



## **Effect of Demographic Factors on Job Satisfaction of Non-Academic Staff in Universities**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction of non academic staff in universities. The study was conducted in university of Ruhuna; one of the leading national universities in Sri Lanka. The job dissatisfaction of non academic employees was identified by doing pilot study and that was taken as research problem. This research employed deductive approach. This study involves job satisfaction as dependent variable and 9 independent variables. Questionnaire was developed as a research instrument to measure level of satisfaction and level of importance and measurements were done using liker scale. The target population consisted of three main job categories of non academic staff named technical grade, clerical grade, and labourer grade and 354 completed questionnaires were used for data analysis. Study found that civil status and age were the most significant factors affecting the job satisfaction and gender and level of education has no significant affect on job satisfaction. The job satisfaction of unmarried staff was higher than the married staff and job satisfaction of unmarried staff was 9.8 and job satisfaction of married staff was 8.7 out of 20. The younger staff members (age group 20-40) were more satisfied than older staff members (Age group 41-60) and the satisfaction values were 9.5 and 8.6 out of 20 respectively. The unmarried labourers have the highest job satisfaction of 11.1 out of 20 and older technical staff members have the least job satisfaction of 7.98 out of 20. Research also explained the nature and intensity of demographic impact on job satisfaction of non academic employees. Findings of this research are important to policy makers of higher education system.

**Keywords:** *demographic factors; job satisfaction; non academic staff; university*

### **1. Introduction**

The objective of this study was to determine the effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction of non academic employees based on the case study done at University of Ruhuna; one of the leading national universities in Sri Lanka. Job satisfaction refers to whether employees are happy, contented and fulfilling their desires and needs at work.

Human resource management is an important aspect of organizational processes. The strong positive relationship between human resource management practice and job satisfaction provide a wisdom way on how an organization can motivate an employee to work efficiently (Hamdia & Phadett, 2011). According to Tella et.al (2007) absence of job satisfaction is the main reason for reduction in organizational commitment and that leads to shift-over to another job. University is an institution of higher learning that provides manpower needs to advance national development in both the public and private sector. The non teaching staffs of the university are responsible for administrative and financial performance of the institution. The non

academic staffs are directly involved in the implementation of strategic solutions of management and finance and they directly communicate with customers. The non academic staff consisted of number of job categories such as Technical officers, Clerks, Computer application assistants, Lab attendants, Security guards and Labourers etc. They represent deferent levels in organizational hierarchy.

The specific problem for research is the job dissatisfaction of non academic staff. The pilot study was done aiming to pre-test the situation and questionnaire. Data analysis of pilot study found that job satisfaction among these technical, clerical and labourer staff categories were less than 50% and that also gave signals of changing the level of job satisfaction according to different demographic factors. A number of previous research evidences have stated that the demographic factors may affect on job satisfaction (Bas & Ardicin, 2002; Yunki, 1999). Those results were varying significantly according to the job type and the country. Hence it is important to know whether there is any significant effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction of non academic employees in universities. Then the management would be able to formulate strategies accordingly.

Very few studies have been done on job satisfaction of non academic university employees and hardly any in Sri Lanka. The effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction of non academic employees was unidentified and that research gap is investigated in this study. This study was limited to three key non academic job categories among several job categories. That was done based on University of Ruruna; one of the 15 national universities in Sri Lanka.

## 2. Literature Review

### **Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is one of the most complex area facing today's managers when managing their employees (Aziri, 2011). According to the Lise and Timothy 2004; employee surveys, can be used effectively for improving employee attitudes and making organizational changes. Warsi et al (2009) found that job satisfaction, work motivation and organizational commitment were positively correlated each other. Job dissatisfaction also appears to be related to other withdrawal behaviours, including lateness; unionization, grievances, and drug abuse, and decision to retire. (Lise & Timothy, 2004). Moser (1997) has stated that absence of job satisfaction leads to lethargy and reduced organizational commitment.

Locke (1976) described job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is associated with job enrichment, good supervision, and clear roles and met expectation (Mitchell et al, 2001). According to the Luthans (1998) there are three important dimensions to job satisfaction as emotional response to a job situation, how well meet or exceed expectations, and related attitudes about important characteristics of the job (work itself, promotion, opportunities, supervision and co-workers)

There are several theories of job satisfaction. The Herzberg two factor theory of satisfaction is the one of the most famous theory of job satisfaction that proposed a theory about job factors that satisfy & dissatisfy employees. He concluded those factors of company policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions and salary as factors creating job dissatisfaction. He found five factors; achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement as strong determiners of job satisfaction. According to the Affect theory satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. According to the Vooms (1964) job satisfaction is interacted between personal and workplace variables. The theory stated that employees put more effort and perform better when they compensated accordingly.

Jain et. al. (2007) concluded that better organizational climate was positively affected on job satisfaction. Research findings have proved that the positive correlation between job satisfaction and better supervision (Harmon et. al., 2007). According to the research of Jude and Church (2000) nature of the work itself emerged as the most important job facet that affect on employee satisfaction among different facets of their job such as supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, co-workers etc. The study of Hamidia and Phadett

(2011) has concluded that supervision, job training, and pay practices have pay a crucial role to enhance job satisfaction of employees. According to Yunki (1999) autonomy turned out to be the strongest projector of satisfaction. The study of Victor (2008) investigated that employee empowerment (employee believes of involvement in organizational processes and decision making) has a stronger effect over employee satisfaction than the other variables including salaries, working conditions, job security and co-workers. Working in a supportive and friendly, corporate environment was very important for employees (Yesemin, 2011).

### ***Demographic factors and job satisfaction***

The study of employee satisfaction in work groups with different gender composition showed that gender balanced groups has higher level of job satisfaction than those who work in Homogeneous groups (Dail & Terry, 1997). The research done by Jaime & Jamie (2004) has investigated that demographic characteristics of faculty members were negligibly related to overall job satisfaction. Cano and Miller (1992) also found that the teacher's age, years in teaching and degree status were not significantly affected on their job satisfaction. If it was so; the research findings of Bas and Ardicin in 2002 on age and job satisfaction proved the positive correlation with each other.

As said by Yunki (1999) sex was the most important demographic variable in relation to job satisfaction. The study done using 5000 British employees by Andrew (1996) found that job satisfaction was higher for women, older workers and those with lower level of education. According to Gurbuz (2007), level of education of four and five star hotel workers were positively related to their job satisfaction. Meagan et.al (2005) observed the significant relationship between demographic factors of gender and race with job satisfaction of extension agents. According to the findings of Berns in 1989; teacher's job satisfaction was increased with their age and level of education. McNeely (1984) and Miaris (1996) observed higher satisfaction level in female than male. However, Soleman (2005) and Collins and Helen (2013) did not found any significant difference of job satisfaction based on gender differences. In contrast to above results; Olorunsola (2010) found that male administrative officers were more satisfied than female administrative officers in Nigeria universities.

### ***Objectives of the study***

The main objective of the study is to investigate effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction of non academic staff-grades. The specific objectives are,

- Examine effect of age on job satisfaction of non academic staff.
- Examine effect of gender on job satisfaction of non academic staff.
- Examine effect of civil status on job satisfaction of non academic staff.
- Examine effect of level of education on job satisfaction of non academic staff.

### ***Research Questions***

- Is there a significant effect of age differences on job satisfaction?
- Is there a significant effect of gender differences on job satisfaction?
- Is there a significant effect of civil status on job satisfaction?
- Is there a significant effect of levels of education on job satisfaction?

### ***Research Hypothesis***

- H<sub>1</sub>- There is a significant effect of age on job satisfaction of non academic employees.
- H<sub>2</sub>- There is a significant effect of gender on job satisfaction of non academic employees.
- H<sub>3</sub>- There is a significant effect of civil status on job satisfaction of non academic employees.

- H<sub>4</sub> - There is a significant effect of level of education on job satisfaction of non academic employees.

### 3. Methodology

Methodology of this study was designed to investigate effect of demographic factors on job satisfaction. The study population consisted of three main job categories of non academic staff named technical grade, clerical grade, and labourer grade. This study was conducted in university of Ruhuna and data had been collected within July to September in 2012.

Survey approach method was used in this research. Questionnaire was developed as a research instrument and measurements were done using likert scale. Questionnaire was developed taking job satisfaction as dependent variable and 9 independent variables categorized into 54 items. The independent variables were organizational Commitment in career development, relationship with management, compensation and benefits, working climate, rewards and recognition, working conditions, working policy and administration, work itself and autonomy. The questionnaire consisted of 3 parts. The first and second parts of the questionnaire gathered general information and demographic information. The third part of the questionnaire contains statements to measure employee satisfaction and importance of factors.

The questionnaire was self administered and that was handed over to respondents by visiting them. Participants were asked to return them within 5 days and kept boxes to collect returning questionnaires. The second round of the questionnaire collection was done after 2 weeks of first round by visiting each participant. The completions of the questionnaires were done in voluntary basis and participants were not asked to mention their names to maintain the assurance of confidentiality. The total numbers of questionnaires received were 372 and out of those 18 were rejected as they were incomplete. The total sample used for analysis consisted of 354 completed questionnaires and that was 70 % of the total population. The employee satisfaction index was calculated by computing the scores of responses for all factors.

$$\text{Employee satisfaction index} = ESI = \sum_{i=0}^n \bar{I}_i \bar{S}_i$$

$$\bar{I}_i = \text{mean importance} \quad \bar{S}_i = \text{mean satisfaction (Chen et al, 2011)}$$

### 4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using statistical software. Data sets were satisfied the requirement of normal distribution and hence parametric tests such as Pearson correlation, analysis of variance were used in data analysis.

Table 1 : General characteristics of the sample

Item		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	223	62.99
	Female	131	37.01
Age	20-40 yrs	127	35.83
Civil Status	married	300	84.75
	unmarried	54	15.25
Level of Education	Grade 7 pass	4	1.20
	A/L	173	52.11
	Degree	27	8.13
	Master	2	0.60
Job category	Technical grades	73	20.62
	Clerical grades	162	45.76
	Labour grade	119	33.62

Table 1 shows the profile of the sample. In terms of gender 63% (223) were male and 37 % (131) were female. The 85% of the sample represent the married staff and only 15 % were unmarried. The highest percentage of the age distribution represent the staff of age category 41- 60 years (64%) and 36 % represent the 20 -40 age group. These sample distribution percentages were also nearly equal to the population distribution. More than half of the sample (52%) had passed the advance level, 39 % passed only the ordinary level and 8 % of the sample was degree holders. The sample represents the employees of three job categories and it consisted of 45 % clerical staff, 34 % labourer staff and 21 % technical staff.

Reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by Cronbach’s Alpha test. Cronbach’s Alpha was calculated for the factors of satisfaction and importance and value of the Cronbach Alpha for 9 factors was 0.954 for importance and 0.929 for satisfaction. That indicated the high reliability of questionnaire to measure job satisfaction.

**Association between demographic factors and job satisfaction**

Pearson correlations were calculated to describe the relationship between job satisfaction and demographic variables named age, civil status, gender, level of education. According to the results (Table 02) age and civil status were shown significant correlation at the 0.05 level. Gender and level of education were not significantly correlated with the job satisfaction. That concluded the negligible correlation of gender and level of education with the job satisfaction and significant correlation of age and civil status with job satisfaction.

Table 2 : Correlations of demographic factors with job satisfaction

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Civil status</b>	<b>Education</b>
ESI Pearson Correlation	-0.015	-0.117	0.111	-0.033
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.774	0.028	0.037	0.532

**Comparison of job satisfaction based on different demographic situations**

Job satisfaction of unmarried staff was 9.85 out of 20 and job satisfaction of married staff was 8.74 out of 20 and job satisfaction of married and unmarried staff was significantly different at 0.05 level (F=4.403, p=.037).

Job satisfaction of two age groups were 9.47 (20- 40 yrs) and 8.60 (41- 60 yrs) and Job satisfaction between two age groups was also significantly different at 0.05 level (F=4.897, p=.028). Sundar & Ashokkumar (2012) also found that significant effect of different age groups on job satisfaction.

The effect of gender on job satisfaction was negligible (F=.083, p=.774) for these three non academic job categories and job satisfaction of male and female employees were 8.87 and 8.98 out of 20.

Table 3: Job satisfaction according to Job Category \* Gender

<b>Job category</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Technical Grade	Female	7.7960	3.15587
	Male	8.5739	3.12207
	Total	8.3424	3.13357
Clerical Grade	Female	9.4535	3.19703
	Male	8.6704	3.71375
	Total	9.1573	3.41122
Labourer Grade	Female	7.4035	3.33024
	Male	9.1533	4.11016
	Total	8.9999	4.06558

Job satisfactions of male and female in each job category were shown considerable difference (Table 3). Though there was no significant difference in between subject effect of job category and gender (significance level 0.092); clerical staff female employees were more satisfied than male clerks. On the other hand technical staff and labourer staff male employees were more satisfied than female employees of those two job categories (Table 3).

Job satisfaction was not significantly varied when comparing with their Level of education ( $F=1.487$ ,  $p=.218$ ). However highest satisfied people were in least educated group. Job satisfaction of grade 7 passed employees were 10.06 out of 20 and job satisfaction of GCE (A/L) and GCE (O/L) passed employees were 8.97 and 8.56 out of 20. The job satisfaction of older technical and labourer staff were considerably lower than young staff. (Table 4). However old and young clerical staffs were having nearly equal level of satisfaction (Table 4).

Table 4: Job satisfaction according to Job Category \* Age

Job category	Age	Mean	Std. Deviation
Technical Grade	20-40 yrs	9.1815	2.4865
	41-60yrs	7.9868	3.32584
	Total	8.3424	3.13357
Clerical Grade	20-40 yrs	9.0147	3.01257
	41-60yrs	9.2207	3.58564
	Total	9.1573	3.41122
Labourer Grade	20-40 yrs	10.0155	4.01407
	41-60yrs	8.0858	3.92289
	Total	8.9999	4.06558

## 5. Conclusion

The demographic factors of age and civil status were significantly affected on job satisfaction of non academic employees. That proved the hypothesis 1 ( $H_1$ ) and hypothesis 3 ( $H_3$ ). The young and unmarried staffs were more satisfied than old and married staff. Demographic factors of gender and level of education were not shown significant affect on job satisfaction of non academic employees. That rejected the hypothesis 2 ( $H_2$ ) and hypothesis 4 ( $H_4$ ).

Interacted effect of age and job category showed relatively high satisfaction (9.18 out of 20) of young technical staff members while older group of technical staff had the least satisfaction (7.98). Hence it is necessary to give priory for take steps to improve job satisfaction of senior technical staff members. On the other hand female technical staff members were less satisfied (7.79) than male technical staff members (8.57). That was indicated the more suitability of technical jobs in universities for male than to female.

Although young and old clerical staff had nearly equal level of job satisfaction; in labourer grades young males were more satisfied than older labourers. Human resource managers need to concern more about carrier needs of older labourers. They have devoted their energy for long years for the sake of the institution. That is also an important point to consider that male labourers were more satisfied than females. That indicates the suitability of labourer jobs for males than for females in universities.

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