4th International Conference on New Horizons in Education

The Gender-Marital Status Job Satisfaction Relationship of Academics

Tülen Saner*, Şerife Zihni Eyüpoğlu

School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Near East University, Lefkosa, 98010 North Cyprus
Business Administration Department, Near East University, Lefkosa, 98010, North Cyprus

Abstract

This study examined the marital status-job satisfaction relationship in higher education. The study instrument used was the short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) which measures overall job satisfaction, intrinsic satisfaction, and extrinsic satisfaction using 20 facets of the job. The instrument was personally administered to the respondents. The population for the study consisted of academics in North Cyprus. The results show that the job satisfaction of married academics is on the whole higher than not married academics. Overall job satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction levels varying for different marital status.

© 2013 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. Open access under CC BY-NC-ND license. Selection and peer-review under responsibility of The Association of Science, Education and Technology-TASET, Sakarya Universitesi, Turkey.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; intrinsic satisfaction; extrinsic satisfaction; academics; marital status; North Cyprus.

1. Introduction

Satisfaction has been widely studied in the management literature (Spector, 1997) due to its relevance to the physical and mental well-being of the employee, as well as its implications for such job-related behaviours as productivity, absenteeism, turnover and employee relations. Job satisfaction also plays an important role in improving the financial standing of organizations (Aronson et al., 2005). In this respect, job satisfaction today still is a topic of major interest for many researchers and is an organizational variable that should be understood and constantly monitored for the welfare of any organization. In fact, understanding the job satisfaction of employees is an important organizational goal of any organization (Aronson et al., 2005) and indeed, has been a matter of growing interest for those concerned with the quality of working life and organizational efficiency (Maghrabi, 1999).

* Corresponding author. Tel.:+9-0392-223-6464; fax: +9-0392-223-6461.
E-mail address: saner@neu.edu.tr

1877-0428 © 2013 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. Open access under CC BY-NC-ND license. Selection and peer-review under responsibility of The Association of Science, Education and Technology-TASET, Sakarya Universitesi, Turkey.
High quality academic staff is the cornerstone of a successful educational system (Sharma and Jyoti, 2009). As Johnes and Taylor (1990) state, the goals of higher education are to provide in-depth knowledge, seek academic development, educate students, as well as to coordinate national development demands, cited in Chen et al. (2006). None of these goals can be accomplished efficiently if low satisfaction or dissatisfaction exists amongst the university teachers in higher education organizations. Thus, the study of job satisfaction of university teachers seems inevitable. The job satisfaction of university teachers (academics), their commitment, and their retention are crucial to effective academic institutions. The understanding of factors affecting the job satisfaction of university teachers is of utmost importance for the implementation of a successful, innovative, and vibrant educational system. Furthermore, their job satisfaction translates into a healthy and positive academic environment. Thus, attracting and retaining high quality university teachers should be a primary requirement for any educational institution (Sharma and Jyoti, 2006, 2009). Although some degree of turnover is inevitable and perhaps desirable, high rates of faculty turnover can be costly to the reputation of an institution and to the quality of instruction (Al-Omari et al., 2008).

A review of published works reveal that there does appear to be general agreement that job satisfaction is an affective reaction to a job that results from the comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired (Oshagbemi, 2003). Research findings have indicated that many personal characteristics affect job satisfaction in different and complex ways, these personal characteristics including gender, age, marital status, and working experience, to name a few (Kousetelios, 2001).

Research focusing on job satisfaction in higher educational organizations has indicated that, on the whole, academics are generally satisfied with their work. Findings indicate that academics want work tasks that correspond to their personal interests and allow them considerable autonomy in task selection and decision-making; they want a sense of achievement, facilitated by feedback from supervisors; they want clarity as to what is expected of them and harmony among the various people they work with; and they want salaries awarded equitably and at a level that meets their expenses; and they want promotions to be awarded fairly (Kelly, 1989). The job aspects that are most frequently perceived as responsible for low satisfaction are pay, university administration policy, availability of resources, and working conditions (Kelly, 1989).

Dissatisfaction amongst workers is undesirable and dangerous in any profession, but it is suicidal if it occurs in the teaching profession (Sharma and Jyoti, 2009). As Johnes and Taylor (1990) state, the goals of higher education are to provide in-depth knowledge, seek academic development, educate students, as well as to coordinate national development demands (cited in Chen, 2006). None of these goals can be accomplished efficiently if low satisfaction or dissatisfaction exists amongst academics. The job satisfaction of academics, their commitment, and their retention are crucial to effective academic institutions (Saner and Eyupoglu, 2012). Academics find themselves in a profession that is highly stressful. The requirements of career completion, excessive course loads that tend to hinder research and insufficient payment are all factors that may cause financial and physiological discomfort for individuals (Koyuncu, 2001). Unless they maintain positive attitudes towards their profession they will inevitably fail in their professional career (Sirin, 2009).

The main purpose of this study is to examine the marital status-job satisfaction relationship in higher education, more specifically academics in North Cyprus, and to identify which aspects of the job are sources of satisfaction and which are source of dissatisfaction. Also the study will identify gender differences in relation to marital status. The results of this study will enable university authorities and policy makers to develop and implement policies towards the improvement of the undesirable conditions and the strengthening of the desirable conditions, reinforcing the higher-educational system.

2. Methodology

To measure the job satisfaction of the academics the short-form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, and Lofquist, 1967) was utilized. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is one of the most widely used instruments in the measurement of job satisfaction (Scarpello and Campbell, 1983)
and its validity and reliability has been proven over the 40 years that it has been in use. It has been used to
to measure job satisfaction in a variety of sectors, including education. The short-form MSQ is composed of twenty
facets, each facet represented with just one satisfaction item. The short-form MSQ measures three satisfaction
scales, namely intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and overall job satisfaction. Intrinsic satisfaction refers
to occupational conditions (how people feel about the nature of the job’s tasks), and extrinsic satisfaction refers
to environmental conditions (how people feel about features of the job that are external to the work). Respondent
academics were asked to express the extent of their satisfaction with each of the 20 facets of their job on a five-
point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The original short-form MSQ was
translated into Turkish by the authors and tested on ten academics to test its validity and reliability. The internal
consistency of the translated questionnaire was 0.85, obtained using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. The
questionnaire was accompanied with a personal information form in order to determine the demographic
variables of the academics that participated in the study.

The population for this study comprises academics from 5 of the North Cyprus universities. A total of
600 academics were randomly approached with 412 agreeing to take part in the study, resulting in a response rate
of 69%. The questionnaires were administered in an interview format. Though extremely time consuming, this
method was utilized so as to ensure as high a response rate as possible, hence the use of the short-form MSQ over
the long-form. Of the 412 respondents, 67.7% were lecturers with a master degree, 7.8% were lecturers with a
PhD, 13.3 per cent were assistant professors, 4.6% were associate professors, and 6.6% were full professors. The
low number of respondents from the academic ranks associate professor and full professor is an indication of
their relatively small numbers in the academic population in North Cyprus compared to the other ranks, though
this is not surprising for a developing country. However, it is not felt that these percentages have had an affect on
the final results as comparable studies conducted have also yielded both similar sampling percentages and similar
results. Such studies include Ssesanga and Garrett (2005) and Oshagbemi (1997). Just slightly over half the
respondents (53.4%) were male and 46.6% were female, and 63.8% were married and 36.2% were not married.
The greatest percentage of respondents (37.6%) were in the age range 21-30, 34.5% were in the age age range 31-40,
17.2% were 41-50, 6.1% were aged 51-60, and the remaining 4.6% were in the age range 61 and above.

The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 13.0 was used to analyze the data
collected. Analysis consisted of the computation of descriptive statistics and ANOVA in order to examine the
different job satisfaction levels of the academics in relation to their marital status.

3. Findings and Discussion

The mean scores (M) and standard deviations (SD) for the job satisfaction of academics in North Cyprus
in relation to marital status can be seen in Table 1. Mean scores below 3.50 are considered to be more on the
“dissatisfied” side of the “satisfaction-dissatisfaction” scale with mean scores above 3.50 being more on the
“satisfied” side of the scale (Pearson and Seiler, 1983). As Table 1 presents the level of overall job satisfaction
experienced by married and not married academics are above 3.50 thus indicating job satisfactions except for
extrinsic satisfaction of not married academics indicating a mean level of 3.41. The analysis indicates that
married academics are more satisfied then not married academics. This is supported by Sharma and Jyoti (2009).

Table 1 Marital Status-Related Mean Satisfaction Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Overall Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Intrinsic Satisfaction</th>
<th>Extrinsic Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mean</td>
<td>sd</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Married</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 Marital Status/Gender Related Mean Satisfaction Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Overall Job Satisfaction mean</th>
<th>Overall Job Satisfaction sd</th>
<th>Intrinsic Satisfaction mean</th>
<th>Intrinsic Satisfaction sd</th>
<th>Extrinsic Satisfaction mean</th>
<th>Extrinsic Satisfaction sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Married Male</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Male</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 2 it is possible to see the mean satisfaction scores of the academics in relation to marital status and gender. Not married female academics are clearly more satisfied than not married male academics. With a mean score of 3.30 not married male academics indicate dissatisfaction with extrinsic job satisfaction.

It is also evident from the table that married female academics indicate higher levels of satisfaction compared to married male academics. The satisfaction of female university teachers may be explained by their role in the family, especially if they are not the sole or the primary income earner (Oshagbemi, 2000). This finding is consistent with Saner and Eyüpoğlu (2012) who indicated that the intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction mean scores are highest for the female university teachers. This is also further supported by Sharma and Jyoti (2009), and Oshagbemi (2000, 2003).

4. Conclusion
The main purpose of this study was to examine the marital status-gender job satisfaction relationship amongst academics in North Cyprus. The results show that the job satisfaction levels of the married academics are on the whole higher than the not married academics. Results further indicate that the female academics (married and not married) are more satisfied when compared to the male academics (married or not married).

The results of the study suggest that university management and higher education authorities need to pay attention to the job satisfaction issues of the married and not married academics on a gender bases and understand their concerns regarding their job satisfaction. Furthermore, academics with different levels of job satisfaction may result in the need for university management to consider different motivational techniques in order to improve overall performance.
Reference


