



Salary, Promotion, and Relationships with Colleagues in Relation to Job Engagement of School Personnel

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Abstract:

Job satisfaction is a pivotal factor influencing employee productivity, retention, and overall well-being, particularly within educational institutions. This study explores the determinants of job satisfaction among diverse personnel groups at a higher education institution, including administrators, faculty, academic non-teaching staff, non-teaching personnel, and general maintenance staff. Utilizing a descriptive-comparative-correlational research design, data were collected through a structured survey administered to 125 employees. The survey assessed satisfaction levels related to salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues using a 4-point Likert scale. Results indicated moderate satisfaction with salary (mean = 3.11) and promotion opportunities (mean = 3.36), while relationships with colleagues received high satisfaction ratings (mean = 3.65). Analysis revealed no significant correlation between these satisfaction factors and job engagement ($Rho = 0.026$, $p = 0.770$), suggesting that traditional extrinsic factors do not directly influence deeper psychological engagement. Furthermore, slight variations in satisfaction were observed across different designations, with faculty members reporting higher salary satisfaction compared to administrators and general maintenance staff. The findings highlight the importance of intrinsic motivators such as meaningful job design, effective leadership, and opportunities for personal and professional growth in enhancing employee engagement. Recommendations include improving job design, fostering transformational leadership, ensuring fair and transparent compensation and promotion policies, and strengthening positive workplace relationships. By addressing these intrinsic factors, educational institutions can cultivate a more engaged and motivated workforce, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, Educational Institutions, Intrinsic Motivation, Compensation Equity, Workplace Relationships

Introduction:

Job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing employee productivity, retention, and well-being, particularly within educational institutions. The satisfaction levels of administrators, faculty, academic non-teaching personnel, non-teaching personnel, and general maintenance staff directly impact the quality of education delivered to students (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Satisfied employees exhibit higher motivation, improved performance, and lower turnover rates, contributing to a stable and effective educational environment (Locke, 1976; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). Conversely, dissatisfaction among school personnel can lead to reduced instructional quality, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates, which disrupt the continuity of education and incur additional recruitment and training costs (Ingersoll, 2001).

This study focuses on understanding the job satisfaction determinants of diverse school personnel in a private higher education institution (HEI). By examining key factors such as salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues, the research aims to identify areas for improvement to foster a supportive and productive work environment. Salary is a fundamental determinant of job satisfaction as it meets employees' financial needs and serves as recognition of their contributions (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969). Opportunities for promotion provide employees with a sense of career progression and professional growth, which are essential for long-term satisfaction and retention (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). Additionally, interpersonal relationships within the workplace significantly impact job satisfaction by fostering a collaborative and supportive work culture, enhancing teamwork, and reducing stress (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

The study is anchored in established theoretical frameworks that provide a robust understanding of job satisfaction dynamics. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory highlights the role of hygiene factors, such as salary and workplace relationships, in preventing dissatisfaction, and motivators, such as promotion opportunities, in enhancing



satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs emphasizes the necessity of fulfilling basic needs like safety and security before addressing higher-order needs such as esteem and self-actualization, which are supported by career advancement and meaningful relationships (Maslow, 1943). Equity Theory suggests that employees evaluate the fairness of their efforts and rewards relative to others, influencing their satisfaction based on perceived equity (Adams, 1965). These theoretical perspectives form the foundation of this study, elucidating how salary, promotion opportunities, and interpersonal relationships shape job satisfaction among school personnel.

The primary objective of this research is to explore the relationship between job satisfaction and the three identified factors—salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues—among administrators, faculty, academic non-teaching personnel, non-teaching personnel, and general maintenance staff in a private HEI. The study utilized a researcher-developed survey questionnaire to gather data and provide actionable insights for enhancing job satisfaction across various staff categories. By focusing on a comprehensive range of personnel roles, the research addresses existing gaps in the literature and provides a holistic understanding of job satisfaction in educational institutions.

Review of Related Literature:

Extensive research highlights the significance of job satisfaction in the education sector. Studies have consistently shown that satisfied employees are more motivated and productive, contributing to better student outcomes. For instance, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found that teacher job satisfaction is significantly influenced by workload, administrative support, and professional development opportunities. Klassen and Chiu (2010) emphasized the interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, noting that while extrinsic factors like salary and job security are essential, intrinsic factors such as professional autonomy and recognition often determine overall satisfaction.

Salary remains a critical determinant of job satisfaction, serving as both a financial necessity and recognition of an employee's value. Fair and competitive compensation is crucial in attracting and retaining qualified personnel, ensuring operational stability within institutions (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969; Ng & Feldman, 2010). Promotion opportunities also significantly influence satisfaction, as they provide pathways for career progression and professional growth (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). Interpersonal relationships within the workplace further enhance satisfaction by fostering a collaborative culture, reducing stress, and promoting a sense of community (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Equity Theory have provided valuable insights into the determinants of job satisfaction. Herzberg et al. (1959) distinguished between hygiene factors, which prevent dissatisfaction, and motivators, which enhance satisfaction. Maslow (1943) underscored the progression of human needs, emphasizing that fulfilling higher-order needs such as esteem and self-actualization contributes to job satisfaction. Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) highlighted the importance of perceived fairness in shaping employee satisfaction and motivation.

Recent studies have also explored the role of organizational culture in fostering job satisfaction. Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016) emphasized that a positive school culture significantly enhances teacher retention and satisfaction. Technological advancements have emerged as new determinants of satisfaction, with research indicating that adequate training and support for technology integration can reduce job-related stress and enhance satisfaction (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010).

By incorporating these insights, this study fills a gap in the existing literature by exploring job satisfaction across a broader range of school personnel, including non-teaching and maintenance staff. The findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of how salary, promotion opportunities, and interpersonal relationships interact to shape job satisfaction, offering valuable recommendations for enhancing employee engagement and institutional success.

Methodology:

Job satisfaction is a pivotal factor influencing employee performance, retention, and the overall effectiveness of an organization. In educational institutions, understanding the determinants of job satisfaction among various personnel groups is essential for fostering a supportive work environment and ensuring institutional success. This study employs a descriptive-comparative-correlational research design to investigate the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction among the diverse workforce of the HEI. By examining satisfaction levels related to salary, promotion opportunities, and collegial relationships, the research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the elements that contribute to overall job satisfaction within the institution.

The research begins with a descriptive phase, wherein it assesses the current levels of satisfaction concerning three primary factors: salary, promotion opportunities, and collegial relationships. Salary satisfaction evaluates employees' perceptions of their compensation relative to their roles and responsibilities, drawing on the



expectancy theory which posits that fair compensation is fundamental to employee motivation and satisfaction (Vroom, 1964). Promotion satisfaction assesses the availability and transparency of career advancement opportunities, aligning with Herzberg's two-factor theory that identifies growth opportunities as key motivators (Herzberg, 1966). Collegial relationships measure the quality of interpersonal interactions and the collaborative environment among staff members, reflecting the social aspect of job satisfaction emphasized in the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964).

Subsequently, the study undertakes a comparative phase, analyzing whether satisfaction levels vary across different groups categorized by years of employment experience and job assignment. This comparative analysis considers whether newer employees differ in their satisfaction levels compared to those with extensive tenure, drawing on the tenure-job satisfaction hypothesis which suggests that job satisfaction may increase with longer employment due to greater familiarity and integration within the organization (Mobley, 1977). Additionally, the study differentiates satisfaction levels among various roles, including administrators, faculty members, academic non-teaching personnel, non-teaching personnel, and general maintenance staff. This categorization acknowledges the diverse experiences and expectations inherent in different job assignments, which may influence satisfaction differently across these groups (Locke, 1976).

The final phase of the research explores the correlations between the identified satisfaction variables and overall job satisfaction. By examining these relationships, the study seeks to identify which factors are most strongly associated with employees' general contentment with their jobs. This correlational analysis is grounded in the broader literature on job satisfaction, which indicates that factors such as compensation, career advancement, and workplace relationships are significant predictors of overall job satisfaction (Spector, 1997; Judge et al., 2001).

Participants in this study include a diverse group of employees at the HEI, encompassing administrators, faculty members, academic non-teaching personnel, non-teaching personnel, and general maintenance staff. To ensure the sample accurately reflects the institution's diverse roles, a stratified proportionate random sampling method is employed. This method involves dividing the population into distinct strata based on job categories and randomly selecting participants from each stratum in proportions that mirror the overall distribution of roles within the HEI (Cochran, 1977). Such an approach enhances the generalizability of the findings, allowing the results to be reflective of the entire employee population.

The survey instrument developed for this study, titled "Salary, Promotion, and Relationships with Colleagues in Relation to Job Engagement of School Personnel," was meticulously designed to capture comprehensive data on the key factors influencing job satisfaction and engagement among the diverse personnel of the HEI. The instrument aligns closely with the study's objectives and theoretical frameworks, ensuring that the collected data effectively addresses the research questions posed. The survey is divided into two main parts: Part I focuses on assessing satisfaction levels related to salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues, while Part II gauges the level of job engagement among employees. Each section employs a 4-point Likert scale, facilitating clear and interpretable responses.

The survey items were crafted based on established theories of job satisfaction and engagement. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory informed the development of questions related to salary and promotion, distinguishing between hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction and motivators that enhance satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Similarly, the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) underpinned the questions on relationships with colleagues and job engagement, respectively. These theoretical underpinnings ensure that the survey measures constructs that are both relevant and significant in understanding job satisfaction and engagement within an educational context.

To establish the validity of the survey instrument, content validity was ensured through a thorough review of existing literature and consultation with subject matter experts in organizational psychology and educational administration. The items were evaluated for their relevance and clarity, ensuring they accurately reflect the constructs being measured and a CVI of 0.99 was the result from the Content Validation of five validators using Lawshe's Content Validity Ratio.

Reliability was assessed through a pilot study conducted with a small subset of the personnel. The internal consistency of the survey sections was measured using Cronbach's alpha, yielding coefficients above the acceptable threshold of 0.70 for all major constructs (0.91 for Salary; 0.75 for Promotion; 0.75 for Relationship with Colleagues; 0.86 for Job Engagement). This indicates that the survey items reliably measure the intended factors of job satisfaction and engagement.

The salary section comprises five items that evaluate employees' perceptions of fairness, competitiveness, and adequacy of their compensation. These items not only assess the current satisfaction levels but also probe the perceived equity of salary structures compared to industry standards and peer earnings, addressing aspects of



Equity Theory (Adams, 1965). The promotion section includes five items that examine the availability, transparency, and fairness of career advancement opportunities. These questions are designed to capture employees' beliefs in the institution's promotion policies and their understanding of the criteria required for advancement, reflecting Locke's (1976) emphasis on clear and attainable career paths.

The relationships with colleagues section consists of five items that assess the quality of interpersonal interactions, supportiveness, and collaboration within the workplace. These items are crucial for understanding the social dynamics that contribute to a positive organizational culture, as highlighted by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). The job engagement section is more extensive, with twenty-five items that measure various dimensions of engagement, including emotional investment, enthusiasm, focus, and sense of belonging. This section is informed by Kahn's (1990) model of personal engagement and self-determination theory, emphasizing the importance of intrinsic motivators such as meaningful work and autonomy.

The survey was administered using a stratified proportionate random sampling method to ensure representation across all employee categories. This methodological choice enhances the generalizability of the findings by reflecting the diverse roles and experiences within the institution (Cochran, 1977). Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, encouraging honest and candid responses, which is crucial for the validity of self-reported data.

One of the primary strengths of the survey instrument is its comprehensive coverage of both extrinsic and intrinsic factors influencing job satisfaction and engagement. By addressing multiple dimensions, the survey captures the complex interplay of various elements that contribute to overall employee well-being and performance.

However, the survey also has some limitations. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce response biases, such as social desirability or recall bias, which could affect the accuracy of the findings. Moreover, while the Likert scale provides clear and structured responses, it may limit the depth of understanding that can be gained from participants' experiences. Future studies could incorporate mixed-methods approaches, including interviews or focus groups, to complement survey data and provide richer contextual insights.

This study leverages a descriptive-comparative-correlational research design to explore the factors influencing job satisfaction. Through stratified proportionate random sampling and a structured survey instrument, the research ensures the reliability and generalizability of its findings. The comprehensive analysis of salary, promotion opportunities, and collegial relationships provides valuable insights for enhancing employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. Ultimately, the study offers a nuanced understanding of the dynamics that drive job satisfaction, contributing to both academic research and practical applications in organizational management.

Results

The study involved surveying 125 employees to evaluate their satisfaction levels concerning salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues. The analysis revealed that employees exhibit a moderate level of satisfaction with their salary, reflected by a mean score of 3.11 (SD = 0.665). This indicates that while employees generally find their compensation acceptable, there is considerable room for improvement to enhance their financial satisfaction and motivation. Promotion opportunities received a slightly higher satisfaction rating, with a mean of 3.36 (SD = 0.616), suggesting that employees perceive some potential for career advancement within the institution, albeit not overwhelmingly positive. Notably, relationships with colleagues achieved the highest satisfaction level, boasting a mean score of 3.65 (SD = 0.390), which categorizes it as "Highly Satisfied."

When dissecting satisfaction based on years of employment experience, the data presents an intriguing uniformity. Employees with shorter tenure (N = 63) reported a mean salary satisfaction of 3.09 (SD = 0.693), while those with longer tenure (N = 62) reported a slightly higher mean of 3.13 (SD = 0.640). Both groups fall under the "Satisfied" category, indicating that the length of service does not significantly alter perceptions of salary adequacy. Promotion satisfaction remained consistent across both groups, with a mean score of 3.35 (SD = 0.636) for shorter-tenured employees and an identical mean for longer-tenured employees. This uniformity suggests that promotion opportunities are perceived similarly regardless of an employee's duration with the institution.

The satisfaction with relationships among colleagues remained consistently high across both experience groups, with a mean score of 3.65 (SD = 0.408) for employees with shorter tenure and 3.65 (SD = 0.374) for those with longer tenure. This consistency underscores the strength of the workplace's social fabric, indicating that interpersonal relationships are a stable and highly valued aspect of the work environment for all employees, irrespective of their tenure.



Further stratification by designation revealed nuanced differences in satisfaction levels. Faculty members ($N = 72$) reported a salary satisfaction mean of 3.13 ($SD = 0.672$), which is slightly higher compared to administrators ($N = 6$) who scored a mean of 3.00 ($SD = 0.876$). Non-teaching staff ($N = 33$) had a mean salary satisfaction of 3.11 ($SD = 0.677$), while general maintenance staff ($N = 14$) reported the lowest mean at 3.04 ($SD = 0.567$). Although all groups fall within the "Satisfied" category, the variation in standard deviations, particularly the higher SD for administrators, suggests a wider range of perceptions regarding salary fairness and adequacy within this subgroup.

Promotion satisfaction across designations exhibited minimal variation. Faculty members reported a mean of 3.39 ($SD = 0.632$), administrators 3.37 ($SD = 0.612$), non-teaching staff 3.27 ($SD = 0.612$), and maintenance staff 3.36 ($SD = 0.593$). These figures indicate a generally consistent perception of promotion opportunities across different roles, with faculty members perceiving slightly better prospects for advancement. Relationships with colleagues remained uniformly high across all designations: faculty members (mean = 3.40, $SD = 0.386$), administrators (mean = 3.35, $SD = 0.413$), non-teaching staff (mean = 3.34, $SD = 0.387$), and maintenance staff (mean = 3.33, $SD = 0.440$). This consistency highlights a universally positive perception of collegial interactions, reinforcing the importance of a supportive and collaborative work environment.

The correlation analysis between salary, promotion opportunities, relationships with colleagues, and job engagement yielded a correlation coefficient (Rho) of 0.026 with a p -value of 0.770. This statistical result indicates that there is no significant correlation between these satisfaction variables and job engagement among the employees surveyed. In other words, variations in salary, promotion opportunities, and collegial relationships do not predict changes in the level of job engagement within this sample.

Analysis and Discussion

The findings from this study offer a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee satisfaction. The moderate satisfaction levels with salary (mean = 3.11) and promotion opportunities (mean = 3.36) suggest that while employees are generally content in these areas, these factors are not robust drivers of high motivation or job satisfaction. Herzberg's two-factor theory categorizes salary as a hygiene factor, essential for preventing dissatisfaction but insufficient for fostering long-term motivation and satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). The moderate satisfaction with salary indicates that employees feel adequately compensated but do not perceive their compensation as a significant source of motivation, highlighting an area where the institution could enhance its compensation structures to boost overall job satisfaction and retention rates.

Promotion opportunities, while slightly more satisfying than salary, also present only moderate satisfaction levels. The uniform satisfaction across different years of experience and designations suggests that promotional pathways may be perceived as limited or not sufficiently transparent within the institution. This aligns with Locke's (1976) assertion that clear and attainable career advancement opportunities are crucial for maintaining job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The lack of enthusiasm for promotion opportunities may indicate a need for the private HEI to develop more structured and visible career progression frameworks, ensuring that employees perceive a clear trajectory for their professional growth within the institution.

Conversely, the high satisfaction with relationships among colleagues (mean = 3.65) underscores the significance of a collaborative and supportive work environment. Strong interpersonal relationships are indicative of a positive organizational culture, which can significantly enhance overall job satisfaction and employee well-being (Blau, 1964). This finding is consistent with the social exchange theory, which posits that positive social interactions at work contribute to increased job satisfaction and organizational loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The consistently high satisfaction in collegial relationships across all employee groups suggests that the private HEI has successfully cultivated a harmonious and cooperative workplace, which is a critical strength of the institution.

Interestingly, the study found no significant correlation between salary, promotion opportunities, relationships with colleagues, and job engagement. This suggests that while these factors contribute to overall job satisfaction, they do not directly influence the deeper psychological engagement employees feel towards their work. Previous research has indicated that job engagement is more strongly related to intrinsic factors such as meaningful work, autonomy, and opportunities for personal growth (Kahn, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 2000). The lack of significant correlation in this study implies that the HEI may need to focus more on these intrinsic motivators to enhance job engagement among its employees.

The consistent satisfaction levels across different years of experience and designations suggest that tenure and role do not significantly impact perceptions of salary and promotion opportunities. This uniformity could indicate that the organization maintains a relatively equitable approach to compensation and career advancement across different employee groups. However, the slightly lower satisfaction among administrators and general maintenance staff regarding salary warrants further investigation. It is possible that compensation structures may not be as competitive or perceived as fair within these specific roles, which could affect long-term retention and job satisfaction (Cameron



& Freeman, 1995). Addressing these disparities is crucial to ensure that all employee groups feel valued and fairly compensated, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction and reducing potential turnover.

Moreover, the high and consistent satisfaction with collegial relationships across all groups highlights a strong foundation of teamwork and mutual support within the institution. Maintaining and fostering these positive relationships can serve as a buffer against potential dissatisfaction in other areas, such as salary and promotion. This reinforces the notion that a supportive work environment is essential for employee well-being and can contribute to higher overall organizational performance (Edmondson, 1999). The robust collegial relationships may also facilitate better communication and collaboration, which are vital for institutional effectiveness and adaptability in a dynamic educational landscape.

The absence of a significant relationship between the measured satisfaction variables and job engagement suggests that other factors may play a more crucial role in influencing how engaged employees feel with their work. Intrinsic motivators such as job design, which includes the meaningfulness, challenge, and autonomy associated with one's role, may be more influential in driving engagement (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Additionally, leadership quality emerged as a potential key factor; leaders who provide clear vision, support, and recognition can significantly enhance employee engagement beyond the impact of salary and promotion opportunities alone (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Furthermore, intrinsic motivators such as autonomy, mastery, and a sense of purpose are critical for fostering engagement. Employees who have the freedom to make decisions about their work, opportunities to develop and refine their skills, and a strong belief that their contributions are meaningful are generally more engaged (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These elements align with self-determination theory, which emphasizes the importance of fulfilling psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness to enhance intrinsic motivation and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

In light of these findings, organizations aiming to enhance job engagement should consider a multifaceted approach that extends beyond traditional factors like compensation and promotion. Fostering a work environment that emphasizes meaningful and challenging work, provides opportunities for personal and professional growth, and cultivates strong, supportive leadership may be more effective in driving deeper levels of employee engagement. This approach can lead to a more motivated and committed workforce, ultimately benefiting both employees and the organization as a whole (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Additionally, the slight discrepancies in satisfaction levels, particularly among non-faculty members, suggest that tailored interventions may be necessary to address the specific needs of different employee groups. For instance, enhancing salary competitiveness for maintenance and administrative staff or providing more transparent and structured promotion pathways could help mitigate any feelings of inequity or stagnation. By addressing these nuanced needs, the private HEI can improve overall job satisfaction and reduce potential turnover, thereby fostering a more stable and engaged workforce.

The findings also indicate that while salary and promotion opportunities are important, they are not sufficient on their own to drive job engagement. This underscores the importance of a holistic approach to employee satisfaction and engagement, where both extrinsic and intrinsic factors are addressed. Future research could explore additional variables such as job autonomy, recognition, professional development opportunities, and organizational support to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what drives job engagement in educational institutions.

Furthermore, the high satisfaction with collegial relationships suggests that interpersonal dynamics play a significant role in the overall work experience. Enhancing team-building activities, promoting collaborative projects, and maintaining a positive organizational culture could further strengthen these relationships and contribute to a more cohesive and motivated workforce. Additionally, leveraging these strong interpersonal relationships can aid in the implementation of organizational changes and initiatives aimed at improving other areas of job satisfaction.

While the HEI excels in fostering strong interpersonal relationships among employees, there are clear opportunities to enhance satisfaction related to salary and promotion opportunities. Addressing these areas could lead to improved job satisfaction and potentially higher employee engagement. Future research should explore additional factors that influence job engagement, such as job design, leadership quality, and opportunities for professional development, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how to cultivate a highly engaged and motivated workforce. Moreover, longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into how these satisfaction factors evolve over time and influence long-term organizational outcomes.

Conclusion:

The findings of this study offer a nuanced understanding of employee satisfaction and engagement within the HEI, revealing both strengths and areas for improvement. Overall, employees report moderate satisfaction with their



salary (mean: 3.11) and promotion opportunities (mean: 3.36). While these satisfaction levels indicate that employees are not dissatisfied, they also do not serve as strong motivators or sources of enthusiasm. This aligns with Herzberg's two-factor theory, which posits that salary and promotion are hygiene factors that prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily enhance motivation or satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). The slight variations in satisfaction across different roles, with faculty members expressing slightly higher satisfaction with salary compared to administrators and general maintenance staff, suggest that compensation and promotion policies may not be uniformly perceived as fair or adequate across all employee groups. Such disparities could lead to feelings of inequity and may impact long-term retention and morale, particularly among non-teaching and general maintenance staff (Cameron & Freeman, 1995).

Conversely, the high satisfaction with relationships among colleagues (mean: 3.65) underscores the institution's strength in fostering a positive, collaborative, and supportive social environment. This finding is consistent with social exchange theory, which emphasizes the role of positive interpersonal relationships in enhancing job satisfaction and organizational loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The low standard deviation in collegial relationships (0.38992) indicates a uniformly positive perception among employees, highlighting effective teamwork, communication, and morale across all designations. Such strong interpersonal dynamics contribute significantly to a cohesive work environment, which can serve as a buffer against potential dissatisfaction in other areas (Edmondson, 1999).

A critical and perhaps unexpected finding of this study is the absence of a statistically significant correlation between traditional satisfaction factors—salary, promotion opportunities, and relationships with colleagues—and job engagement ($Rho = 0.026$, $p = 0.770$). This challenges the conventional assumption that improving compensation, career advancement opportunities, and workplace relationships will directly enhance employee engagement. Instead, it suggests that job engagement may be more strongly influenced by intrinsic factors such as meaningful job design, autonomy, and opportunities for personal and professional growth (Kahn, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 2000). This aligns with self-determination theory, which emphasizes the importance of fulfilling psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness to foster intrinsic motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The variability observed in salary and promotion satisfaction, particularly among non-teaching and general maintenance staff, indicates potential inconsistencies in how compensation and promotion policies are perceived or implemented. Addressing these disparities is crucial to ensure that all employee groups feel valued and fairly treated, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction and reducing the risk of turnover (Cameron & Freeman, 1995). Although these factors do not directly influence job engagement, persistent dissatisfaction could erode overall morale and organizational commitment over time.

In light of these findings, it is evident that the HEI should adopt a more holistic approach to enhancing job engagement. While maintaining and strengthening positive interpersonal relationships remains a key strength, the institution must also focus on intrinsic motivators to drive deeper levels of employee engagement. This could involve redesigning job roles to increase their meaningfulness and challenge, providing greater autonomy, and offering opportunities for skill development and career growth. Additionally, fostering transformational leadership that emphasizes support, recognition, and a clear vision can significantly enhance employee engagement beyond the impact of traditional satisfaction factors (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Moreover, tailored interventions to address the specific needs of different employee groups are essential. Enhancing salary competitiveness for maintenance and administrative staff, along with creating more transparent and structured promotion pathways, can help mitigate feelings of inequity and stagnation. By addressing these nuanced needs, the HEI can improve overall job satisfaction and foster a more stable and engaged workforce (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Future research should explore additional variables that influence job engagement, such as job autonomy, recognition, professional development opportunities, and organizational support, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what drives engagement in educational institutions. Longitudinal studies could also provide deeper insights into how satisfaction factors evolve over time and their long-term impact on organizational outcomes. Ultimately, by integrating both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, the HEU can cultivate a highly engaged and motivated workforce, enhancing both employee well-being and institutional effectiveness.

Recommendations:

To effectively enhance employee engagement and overall job satisfaction, it is imperative for the organization to adopt a strategic approach that transcends traditional factors such as salary and promotion. The findings of this study indicate that while these conventional elements contribute to job satisfaction, they are not the primary drivers of employee engagement. Therefore, a shift towards more intrinsic motivators is essential for cultivating a motivated and committed workforce.



Firstly, organizations should prioritize the improvement of job design. According to Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, designing roles that are meaningful, provide a sense of accomplishment, and offer opportunities for skill development and personal growth can significantly enhance employee motivation and engagement (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). By ensuring that employees perceive their work as valuable and believe that it contributes to a larger organizational purpose, the HEI can foster a more engaged and motivated workforce, even in the absence of substantial financial rewards or frequent promotions. This can be achieved by incorporating elements such as task variety, autonomy, and feedback into job roles, thereby making work more fulfilling and stimulating (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Leadership development is another critical component for enhancing employee engagement. Transformational leadership, which emphasizes clear communication, vision, recognition, and the fostering of a supportive and growth-oriented culture, has been shown to profoundly impact employee engagement (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Organizations should invest in comprehensive leadership training programs that equip leaders with the skills necessary to inspire and support their teams effectively. When employees feel that their leaders are genuinely invested in their professional development and well-being, their commitment and engagement levels tend to increase significantly (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This involves training leaders to provide regular feedback, recognize and reward achievements, and create an inclusive and motivating work environment (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Furthermore, addressing the discrepancies observed in satisfaction with salary and promotion, particularly among non-faculty members, is essential. Conducting a thorough review of compensation and career advancement policies with an emphasis on fairness, transparency, and equity can help identify and rectify any perceived or actual disparities. Research by Cameron and Freeman (1995) highlights the importance of equitable compensation structures in maintaining employee morale and reducing turnover. By ensuring that all employee groups perceive compensation and promotion opportunities as fair and attainable, the HEI can mitigate feelings of inequity and enhance overall job satisfaction. This may involve implementing standardized pay scales, clear criteria for promotions, and transparent communication regarding career advancement opportunities (Cameron & Freeman, 1995).

Building upon the organization's strength in fostering positive workplace relationships is also recommended. High satisfaction with collegial relationships indicates a strong foundation of teamwork, communication, and mutual respect within the workplace. To further enhance these positive dynamics, organizations can implement team-building activities, promote collaborative projects, and encourage open communication channels (Edmondson, 1999). Positive social interactions at work not only contribute to a supportive and cohesive work environment but also act as a buffer against dissatisfaction in other areas, thereby maintaining high levels of employee morale and engagement (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Additionally, fostering an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and all employees feel respected and appreciated can further strengthen workplace relationships (Edmondson, 1999).

Moreover, organizations should consider implementing recognition programs that acknowledge and reward employee achievements and contributions. According to Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, recognition fulfills the psychological need for relatedness and competence, which are crucial for intrinsic motivation and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Regularly acknowledging employees' efforts and accomplishments can reinforce their sense of purpose and belonging within the organization, further enhancing their engagement and commitment. This can be facilitated through formal recognition programs, such as employee of the month awards, as well as informal recognition, such as verbal praise and written commendations (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

In summary, while traditional factors like salary, promotion, and workplace relationships are important components of job satisfaction, they do not solely drive employee engagement. By focusing on intrinsic motivators such as meaningful work, effective leadership, and opportunities for personal and professional growth, alongside ensuring fair and transparent compensation and promotion policies, private higher education institutions can cultivate a highly engaged and motivated workforce. These strategies not only improve job satisfaction but also contribute to the overall effectiveness and success of the organization, creating a work environment where employees feel valued, supported, and connected to the organization's broader mission (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

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