Does the Academics Member Remuneration Impact Job Satisfaction of Academic Faculty Members of state Universities in Sri Lanka?

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Does the Academics Member Remuneration Impact Job Satisfaction of Academic Faculty Members of state Universities in Sri Lanka?

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine whether the remuneration of the state university lectures had an impact on their overall job satisfaction and to assess the overall level of job satisfaction of university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka. A quantitative approach was employed in this study, and a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from university lectures in fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka. Out of fifteen state universities, a representative sample based on a multi-stage stratified random sampling method was used, where 500 questionnaires were distributed and 423 questionnaires deemed usable for further analysis were identified. In terms of findings, the multiple regression analysis performed to test the research hypothesis on the relationship between remuneration and overall job satisfaction indicated that the factor 'remuneration' is a significant positive factor affecting the overall lectures job satisfaction of academics in Sri Lankan state universities. Further, in terms of the overall job satisfaction of academic staff members of Sri Lankan state universities, the median and mean values of were found to be 3.95 and 3.93 (in a 1-5 Likert scale), respectively, and in addition, the mean value was also found to be significantly higher than the neural value 3 (based on one-sample t-test). This means that the university lectures are generally satisfied with their jobs in the Sri Lankan context.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, State Universities in Sri Lanka, University lectures, Remuneration.

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Background of the Study

Job satisfaction is of major interest to the field of organizational behavior and the practice of human resource management. Alniacik, Akcin, and Erat (2012) Gurinder and Gursharan (2010) point out that job satisfaction "is the positive emotional response to the job situation resulting from attaining what the employee wants from their job". Job satisfaction is vital for personal well-being and organizational effectiveness (Lim, 2008). Job satisfaction has been a significant contemporary issue (Akpofure et al., 2006). An employee who is satisfied with his job will perform his duties well and be committed to his job, and subsequently to his organization. Thus, it is of utmost importance for employers to know the factors that can affect their employees' job satisfaction level since it can affect the performance of the organization as well; this is especially true in the university sector.

The excellence of a university is directly related to the excellence of its faculty members; higher education is the foundation for nearly all professional careers. Higher education plays an important role in the socio-economic development of a country. Due to the fast pace of growing technology and changing environment, today countries such as Sri Lanka are concerned about to be more adaptable to these changing trends, helping them to face the challenges of the globalized world.

It should be noted that education is considered as the most important aspect of everyone's life. Especially higher education plays a vital role in the deployment of the country. And also the excellence of a university is directly related to the excellence of its faculty members; higher education is the foundation for nearly all professional careers. Higher education plays an important role in the socio-economic development of a country. A quality higher education has now become an integral part of the development and prosperity of a country. Many countries are paying greater attention to delivering their higher education, bringing structural and technological reforms, whilst efficiently utilizing their intellectual resources consistently to the needs of higher education, thus, becoming the leading giants in this globalized world. A country that has been equipped and highly supported by quality institutions that are enriched with a creative, talented pool of academic staff will be the market leader in innovations. To have this particular aspect of quality education and creative academic staff, job satisfaction among faculty members is the key and therefore requires its various dimensions to be studied, as satisfaction contributes highly to the productivity and performance of individuals, which in turn will benefit the organization. Due to these observations, (Küskü, 2003) argues that employee satisfaction in higher educational establishments can be considered as an immensely important factor. The main reason for such enhanced attention is since institutions of higher education have become highly labor-intensive. Having established the importance of job satisfaction, many research studies have indicated that several factors contribute to the job satisfaction among university faculty members that include, work environment, work content, work autonomy, development, financial rewards, promotion, supervision, communication, co-workers, workload, etc. However, the authors of this study do not observe sufficient studies performed on the relationship between remuneration and university faculty members' job satisfaction particularly in the context of developing countries as Sri Lanka and observe it as a research gap that needs to be addressed. Accordingly, the present research study mainly focuses on remuneration as a significant factor that contributes to the job satisfaction of university lectures in state universities in Sri Lanka.

Research Questions and Objectives

Based on an above research problem, there are two main research questions addressed in this study are; first, what is the association between remuneration and job satisfaction, and the second, what is the level of the overall level of job satisfaction, of university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, there are two main objectives of this research study are; first objective is to investigate the impact of remuneration on job satisfaction of university faculty members of state universities in Sri Lanka; and then, the second research objective is to assess the degree of the overall level of job satisfaction of the university lectures of state universities in the Sri Lankan context. Apart from these main objectives, this study also attempts to examine the impact of selected demographic factors on the level of job satisfaction of university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka. This research paper is structured as follows: Section 2 discusses the literature about the association between remuneration and job satisfaction and develops the related hypothesis proposed to be tested in this study. Section 3 discusses the methodology in testing this proposed hypothesis and other methodological dimensions of the study. Section 4 presents the data analysis and findings, while the final section provides the related conclusions derived under this study.

Literature Review

Sri Lankan Context

In the present Sri Lankan context, there are 15 state universities with approximately 91,063 internal students and more than 5,700 lectures (University Grants Commission, 2017). These universities are under the control of the Ministry of Higher Education, which was established in March 1978, and is governed by the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. According to Samaranayake, (2010), the University Grants Commission (UGC) serves as a buffer between the universities and the government. The main functions of the UGC include planning and coordinating in keeping with national policy, regulation

of administration, maintenance of academic standards, selecting of students for state universities, and allocating public funds to higher educational institutions and control of expenditure.

Job Satisfaction and Remuneration
Job Satisfaction
Alniacik, Akcin, and Erat (2012) define job satisfaction as the result of an employees' perception of how well their job provides those things they view as important. Further, Akpofure et al. (2006) found that job satisfaction can be considered as an overall feeling about an individual's job or the specific dimensions of the job. Furthermore, Lim (2008) indicated job satisfaction is vital for personal well-being and organizational effectiveness. Job satisfaction can be understood as the way employees feel about their jobs and the different aspects of their jobs. Most of the extant literature explains employee job satisfaction as a function of the employee's features and the features of the job itself (Santhapparaj & Alam, 2005b).

Remuneration
According to Gerber et al. (2003), individuals perceive the remuneration they obtain as a signal of worth to their respective organization. However, Bergh and Theron (2001) argue that employees should be remunerated according to the amount of effort they put into their jobs to create a sense of job satisfaction. Based on several extant research findings, between employee salary and the degree of satisfaction with a job, a constructive association has been regularly found. Souza-Poza and Souza-Poza (2000) found that salary could be considered as a forecasting variable for job satisfaction. Similarly, Miller (1980) indicated that significant worker rewards result in higher degrees of employee satisfaction, as well as enhanced performance. Saba (2011) identified pay as the most determinant factors of job satisfaction while examining the job satisfaction of Bhawalpur's teachers. Several research findings (Berg, 2002a, 2002b; Scott, Stone, & Dinham, 2001; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006) assert that employee salary is one of the main variables that cause different levels of job satisfaction in the academic environments in developed countries of the world. Hamermesh (2001) indicates that changes in wages have an impact on job satisfaction. Layard (2003); (Layard, 2006) and Clark (2005) indicated that despite rising wages there are stagnant levels in job satisfaction. (Clark & Oswald, 1996) support the idea that a comparison of income, is significantly correlated with the reported levels of job satisfaction

Santhapparaj & Alam, (2005a) identified that pay has a positive and significant effect on faculty job satisfaction. Frye (2004) found the link between salary and job satisfaction has a constructive relationship between them. Tessema and Soeters (2006) identified a positive relationship between compensation practices and job satisfaction in developing countries. According to a Bangladeshi study (Tasnim, 2006), a lower salary does not facilitate job satisfaction as it is not consistent with socio-economic conditions. Nguyen, Taylor, and Bradley (2003) identified during the tests in their study that the relationship between pay and job satisfaction very much depended on income.

In other research conducted at the Universities of Rawalpindi and the Islamabad region (Bilal, 2012) the studies found a strong interrelation between salary and job satisfaction among university lecturers. Heywood and Wei (2006) found that employees are very much concerned about the payment schemes of their organizations; periodical and regular salary increments, allowances, bonuses, fringe benefits and other compensation reviews within a specific period helps keep morale high and results in greater motivation and contribution to job satisfaction (Danish & Usman, 2010b). Shahzad et al. (2010a) found a positive impact on faculty compensation on faculty job satisfaction. Shields and Price (2002) identified that income is important for worker's "satisfaction with pay" and for "overall job satisfaction". Chimanikire et al. (2007) argued that academicians in institutions at the tertiary level are not satisfied or committed to their job, this is because of inadequate salaries, allowances, and other incentives.

Furthermore, Brainard (2005) argued that pay and benefits are highly associated with job satisfaction. Kinaki (2000) found that academic staff working in public sector organizations are less satisfied with their pay compared with academic staffs working in private sector organizations.

However, Belfield and Harris (2002) found no evidence that job satisfaction depends on income among those who are working in higher educational institutions. Strydom (2011b) found that remuneration plays a significant function in job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of university academicians. Similarly, Maniram (2007) found that remuneration is one of the major factors that have a major impact on job dissatisfaction. However, Awang and Ahmed (2010) argued that remuneration has a very low correlation with job satisfaction compared to other factors. However, Mustapha (2013) argued that there is quite a low correlation between remuneration and an academic faculty member's job satisfaction. Accordingly, the above discussion indicates that there is mixed evidence regarding the association between remuneration and job satisfaction of the faculty members. Therefore, considering the information discussed, the following hypothesis is developed and proposed to be tested in this study:

H1: Remuneration is positively associated with job satisfaction of state university lectures of Sri Lanka.

Methodology

The research methodology is defined as the philosophical framework that provides guidance to the research activity and also sets the basis as the paradigm or tradition in which the problem of the research is formulated (Henning, Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). In this research, a quantitative research approach used as an association is examined, which is based on the dominant extant literature (Amarasena et al., 2015).

Population and Sample

In this study, the population is considered to be all university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka. There are fifteen state universities under the University Grant Commission in Sri Lanka (University Grants Commission, 2017). The total university lectures in the accessible population are nearly 5,700 (University Grants Commission, 2017) in the all-state universities in Sri Lanka.

The sample consisted of male and female university faculty members, professors, senior lecturers and lecturers of all state universities in Sri Lanka. The multi-stage stratified random sampling method was used to select respondents for the study, which consisted of responses from 423 university lectures out of 5,700 lectures in Sri Lanka.

Data Collection

Primary and secondary sources of data are used in this study. As a primary data collection tool, the questionnaire-method was used for this study. The structured questionnaire was developed based on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967). Secondary data was collected from the University Grants Commission (UGC), University Administration units as well as using books, specials reports, and annual reports, etc.

Data Analysis Methods

In this study, quantitative analytical techniques are used to describe and explore the association between the remuneration and job satisfaction of university lectures in Sri Lanka. In terms of the data analysis strategy, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis are proposed and used in describing the data as well as testing the research hypothesis indicated in Section 2. The model, which is constructed, based on the related extant literature that is proposed to be tested using the multiple linear regression analysis, is as follows:

$$OS=\alpha+\beta\_1 RM+\beta\_2 ControlVars+\beta\_3 Demo Vars+\varepsilon \textbf{ (Model 1)}$$

Where: OS: Overall job satisfaction of academic staff members of state universities. RM: Remuneration of university lectures of state universities. Control Vars: Work Environment and Workload of academic staff members of state universities (based on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967)). Demo Varrs: Current Working Status, Teaching Experience, Gender, Age, the Highest level of education, Monthly Salary, and Marital Status of university faculty members of state universities. The dummy version of these variables will be used. The next section indicates the findings that are derived by adopting the methodology suggested in this section.

Findings and Discussion

Validity and Reliability

There are 8 items (sub-questions) in the remuneration (RM) construct. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the remuneration construct was .842, meaning that the measured items have high internal reliability and consistency. The inter-item correlation values for remuneration (RM) items were above .3, thus all the items (except item 7) were consistent with the construct (Hair et al., 1998). There are 7 items in the construct. The inter-item correlation values are shown in Table 1.
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Table 1
Inter-item Correlation Values for Items in Remuneration

	RM1	RM2	RM3	RM4	RM5	RM6	RM7	RM8
RM1	-							
RM2	.342	-						
RM3	.532	.360	-					
RM4	.620	.278	.509	-				
RM5	.497	.251	.464	.545	-			
RM6	.535	.365	.437	.505	.359	-		
RM7	.178	.145	.123	.200	.083	.209	-	
RM8	.456	.259	.419	.479	.390	.476	.149	-

(Source: 'Researcher 's Field Survey Report, 2015)

In table 1, the highest correlation is observed for item RM7, this is less than 0.3. Hence, item RM 7 was dropped. In FA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.887, which is considered to be good. A single factor was extracted that explained 51.95% of the variance in the 7 items. Therefore, RM which is considered to be acceptable. Accordingly, the factor analysis performed and a single factor was extracted that explained 52% of the variance in these 7 items (not tabulated). Thus, only one item needed to be dropped at this stage and the construct validity is ensured. Therefore, the mean for these seven items was computed and saved as the variable: Remuneration (RM) to be used in further analysis. As noted in Table 1 earlier, the inter-item correlation values for remuneration trait items were above .3, and thus all items were consistent with the construct (Hair et al., 1998). Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the remuneration construct was .842 reflecting that the measured items have high internal reliability and consistency.

Descriptive Statistics

In this study, responses were obtained from fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka. As indicated under the methodology section of the paper, the population of academic staff members is 5,700 approximately in Sri Lanka all state universities (University Grants Commission, 2017), and 423 academic faculty staff members were selected as the sample. As indicated in Table 2 below, out of these 423 academic members, 51% were males and the rest of them (49%) were females.

Table 2: Demographic Analysis

Demographic Characteristic	Category	N	%
Current Working Status	Professor	45	10.6
	Senior Lecturer	231	54.6
	Lecturer	147	34.8
	Total	**423**	**100**
Teaching Experience of the Respondents	Less than 5 Years	113	26.7
	$5 \leq$ Years < 10	100	23.6
	$10 \leq$ Years < 15	84	19.9
	$15 \leq$ Years < 20	50	11.8
	$20 \leq$ Years < 25	37	8.7
	Over 25 years	39	9.2
	Total	**423**	**100**
Gender of the Respondents	Male	216	51.1
	Female	207	48.9
	Total	**423**	**100**
Age of the Respondents	Less than 30 years	59	13.9
	$30 \leq$ Years < 40	161	38.1
	$40 \leq$ Years < 50	110	26.0
	$50 \leq$ Years < 60	**77**	18.2
	Over 60 years	16	3.8
	Total	**423**	**100**
Highest Level of Education of the Respondents	Bachelor's Degree	66	15.6
	Master's Degree	138	32.6
	Doctoral Degree	186	44.0
	Other	33	7.8
	Total	**423**	**100**
Monthly Salary of the Respondents	Less than Rs. 35000	13	3.1
	$35000 \leq$ RS < 50000	22	5.2
	$50000 \leq$ RS < 65000	51	12.1
	$65000 \leq$ RS < 80000	75	17.7
	$80000 \leq$ RS < 95000	65	15.4
	More than RS 95000	197	46.6
	Total	**423**	**100**
Marital Status of the Respondents	Married	354	83.6
	Unmarried	62	14.7
	Divorced/Widowed	7	1.7
	Total	**423**	**100**
Number of Children of the Respondents	None	129	30,5
	One	115	27.2
	Two	141	33.3
	Three	35	8.3
	Four	3	0.7
	Five	0	0
	Total	**423**	**100**

(Source: 'Researcher 's Field Survey Report, 2015)

Most of the respondents (55%) were senior lecturers, while in terms of teaching experience, the majority (70%) have at least 15 years teaching of experience. In terms of gender, it is observed that there is a similar proportionate between males and female academics in the selected sample. The majority (77%) of respondents have either a Masters or a Doctorate in terms of their highest academic qualifications. Further, a majority of respondents (47%) had a monthly salary of more than Rs. 95,000. In terms of marital status, out of total respondents, 84% were married.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on the overall level of Job Satisfaction (OS) of university lectures

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean°	SD	Percentiles			Skewness	Kurtosis
						25	50	75		
OS	423	3	5	3.93***	.568	3.57	3.95	4.33	-.239	-.635

a note: The one-sample t-test indicates whether the mean value (M=3.93) is statistically significantly different from the neural value of 3 on the Likert scale (1-5).
 *p< .05, ** p< .01, ***p< .00
(Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2015)

In Table 3 above, the descriptive statistics of the overall job satisfaction of the academic staff members in Sri Lankan state university is depicted. Based on the results indicated in this table, the mean overall job satisfaction is 3.93 and the median value is 3.95 (50th percentile) on a 1-5 Likert scale. Further, the one-sample t-test indicates that the mean value, 3.93 is statistically significantly higher than the neutral value of 3 (i.e., the neutral value is 3 in the Likert scale of 1-5). Accordingly, these results indicate that the academic members, in general, are quite satisfied with their job.

Results from Multiple Regression Analysis
The purpose of multiple linear regression analysis is to help to understand the prediction between more than two quantitative variables. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) highlighted the multiple linear regression analysis presents a method of objectively examining the extent and the nature of the association between the predictor variables and the outcome variable. As proposed under Model 1 in the methodology section of this study (section 3), a multiple linear regression analysis is used to evaluate how well the construct: Remuneration (RM) predicted the overall job satisfaction of the university lectures in the Sri Lankan state universities.

Table 4: The Results from Regression Analysis
Model 1
(Dependent Variable: Overall Job Satisfaction)

	Coefficient	*Std. Error*	*t-value*	Collinearity Diagnostics	
				Tolerance	VIF
Work Environment	.254***	.039	6.448	.781	1.280
Remuneration	.060*	.035	1.693	.796	1.257
Work Load	.341***	.048	7.065	.698	1.433
Current working status – Senior Lecturer	-.218**	.108	-2.012	.225	4.441
*Current working status –*Lecturer	-.159	.154	-1.032	.121	8.235
Teaching Exp.: 5 ≤ Years < 10	-.046	.093	-.489	.419	2.389
Teaching Exp.: 10≤ Years < 15	-.035	.116	-.302	.308	3.247
Teaching Exp.: 15 ≤ Years < 20	-.050	.138	-.360	.328	3.051
Teaching Exp.: 20 ≤ Years < 25	-.138	.150	-.920	.363	2.752
Teaching Exp.: Over 25 Years	-.062	.169	-.366	.274	3.650
Gender- Female	-.049	.055	-.904	.879	1.138
Age: 30 ≤ Years < 40	-.096	.122	-.786	.186	5.372
Age: 40 ≤ Years < 50	-.069	.150	-.460	.151	6.626
Age: 50 ≤ Years < 60	-.184	.171	-1.076	.150	6.682
Age: Over 60Years	-.187	.232	-.804	.333	3.001
Master's Degree	.100	.113	.890	.235	4.252
Doctoral Degree	-.022	.129	-.167	.159	6.277
Education-Other	-.072	.151	-.475	.399	2.506
*Salary-*35,000<=Rs<50,000	.563***	.189	2.975	.371	2.694
*Salary-*50,000<=Rs<65,000	.473***	.171	2.765	.211	4.733
*Salary-*65,000<=Rs<80,000	.417**	.166	2.505	.162	6.173
*Salary-*80,000<=Rs<95,000	.477***	.182	2.617	.152	6.596
*Salary->95,000	.641***	.179	3.593	.083	12.110
Marital Status – Unmarried	-.098	.084	-1.173	.746	1.341
Marital Status – Divorced/widowed	.120	.210	.571	.914	1.095
Intercept	1.687	.275	6.132		
F-value	9.115***				
R²	36.5%				
N	423				

*p< .05, ** p< .01, ***p< .00.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A survey of related extant literature indicates that only a few research studies on job satisfaction of university lectures have been conducted in the context of developing countries. Therefore, it was highlighted that there is a need for more research studies from developing countries like Sri Lanka. Thus, this study attempted to identify the impact of remuneration on overall job satisfaction of university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka.

In addressing the first objective of the study, i.e., assessing the degree of the job satisfaction of the university lectures of the state universities in Sri Lanka, the study finds that the median value is 3.95 and the mean value of overall job satisfaction is 3.93 (in a1-5 Likert scale). This value is also found to be significantly (p<.01) higher than the neural value 3. Thus, these results indicate that the university lectures in the Sri Lankan state universities are in general quite satisfied with their jobs. In terms of the second objective of examining the association between the Remuneration and job satisfaction of university lectures of state universities in Sri Lanka, the results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that the one of important predictor is the Remuneration that confirms the hypothesis established regarding these two variables, which is also consistent with the findings of extant literature Many previous research studies Souza-Poza and Souza-Poza (2000), Miller (1980), Saba (2011), Nadeem (2010), Hamermesh (2001), Grace and Khalsa (2003), Frye (2004), Shields and Price (2002), Oshagbemi (2000) found that remuneration will influence faculty job satisfaction. However, Awang and Ahmed (2010) argued that remuneration has a very low correlation with job satisfaction compared to other factors. Many researchers, however, have highlighted that salary has been identified as one of the main predictors that lead to different levels of job satisfaction in the academic setting the developed countries (Berg, 2002a, 2002b; Scott et al., 2001; Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2006). Furthermore, some researchers Shahzad et al. (2010a), Zhou and Volkwein (2003), (Santhapparaj & Alam, 2005a), Tessema and Soeters (2006), Shahzad et al. (2010a) found that there was a positive significant relationship between remuneration and job satisfaction.

This result amounts to valuable policy recommendations, and the relevant authorities could use remuneration as an important factor and should take active steps to enhance the remuneration policy in state universities in Sri Lanka to increase job satisfaction of academic staff members.

According to the research, policy makes should consider recommendations for further development. The remuneration is the predictor was found to be statistically significant in terms of predicting overall academic staff satisfaction. The relevant authorities could use these factor to attract and retain talented intellectuals in to the university system. Adjust the university faculty member's salary level based on an Asian benchmark for academic compensation. Amend the wage scale of university faculty members in comparison to other competitive professions in Sri Lanka. Determine the various types of reward packages (benefits, allowances, medical benefits, fuel allowances) rather than increasing the existing sole basic financial incentives. Build a performance-based incentive system for the academic members. Reduce the financial and non-financial gap related to current working status (job rank). Provision of inflation-adjusted salaries to university faculty members. Consider the geographical area (such as academics in remote areas) to decide financial and non-financial benefits.

It should be noted that there are few limitations in the present study and the findings and related conclusions should be interpreted subject to these limitations. The study was conducted only in the Sri Lanka context as well as the focus was only state universities within Sri Lanka, and therefore the findings and related conclusions may not be able to be generalized and compared with rest of the other countries and other types of universities in the Asia region and the world. As future research directions, it is suggested to consider other Asian counties and other types of universities such as some private universities.

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