (11.2%) endodontics, 8 (8.2%) pediatric dentistry, 11 (11.2%) orthodontics, 5 (5.1%) oral pathology, 4 (4.1%) dental materials, 4 (4.1%) community

oral health. The average of teaching experience of participants was  $16.55 \pm 10.62$  years. 48 (50%) of them were assistant professor, 33 (34.4%) were associate professor and 13 (13.5%) were professor in their academic degree.

The level of satisfaction of our samples was moderate and the average score was  $2.77 \pm 0.59$ , with the most satisfaction degree belongs to dental material department and the least belongs to prosthodontists (Table 1).

The highest satisfaction level reported by academic members was in the domain of nature of the work. Meanwhile they were very dissatisfied in the opportunities for promotion and personal growth domains. Table 2 shows the level of academic members' satisfaction about each domain.

Comparison of different domains by means of Kruskal-Wallis test revealed significant difference among academic members' level of satisfaction, about salary ( $P \leq 0.02$ ), nature

**Table 1:** The level of job satisfaction in various departments.

Departments	Satisfaction degree	Standard division
Prosthodontics	2.56	0.51
Oral radiology	2.88	0.64
Oral medicine	2.57	0.53
Periodontology	2.57	0.79
Oral surgery	3.0	0.71
Restorative dentistry	3.0	0.53
Endodontics	2.73	0.47
Pediatric dentistry	2.63	0.52
Orthodontics	2.64	0.67
Oral pathology	3.0	0
Dental material	3.25	0.5
Community oral health	3.0	0.82

**Table 2:** Number and percentage of academic members in terms of their satisfaction in different domains

Level of Satisfaction	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
<b>Domain</b>					
sSalary	1 (1%)	36 (36.7%)	51 (52%)	10 (10.2%)	0
Job opportunities for promotion	10 (10.2%)	49 (50%)	29 (29.6%)	10 (10.2%)	0
Supervision and communication	5 (5.1%)	29 (29.6%)	57 (58.2%)	7 (7.1%)	0
Mental condition and job security	6 (6.1%)	38 (38.8%)	52 (53.1%)	2 (2%)	0
Work environment	10 (10%)	37 (37.8%)	40 (40.8%)	9 (9.2%)	2 (2%)
Nature of the work	1 (1%)	3 (3.1%)	57 (58.2%)	33 (33.7%)	4 (4.1%)
All domains	1 (1%)	28 (28.6%)	62 (63.3%)	7 (7.1%)	0

of the work ( $P \leq 0.007$ ) and physical condition ( $P \leq 0.001$ ).

However, there was no significant difference in opportunities for promotion ( $P=0.36$ ), supervision and communication ( $P=0.28$ ), mental conditions and job security ( $P=0.37$ ) domains. Table 3 shows the faculty members'

satisfaction level in different domains of their job.

## Discussion

According to our study, there was a moderate level of job satisfaction among faculty members

**Table 3:** Number of academic members regarding their level of satisfaction in different departments

Domains Departments	Salary	Job opportunities for promotion	Supervision and communication	Mental condition and job safety	Physical condition	Nature of the work
Prosthodontics	Very low=1 Low=8 Medium=7	Very low=2 Low=8 Medium=4 High=2	Low=5 Medium=11	Low=9 Medium=7	Very low=1 Low=13 Medium=2	Low=1 Medium=14 High=1
Oral radiology	Low=2 Medium=3 High=3	Low=6 Medium=2	Low=2 Medium=5 High=1	Low=3 Medium=5	Low=1 Medium=4 High=3	Medium=4 High=4
Oral medicine	Low=2 Medium=5	Low=4 Medium=1 High=2	Low=5 Medium=2	Low=3 Medium=4	Very low=2 Low=5	Medium=5 High=2
Periodontics	Low=1 Medium=5 High=1	Very low=2 Low=3 Medium=2	Very low=1 Low=2 Medium=4	Very low=2 Low=2 Medium=3	Very low=2 Medium=5	Very low=1 Medium=2 High=4
Oral & maxillofacial surgery	Low=4 Medium=3 High=2	Very low=2 Low=1 Medium=4 High=2	Low=2 Medium=7	Low=2 Medium=7	Low=2 Medium=4 High=1 Very high=2	Medium=3 High=4 Very high=2
Restorative dentistry	Low=1 Medium=7	Low=5 Medium=2 High=1	Very low=1 Low=2 Medium=3 High=2	Very low=1 Low=2 Medium=5	Low=2 Medium=6	Medium=3 High=5
Endodontics	Low=7 Medium=3 High=1	Very low=2 Low=5 Medium=4	Low=3 Medium=8	Very low=2 Low=1 Medium=8	Very low=3 Low=2 Medium=6	Medium=8 High=3
Pediatric dentistry	Low=1 Medium=7	Low=6 Medium=2	Very low=1 Low=2 Medium=4 High=1	Very low=1 Low=5 Medium=2	Low=5 Medium=3	Low=2 Medium=6
Orthodontics	Low=2 Medium=7 High=2	Very low=1 Low=7 Medium=3	Very low=2 Low=4 Medium=5	Low=5 Medium=5 High=1	Very low=2 Low=4 Medium=4 High=1	Medium=7 High=4
Oral pathology	Low=5	Low=4 Medium=1	Low=1 Medium=4	Low=4 Medium=1	Medium=4 High=1	Medium=1 High=4
Dental material	Medium=4	Medium=3 High=1	Low=1 Medium=1 High=2	Medium=4	Low=2 Medium=1 High=1	Medium=2 High=1 Very high=1
Community oral health	Low=3 High=1	Very low=1 Medium=1 High=2	Medium=3 High=1	Low=2 Medium=1 High=1	Low=1 Medium=1 High=2	Medium=2 High=1 Very high=1

of Shahid Beheshti dental school. Other studies also reported moderate level of satisfaction in academic members of other universities which were consistent with our results (12-14). Nevertheless results of Seraj and co-workers' study were different (5). Although the Level of satisfaction in the USA dental faculty members was reported high, the level of satisfaction in different countries is different (15, 16). Faculty members' satisfaction results in their long term stay in universities; this not only increases their stability and experience, which in turn improves the education process, but also eliminates expenses of costly search for recruiting new expert members (8).

To the best of our knowledge, no study compared the level of job satisfaction among various dental specialists regarding academic job. Academic dentistry is functioning in a societal and technological environment which is changing rapidly (7). In addition to these changes, differences in natures of specialties make them difficult to compare.

In our study prosthodontists were the most dissatisfied among the other faculty members. Great income gap between academic and private practice in dentistry may be one of the reasons of low job satisfaction level especially in the salary domain. Income Was shown to be the most important factor that affects the level of satisfaction (17). However in another study, prosthodontists' level of satisfaction in academic job was high (10).

Salary is one of the most effective factors in the level of job satisfaction; Perie reported that satisfaction with salary has a direct effect on creativity in education and research (18). Similar to Seraj's study, satisfaction about this domain was low in our study (5). Considering salary domain alone, oral pathologists were the most dissatisfied and oral radiologists were the most satisfied ones.

We found that the least satisfaction level among all domains belonged to opportunities for promotion. In this domain periodontists were the most dissatisfied specialist and the dental material specialist were the most satisfied ones.

The number of members in each department seems to play an important role in satisfaction level in this domain. Interestingly, most participants were dissatisfied with promotion requirements and had no opportunity for research and higher education.

Our samples were moderately satisfied with mental conditions and job security. In this field the most satisfied were dental material specialists and the most dissatisfied specialists were periodontists. Stress-free and friendly communication can induce a positive organizational environment which eliminates mental distress.

The nature of the work was the most satisfying domain. This result is consistent with previous studies (12, 13). This indicates that the interest in teaching was high and the joy of teaching and learning was the most satisfying option in the participants. The most and the least level of satisfaction in this domain belonged to oral surgery and pediatric dentistry departments respectively.

Work environment in clinical practices can produce extra stress so this domain is very important in job satisfaction; our participants were moderately satisfied about this whereas oral medicine specialists and oral surgeons showed the lowest and the highest level of satisfaction among the others, respectively.

Good supervision is a factor that contributes to job satisfaction. In our study there was a medium satisfaction degree in this domain, meanwhile oral medicine and dental material specialists were the most and the least satisfied faculty members.

## Conclusion

In general, prosthodontists were the least and the dental material specialists were the most satisfied dental specialists among faculty members. To increase job satisfaction of faculty members and their maintenance in academic position we suggest considering resources allocation and strategies in a direction that provide equal opportunities for promotion and

members flourish.

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## Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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