

Influencing Factors and Strategies for Improving University Teachers' Job Satisfaction

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Abstract: With the rapid development of national higher education, the importance of university teachers' job satisfaction has become increasingly prominent. This paper discusses the previous research results on influencing factors and strategies to improve the job satisfaction of university teachers. Based on the analysis of the concept of job satisfaction in universities this paper summarizes the current situation of the job satisfaction of university teachers, and summarizes its influencing factors and existing intervention measures. For the administrators of universities to improve the existing institutions of universities, all departments should find a good focus in terms of factors and strategies and to improve the job satisfaction of university teachers.

Keywords: University Education; University Teachers; Job Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Job satisfaction first appeared in the Hawthorne Experiment of Mayo et al. (1927-1932). They believe that job satisfaction is a psychological state that encourages morale and has a positive impact on labor productivity and enthusiasm, and the key factor affecting job satisfaction is mainly the internal emotional factors of workers (Dong, 2022). Then American scholar Hoppock put forward the concept of "job satisfaction" in a paper titled "Job Satisfaction" in 1935. In his opinion, job satisfaction refers to employees' physiological and psychological satisfaction with external inspection environmental factors, and it is employees' subjective response to external working environment. Locke defined job satisfaction as the pleasant emotional state generated by the evaluation of one's work or work experience (Wilfried, 2023). Nowadays, scholars generally believe that job satisfaction is a psychological state in which people positively reflect on the work itself, salary, promotion, work pressure, interpersonal relationship with leaders and colleagues, etc. (Lu, 2022; Dong, 2022).

After job satisfaction was proposed, it was widely used in human resource management of enterprises and institutions at first. Later, the education circle also gradually paid attention to this term, and combined pedagogy and psychology, as well as teachers' professional characteristics for further exploration. According to the research of Usop and Askandar (2013) "Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to be creative, innovative, and take the initiative to seek breakthroughs, thus improving their work performance". Strong science and technology are the key to China's development. University and university teachers are the core strength to train talents. Their work satisfaction directly affects their work enthusiasm and innovation ability. Teacher job satisfaction is the stability of teacher team (Harris, 1992) and organizational commitment (Shin & Reyes, 1991; Cushman, 1992) as one of the important influencing factors (Clark, R. & Keating, W. F, 1995). Shin and Reyes (1991; see also Reyes & Reyes, 1995) used longitudinal career ladder data to investigate the causal relationship between school organizational commitment and job satisfaction of 854 teachers, and found that "commitment is different from

satisfaction, and satisfaction has greater causal advantage than commitment". Building a team of teachers with strong professional ability, high overall quality, high innovation and high stability is a great development plan for our country. Only by providing enough social support to university teachers and improving their job satisfaction can the quality of higher education be improved and the higher education in China develop in a healthy direction (Lu Jing & Liu Xu, 2022, p.1). Thus, this paper discusses past research studies on the influencing factors and strategies for improving university teachers' job satisfaction.

2. Analysis on Influencing Factors of University Teachers' Job Satisfaction

With the change of times, the job satisfaction of university teachers presents a diversified and complicated trend. Comprehensive research data shows that factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction can be analyzed from the following dimensions.

2.1. Factors Affecting Teachers' Job Satisfaction

2.1.1. The Influence of Gender on Job Satisfaction

Zhou Haobo and Li Lingxiao (2019) conducted a qualitative analysis on the interview data of 18 university teachers and found that female teachers' job satisfaction is generally higher than that of male teachers. Clark (1997) research on the relationship between gender and job satisfaction also put forward that "women have higher job satisfaction than men". Yang (2006) pointed out in her research that the job satisfaction of female teachers is generally significantly higher than that of male teachers, and there is a gender difference in the job satisfaction of university teachers.

2.1.2. The Effect of Marital Status on Job Satisfaction

Late-life studies focused on unmarried and married teachers. New unmarried teachers work pressure is generally larger, unmarried young teachers face new employment, strange working environment, scientific research pressure and other problems, but the overall show a positive attitude,

married teachers in addition to teaching and research work but also take into account the family, limited energy, work enthusiasm and energy is obviously insufficient, and long working years will inevitably appear burnout problem, They have more negative feelings about long-standing problems in school that cannot be solved immediately (Lu, 2022).

2.1.3. The Influence of Age on Job Satisfaction.

Huang (2022) found that "teachers under 30 years old have the highest satisfaction, followed by those between 30 and 39 years old, those between 40 and 49 years old have the lowest satisfaction, and those above 50 years old will have higher job satisfaction". Wei (2008) pointed out that "teachers' job satisfaction basically increases with the growth of age", and young teachers are more inclined to consult older teachers, which to some extent improves the sense of achievement and satisfaction of older teachers. At the same time, with the growth of age and promotion of positions, elderly teachers will gain more economic income, the enrichment of material life will bring spiritual life satisfaction, and improve job satisfaction.

2.1.4. The Impact of Educational Background on Job Satisfaction.

On the whole, previous studies show that university teachers with bachelor's and doctoral degrees have higher job satisfaction, while those with master's degrees have lower job satisfaction. Lu Jing (2022) proposed that "Teachers with domestic doctoral degrees in universities are often paid more and have higher job satisfaction". Teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees will face the need to upgrade their education level to meet the job requirements. However, for some teachers who have worked for many years, learning is difficult, and they have lost their interest and motivation in learning, which is also one of the factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction. Compared with the domestic doctoral degree, the job satisfaction of university teachers with foreign diplomas is lower. Zhou Mohan conducted a questionnaire survey on 447 teachers with foreign diplomas from 21 universities in Shanghai and found that "Teachers with foreign diplomas are generally not satisfied with the progress of scientific research after returning to China, and professional title and discipline factors have a significant impact on the satisfaction of scientific research progress" (Zhou Mohan, 2019). Doctors returning from abroad tend to be younger. They have a higher degree of self-satisfaction, research and construction teams have higher requirements. But in reality, often all conditions cannot meet their requirements, which will reduce the job satisfaction of overseas teachers (Lu,2022).

2.1.5. Influence of Professional Title on Teachers' Satisfaction.

For universities, teachers have relatively few promotion opportunities in school administration, and the promotion of teachers is mainly reflected in the promotion of professional titles (Yang,2022). Teachers with senior titles in universities often have access to more resources and better platforms. At the same time, teachers with senior titles can better feel the sense of honor and satisfaction brought by the teaching profession (Lu,2022). Emotional satisfaction drives job satisfaction.

2.2. Organizational Commitment Affects Job Satisfaction

The key of higher education is to improve teaching quality.

Teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment are important factors affecting teaching quality. Organizational commitment (OC) is an important concept in organizational behavior and human resource management, but the attention to organizational commitment of university teachers only started in the past two decades (LAN Chunhong, 2014). Shani Jay said, "Organizational commitment helps organizations better execute and achieve their goals, because their employees feel connected to the organization" (Shani Jay,2023). Organizational commitment is an individual's recognition and trust of the goals and values of the organization to which he belongs, and this emotion will produce a positive internal tendency to the organization. Organizational commitment is positively correlated with job satisfaction. High organizational commitment can make individuals empathize with the organization, generate subjective well-being, and guide job satisfaction.

2.3. School Policies and Management Affect Teachers' Job Satisfaction.

Policy and system are the foundation of school establishment and management, which mainly includes policy formulation, fair execution, system improvement and so on. As senior intellectuals, university teachers have a high sense of participation, autonomy and autonomy in their work. The leadership and management style of the school will affect the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of university teachers, and then affect their job satisfaction. "No chance to express opinions on school and work", no chance to "participate in major decisions of the school", and unable to "fully express their own opinions and views" are the most important aspects of teachers' dissatisfaction with leadership and management in universities (Li Liping and Huang Qiaoxiang,2004).

2.4. Salary Affects Job Satisfaction

Salary satisfaction is a person's subjective feeling, which mainly refers to the degree of satisfaction an individual achieves when he or she reaches the expected reward (Chen Junzhu, 2018). Some studies have pointed out that there is a direct and clear positive correlation between salary and welfare satisfaction and university teachers' job satisfaction (Hu Gaoxi and Tong Zhe, 2016). Higher wages not only increase subjective well-being, but also reduce the production of negative emotions (Bruno S.Frey&Alois Stutzer.2002).

Remuneration covers salary, allowance and so on, which is most directly close to teachers' life. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, although these needs are the minimum needs of individuals to maintain life and ensure safety, they are the basis for individuals to obtain higher needs. Only when these material needs are met can teachers' higher-level needs be stimulated. A scientific, reasonable and fair salary system can motivate teachers to make continuous progress and contribute more to the school.

3. Measures to Improve the Job Satisfaction of University Teachers

3.1. Strengthen Social Support

Social support refers to the psychological state obtained by individuals through social connections to relieve tension, reduce psychological stress response, and gradually enhance social adaptability (Chen Guodian & Li Yu, 2011). Social support includes objective social support, subjective social support, material social support and spiritual social support.

Yang Xingxing pointed out that "social support will have an impact on individual work stress and job satisfaction" [Wen Wu Sen.2000]. In her research on teachers' social support in mainland China, Qiao Hong found that there was a significant positive correlation between teachers' mental health and social support [Qiao Hong, 2011], and social support played an intermediary role in the influence of work stress on job satisfaction. Faced with the same work pressure, university teachers with higher social support have less pressure and higher job satisfaction (He Tengfei, 2015).

3.2. Meet the Material and Emotional Needs of University Teachers

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, human needs develop from the most basic low-level needs to higher level needs. Research shows that economic income and living conditions are important factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction (Zhu Xinjian & Zhuo Yizhou, 2005; Kwon, Hee-jin, 2016). In the context of universities, salary system is the key to stimulate the innovation vitality of universities (Cao Yingying, 2022). "It is recommended that remuneration should be linked to individual and team performance and that remuneration strategies should encourage and reward excellence and address underperformance" (Tahira Nazir& Saif-ur-Rehman Khan). Stimulating the enthusiasm and creativity of university teachers through a reasonable salary system is a necessary measure to promote the construction of universities (Zhao Hengping, Lei Weiping, 2010). Through stratified random sampling and questionnaire survey results, Bushra Arif and Yasir AftabFarooqi concluded that "there is a significant positive correlation between university teachers' work-life balance and job satisfaction" (Bushra Arif & Yasir AftabFarooqi, 2014). Schools should try their best to provide teachers with good salary and teaching and research environment. From the humanistic feeling, we should try to solve the problem of teachers' families. Family stability can provide dynamic support for teachers' positive progress and dedication to the school, which has an important promoting role. When the material and spiritual conditions are satisfied, the satisfaction of university teachers to their work will be improved.

3.3. Improve the Management System of Universities and Respect Teachers' Rights

System innovation is an important condition for improving the core competitiveness of university teachers (Zhao Hengping, Lei Weiping, 2010). In order to meet the needs of talent training in universities and universities, various positions should be set up according to the principle of "people should be used for their own purposes", with classified guidance, scientific evaluation, enhanced incentives and dynamic adjustment (Zhong Qian, 2018). Actively guide and encourage teachers to combine their own advantages, stimulate their own potential, reasonable positioning, to achieve the organic combination of university personnel training and personal development of teachers. We will improve the management and evaluation system of universities, mobilize teachers' enthusiasm in teaching and scientific research, and improve job satisfaction.

University teachers have higher spiritual pursuit and strong demand for respect. Guaranteeing teachers' democratic rights and respecting their rights to subsistence and development can effectively improve teachers' subjective well-being and job satisfaction. Strengthen the democratic management of

schools, attach importance to the status of teachers in schools, meet the requirements of teachers being respected and having a sense of belonging, implement people-oriented management, so that teachers can teach and research in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, experience a sense of pleasure, and ultimately improve job satisfaction.

3.4. Strengthen Teacher Training and Broaden Teachers' Horizons

As knowledge workers, teachers generally attach great importance to training and learning opportunities to improve their own inner cultivation, so as to better carry out teaching and research work (Yang, 2006). Through the establishment of a scientific training system, the school strategy can achieve the guarantee of needed talents, and the teachers' own work skills are constantly growing and improving (Zhang Youxiang & Weng Changwu, 2018). Yuan Ling et al. (2006) found in their research that teachers in universities and universities have low satisfaction in salary, further study and promotion (Yuan Ling, Xie Chi, Xie Faishai, 2006). Schools should strengthen teacher training, so that teachers can constantly accept and supplement new knowledge, participate more in high-level academic exchanges, broaden their minds, broaden their horizons, and carry out teaching work more confidently (Zhu Zhaohui, 2019).

3.5. Establish Good Interpersonal Relationship

Workplace interpersonal communication exists in any career field and is an indispensable part of modern working life (Liu Weifeng, Chen Yunsong, Bian Yanjie, 2016). Good interpersonal relationships can make people happy at work. Harmonious working atmosphere can not only increase the cohesion of the team, but also improve the work enthusiasm of teachers. Although university teachers are relatively independent in their work, they increasingly emphasize the cooperation of many people in their scientific research work. A good colleague relationship can improve the sense of pleasure and the degree of immersion in work.

3.6. Build a Green Campus and Optimize the Working Culture Environment.

Campus work environment can be divided into hardware environment and software environment. Hardware environment refers to campus construction. School is a place for teachers to work, rest and communicate. Teachers spend most of their time on campus every day, so campus construction is very important (Duan Yanling, & Zhang Mengqi, 2018). Many universities promote campus construction to the height of attracting talents, "the cultural environment of universities is an important way to realize the purpose of running a school and give full play to the function of teaching and educating people." Good cultural environment is an effective means to improve the comprehensive quality and core competitiveness of university teachers (Zhang Junwei. 2005).

The software environment refers to the academic atmosphere. The academic atmosphere of a school determines its scientific research results and teaching quality. A good academic atmosphere can stimulate teachers' enthusiasm for scientific research and achieve better results. Academic atmosphere is an important factor affecting the job satisfaction of teachers in universities (Yang,2006).

4. Conclusion

This paper discusses past research studies on the influencing factors and strategies for improving university teachers' job satisfaction. From the perspective of personal factors, organizational commitment, school policies and management, salary and other factors affecting the job satisfaction of university teachers are summarized, and specific suggestions are summarized from the aspects of social support, material and emotional support, management policies, teacher training, interpersonal relations and campus cultural environment.

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