

Research Article

Job Satisfaction among Academics in Higher Education: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Globalization, digital technology, and ongoing demand and rivalry from other industries create significant higher education changes. Academics are particularly affected since they are compelled to compete and succeed, which negatively influences work satisfaction. According to recent surveys, job satisfaction is lacking owing to workload and academic independence. Hence, there is a need to analyze the framework of job satisfaction of academics. There is also a lack of conceptual frameworks defining job satisfaction among academics, particularly in higher education. This article examines the existing literature on the conceptual frameworks for defining job satisfaction among academics in higher education. A systematic review of Scopus and Web of Science databases turned up 28 studies that are linked. A closer examination revealed three main themes and 20 variables of job satisfaction. The contribution of the current study may be valuable to stakeholders in higher education institutions.

Keywords: *Job satisfaction, higher education, academics, systematic review*

Introduction

Education is regarded as the most prominent aspect of any country or organization, and it plays a critical role in the nation's progress (Basak & Govender, 2015). Higher education's future is currently shifting and changing in lockstep with the rest of the world. Universities, for example, have endured vital challenges and undergone significant transformations in their nature and

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scope, governance structures, knowledge nature and value, and association with the economy and society. As a result, higher education academics must accept that higher education is on the edge of significant transformation and a slew of changes. Academics are the ones who will be most affected, as they will have to compete and strive for success as higher education evolves. Academics are educators and administrators who work in the areas of tertiary education. While there is a wealth of literature on academic labour, roles, and identities, being an academic is typically connected with autonomy and independence, intellectual stimulation, teaching and research, and ideals focused on making a difference, as well as a feeling of vocation. (Rosewell & Ashwin, 2019). These academic pressures in higher education, both from within and outside the university, are complex, intertwined, and challenging to manage (Stone & Gruber, 2017). They must continue to develop professionally, particularly concerning their teaching abilities, to provide quality instruction to students (Kamarudin et al., 2016). Due to the workload and lack of academic freedom, this constant need to compete and strive would impact their motivation. As a result, in the higher education setting, a framework of job satisfaction would be required.

Numerous definitions of job satisfaction refer to how an employee feels about their work on an emotional level. According to Khan, Masrek, and Nadzar (2017), job satisfaction refers to workers' emotions, expressions, and reactions toward their job or work and motivates performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction may be determined by how well work expectations are met or exceeded. Gopinath (2020) defines job satisfaction as assessing a person's work and organisation in terms of their contribution to accomplishing one's objectives. The nature of the work and what people expect from it impact job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as a positive and affirming outlook, whereas job dissatisfaction is interpreted as a cynical and disapproving viewpoint. Job satisfaction is a notable factor between academics in an educational setting, resulting in different organisational behaviors and mood changes at work (Azeez, Jayeoba, & Adeoye, 2016). As a result, job satisfaction must be promoted among them. According to Machado-Taylor et al (2016), job satisfaction is necessary for acquiring a positive result in the establishment's quality. Academics' job satisfaction and performance will both improve as a result of this.

The Systematic Review

A systematic review investigates a specific question by employing methodical and particular approaches to find, choose, and critically assess pertinent research and gather and analyze data from the studies incorporated in the review (Shaffril, Krauss, & Samsuddin, 2018). Bias can be lessened by using explicit and systematic methods while reviewing articles and all available evidence, resulting in notable findings from which conclusions and decisions can be drawn (Snyder, 2019). The information will aid in the planning and suggesting the research value and may even answer the question.

While there are various studies on academic motivation and job satisfaction, the effort to review these studies systematically is lacking. As a result, this article used a systematic review to fill the knowledge gap and recognize and characterize job satisfaction among higher education academics. The research fills a significant void in the literature, with the majority of systematic reviews concentrating on job satisfaction among non-academics (Dilig-Ruiz et al., 2018; Vigan & Giauque, 2018; Penconek et al., 2021; Chu & Zhang, 2018), as well as other non-education sectors (Zhang et al. 2016; Chappell & Statz-Hill, 2016.; Okello, & Gilson, 2015; Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2016). This study was considered essential due to the lack of studies that provided a broad view of job satisfaction among higher education academics. This research is critical because higher education changes significantly impact academics (Mula et al., 2017). These studies' interpretation and application are restricted because they focus on aspects irrelevant to academics and higher education. As a result, details on where the reviewed literature focuses on provide the opportunity to understand where the emphasis is and where attention should be directed.

The current study was directed by the core research question of what factors impact job satisfaction among higher education academics to design a suitable systematic review. This study's primary focus is job satisfaction, with a particular emphasis on academics in higher education. The objective of this study is to examine the present article on academic job satisfaction in higher education. The aim of conducting a systematic review will be explained in this section, followed by the methodology section. The following section examines and incorporates the literature to find, choose, and evaluate relevant research on job satisfaction among higher education academics. The final section concludes the study.

Methodology

The method for retrieving articles and literature related to job satisfaction among higher education academics is discussed in this section. Two central journal databases – Scopus and Web of Science – were employed to conduct a systematic literature search (WoS). *Scopus* is the second-largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature globally, with over 22800 journals selected from 5000 publishers throughout the world. *WoS* is a robust database that provides comprehensive citation data to over 18000 high-impact journals with more than a decade of extensive coverage.

The systematic review technique is divided into four stages. In February 2021, the review process was initiated and was completed. The first phase distinguishes the keywords that will be employed in the search. Keywords related to job satisfaction, higher education, and academics were used, heavily relying on pre-existing studies and thesaurus. After thorough browsing and screening, 25 duplicated articles were eliminated at this stage.

Table 1

The search string utilised for the process of systematic review

Databases	Keywords used
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((job satisfaction* OR employee satisfaction* OR work satisfaction* OR career satisfaction* OR job contentment* OR employee contentment* OR work contentment* OR OR career contentment* OR job fulfilment* OR employee fulfilment* OR work fulfilment* OR career fulfilment*) AND (higher education* OR tertiary education* OR postsecondary education* OR further education* OR university education* OR college education* OR universit* OR college* OR graduate school* OR tertiary school* OR higher learning) AND (academic* OR academe* OR academia OR academician* OR academic personnel* OR academic communit* OR scholar* OR scholarly communit* OR research communit* OR university communit* OR educator* OR instructor* OR professor* OR senior professor* OR prof* OR lecturer* OR senior lecturer*))
Web of Science	TS= ((job satisfaction* OR employee satisfaction* OR work satisfaction* OR career satisfaction* OR job contentment* OR employee contentment* OR work contentment* OR OR career contentment* OR job fulfilment* OR employee fulfilment* OR work fulfilment* OR career fulfilment*) AND (higher education* OR tertiary education* OR postsecondary education* OR further education* OR university education* OR college education* OR universit* OR college* OR graduate school* OR tertiary school* OR higher learning) AND (academic* OR academe* OR academia OR academician* OR academic personnel* OR academic communit* OR scholar* OR scholarly communit* OR research communit* OR university communit* OR educator* OR instructor* OR professor* OR senior professor* OR prof* OR lecturer* OR senior lecturer*))

The screening stage came next. At this stage, 22 of the 65 articles that were eligible for review were discarded. There were a few inclusion and exclusion criteria that were defined, as shown in Table 2. Firstly, the journal will be chosen for seven years period (from 2015 to 2021), allowing for an adequate view of the progression of previous research and publications. Second, only journals that publish research articles are preferred, excluding other literature types such as books, book series, chapters in books, conference proceedings, review articles, and reports. Thirdly, to evade confusion and complication in translation, the search process dismissed non-English publications and centred solely on English articles. Finally, articles are carefully selected to focus on the higher education sector, aligning with their academic goals.

Table 2

The inclusion and exclusion of criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	From 2015 to 2021	< 2015
Literature Type	Journal (research articles)	Journal (systematic review), book, book series, book chapter, conference proceedings, reports
Language	English	Non-English
Sector	Higher-education or education sector	Non-education sector
Population	Academics	Non-academics

The 43 full articles were accessed during the third stage of eligibility. After a thorough review, fifteen articles were eliminated because they did not focus on academics' perspectives, did not focus on the higher education sector, or were non-English publications. The systematic review's final stage resulted in 28 articles being used in the analysis, depicted in the figure below. The information was gathered by scanning the abstracts and then reading the complete article to classify crucial themes linked to job satisfaction among higher education academics.

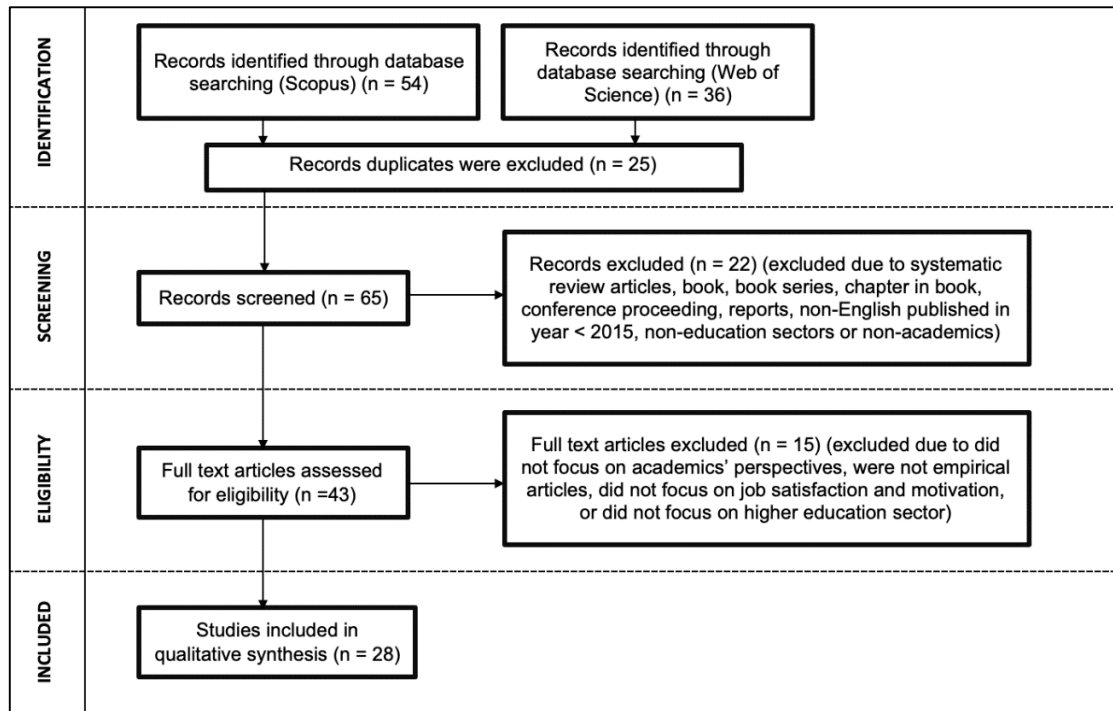


Figure 1. The study's flow diagram (Adapted from Pazil & Razak, 2019)

Findings

There were 28 journal articles reviewed in total, with job satisfaction centring on higher education academic perspectives. The year of publication, the database in which the articles were published (Scopus or WoS), the country of origin, the population sample, the respondents involved, the methodology, the tools used, and the variables used to classify these journals.

The distribution of the 28 peer-reviewed journal articles by year of publication is depicted in Figure 2. Since the review process was completed in February 2021, it is presumed that the number of articles will rise in 2021. With five articles each, the most frequent journal articles used are from 2016, 2018, and 2019.

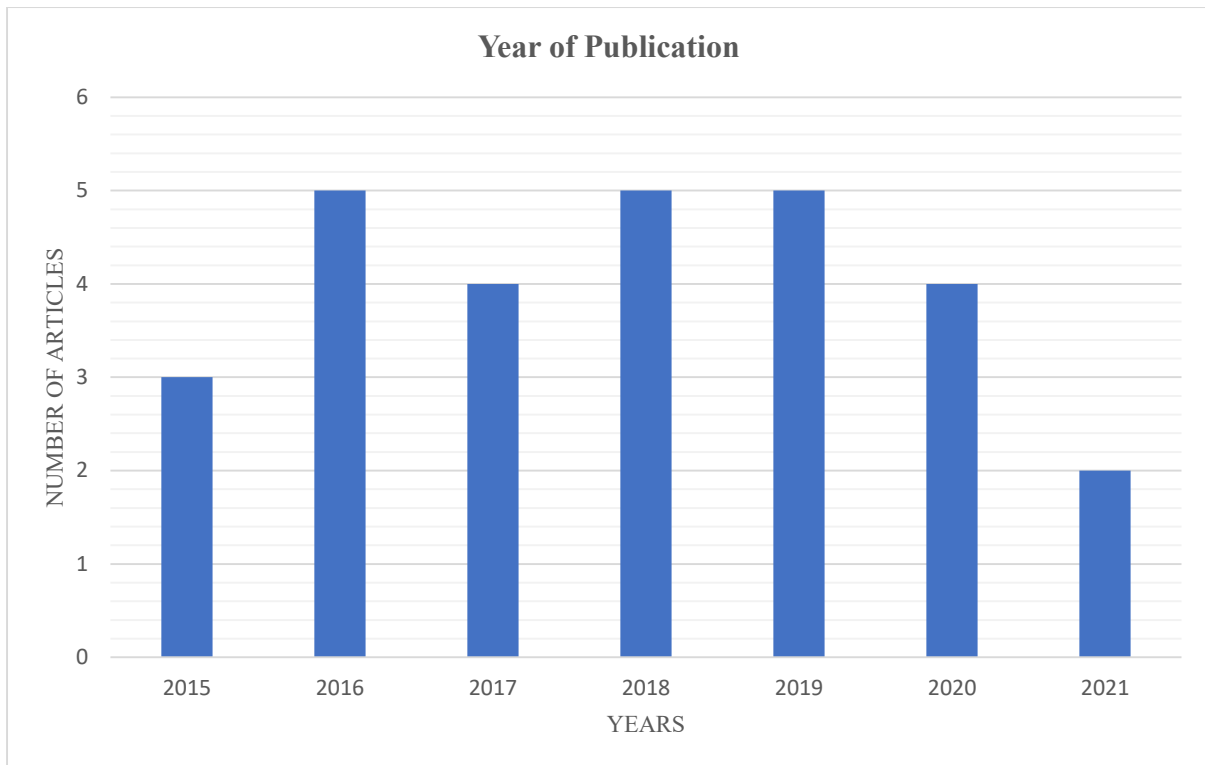


Figure 2. Distribution of 28 review journal articles from 2015 to 2021

Table 3 showcases the classification of all 28 reviewed journal articles by country of origin. Malaysia and India had the most published articles among the 28 journal articles used for this systematic review. Malaysia had a total of five articles (Yee, 2018; Hee et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2021; Ahmad & Abdurahman, 2015; Seng & Wai, 2016), while India also had a total of five articles (Naveena & Geevarghese, 2019; Tiwari & Tiwari, 2020; Dhume, & Lucas, 2019; Singh & Mohan, 2020; Yadav, Khanna, & Dasmohapatra, 2019). This is followed by two consecutive studies from Vietnam (Anh Duc et al., 2020; Lien, 2017) and one study focusing on all other countries such as Bulgaria (Stankovska et al., 2017), Poland (Szromek & Wolniak, 2020), Kuwait (Abdullah, Naser & Al-Enezi, 2017), Ghana (Milledzi et al., 2018), Nepal (Chapagain, 2021), Serbia (Slavić, Avakumović, & Berber, 2019), U.A.E. (Jawabri, 2017), Sri Lanka (Perera & Kajendra, 2016), Iran (Hesampour et al., 2016), Tanzania (Masanja, 2018), South Africa (Basak & Govender, 2015), Bangladesh (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2015), Turkey (Kayacana et al., 2016), Saudi Arabia (Almutawa et al., 2018), Ethiopia (Addisu, 2018) and Pakistan (Naseem & Salman, 2015).

Table 3

Classification of 28 peer reviewed journal articles by country

Name of Country	No.
India	5
Malaysia	5
Vietnam	2
Bulgaria	1
Poland	1
Kuwait	1
Ghana	1
Nepal	1
Serbia	1
UAE	1
Sri Lanka	1
Iran	1
Tanzania	1
South Africa	1
Bangladesh	1
Turkey	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Ethiopia	1
Pakistan	1

The primary study design used in the 28 peer-reviewed journal articles is depicted in Figure 3. According to the figure, 23 studies (82%) use a quantitative approach, three studies (11%) use a qualitative approach, and the remaining two studies (7%) use a mixed-method approach, which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods.

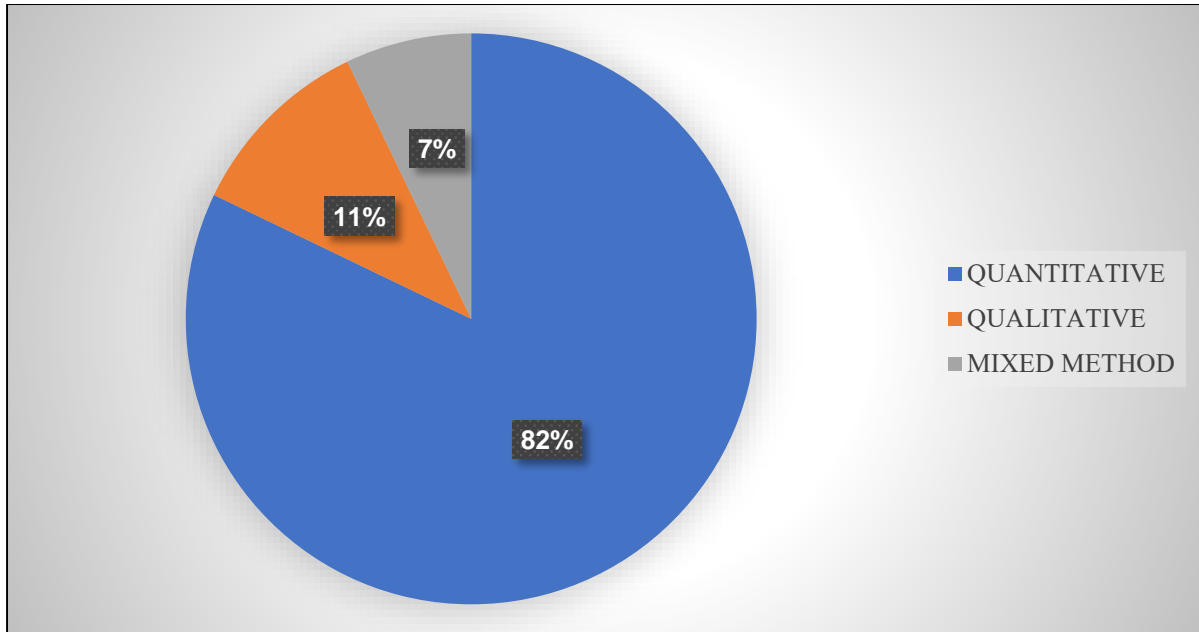


Figure 3: The methodology used in the 28 review journal articles

Discussion and Recommendations

Job Satisfaction among Academics in Higher Education

This section focuses on job satisfaction variables from the standpoint of academics in higher education. As shown in the table below, twenty job satisfaction variables are identified across the 28 peer-reviewed journal articles. Further investigation reveals that these 20 variables are divided into three categories: demographic, hygiene, and motivator. Demographic factors are elements that are used to define a person's or population's characteristics. Hygiene and motivator factors are based on Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory, with hygiene factors referring to non-job-satisfaction-related extrinsic elements. Motivator factors, on the other hand, are intrinsic elements that lead to job satisfaction. Table 5 shows the 20 variables that affect job satisfaction:

Table 4:

Factors and variables of job satisfaction

Factors	Variables
Demographic	Gender, academic qualification, work experience, age
Hygiene	Salary, work environment, relationship, supervision, job security, policy, status
Motivator	Recognition, nature of work, responsibility, promotion, rewards, compensation, benefits, support, and training and development

As mentioned above, there are 20 variables of job satisfaction. The table below delineates 28 review journal articles' systematic review finding, which resulted in the variables.

Table 5:

The systematic review findings

No.	Authors	Demographic				Hygiene								Motivator							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1	Yee, 2018					✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			✓					
2	Stankovska et al., 2017					✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓		✓		
3	Anh Duc et al., 2020						✓												✓		✓
4	Lien, 2017					✓		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓		✓		
5	Hee et al., 2019					✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓							
6	Szromek & Wolniak, 2020					✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓				✓
7	Naveena & Geevarghese, 2019					✓	✓	✓		✓						✓					✓
8	Abdullah, Naser, & Al-Enezi, 2017						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			
9	Tiwari & Tiwari, 2020					✓	✓		✓		✓		✓								
10	Dhume & Lucas, 2019							✓								✓	✓	✓			
11	Singh & Mohan, 2020	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓														
12	Milledzi et al., 2018					✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓					
13	Chapagain, 2021	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓							
14	Thomas et al., 2021					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓										
15	Slavić, Avakumović, & Berber, 2019					✓			✓					✓		✓	✓		✓		
16	Jawabri, 2017					✓							✓		✓	✓	✓				✓
17	Yadav, Khanna, and Dasmohapatra, 2019	✓		✓	✓	✓							✓								
18	Perera, and Kajendra, 2016					✓			✓					✓	✓	✓					✓
19	Hesampour et al., 2016					✓	✓		✓	✓				✓					✓		

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20	Masanja, 2018					✓	✓						✓		✓					✓	
21	Basak, and Govender, 2015					✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓				
22	Masum, Azad, and Beh, 2015						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓			✓	
23	Kayacana et al., 2016						✓		✓		✓		✓		✓						
24	Ahmad & Abdurahman, 2015					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
25	Seng, & Wai, 2016					✓		✓		✓			✓								
26	Almutawa et al., 2018			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													
27	Addisu, 2018	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓						
28	Naseem & Salman, 2015	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓						
Total studies		5	4	3	5	23	16	16	15	11	9	3	10	11	7	15	7	3	5	3	4

Table 6:

Keywords for table 5

A GENDER	B ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	C WORK EXPERIENCE	D AGE	E SALARY
F WORK ENVIRONMENT	G WORK RELATIONSHIP	H SUPERVISION	I JOB SECURITY	J POLICY
K STATUS	L RECOGNITION	M NATURE OF WORK	N RESPONSIBILITY	O PROMOTION
P REWARDS	Q COMPENSATION	R BENEFITS	S SUPPORT	T TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT

Demographic Factors

Gender (A): Five out of 28 studies viewed gender as a factor in job satisfaction. Male and female employees are said to respond differently to job satisfaction because their job expectations vary. Dhume and Lucas (2019) believe that work happiness differs by gender, with female academic staff reporting higher job satisfaction than male academic staff. Gender has an impact on job satisfaction, according to Naseem and Salman (2015). They believe that employee gender has a strong influence on job satisfaction and work motivation. This study took a different approach to gender, claiming that male employees are happier in their jobs than female employees. Gender has a significant impact on organizational commitments, but not on work-life quality job satisfaction, according to a study by Yadav, Khanna, and Dasmohapatra (2019).

Academic Qualification (B): Academic qualifications were mentioned in four out of the 28 studies. Individuals have varying education, skills, and abilities, which influences their attitude toward their work (Kapur, 2018). Teachers having a higher level of education, such as a postgraduate or doctoral degree, are more satisfied than those with an undergraduate or postgraduate diploma, according to Dhume and Lucas (2019). Still, their research has demonstrated that academic qualification has no significant impact on job satisfaction, contrary to a previous study's hypothesis (Amarasena, Ajward, & Haque, 2015). However, a study by Chapagain (2021) refuted the theory, demonstrating that academic qualifications influence job satisfaction. Naseem and Salman (2015) also affirm that employees are more content with their work when they have a higher level of education, and academic qualification is one of the most substantial cognitive factors of job satisfaction.

Work Experience (C): Four of 28 studies looked at work experience as a factor in job satisfaction. The number of years an academic has worked in an educational setting is referred to as work experience. Work experience illustrates the types of jobs someone has done and provides an excellent opportunity to improve one's performance. The more work experiences a person possesses, the more skilled they are at their job, and the more perfect their thinking and acting patterns are for achieving stated goals (Dewi, Maulana, & Muhadzib, 2019). Academicians' job satisfaction is unaffected by their work experience, according to Chapagain (2021). However, Al-Smadi and Qblan (2015) discovered that teaching experience was slightly more efficient in job satisfaction. According to Yadav, Khanna, and Dasmohapatra (2019),

there is a positive relationship between experience and job satisfaction and the quality of work life.

Age (D): Age was mentioned in five studies as a factor in job satisfaction. Older employees are more committed to their organization than younger employees, indicating a positive relationship between organizational commitment and age. (Naseem & Salman, 2015). Employees from similar age groups have better communication, according to Sharma (2017), because they usually share specific common values. According to Almutawa et al. (2018), there is a high level of job satisfaction related to age, with those over 40 being the most satisfied. According to research, older workers are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction than younger workers with less experience and a higher demand for basic needs satisfaction. (Mulugeta, 2020). Addisu (2018) also discovered a correlation between age and job satisfaction.

Hygiene Factors

Salary (E): Salary is the most frequently mentioned variable, appearing in 23 of 28 studies. A salary is a set amount of money provided by an employer to an employee in return for doing productive labour, according to Hee et al. (2019). It is the psychological reaction that workers have to the monetary gain they receive in exchange for their labour, and it is very significant in human resource management (Kim, 2017). Salary satisfaction can be broken down into five categories: salary system, salary structure, a sense of fair wages, intrinsic motivation, and welfare policies (Hung, Lee, and Lee, 2018). In both the public and private sectors, salary is one of the most critical drivers of work satisfaction, according to Milledzi et al. (2018), because it satisfies employees' financial and material desires. Salary is a significant factor that plays a crucial aspect in academicians' job satisfaction in the higher education sector, according to Naveena and Geevarghese (2019). While money is essential, the fairness with which a salary is paid enormously correlates with job satisfaction and employee motivation (Lien, 2017). According to Basak and Govender (2015), employees with low salaries would cause profound upheavals. This demonstrates that pay has a more noticeable impact on job satisfaction, with employees with higher ranks, qualifications, and pay raises being more satisfied with their jobs (Naseem and Salman, 2015). As a result, the institute should improve employee salary treatment by improving the overall salary package. Management should pay a reasonable

monthly salary and have it increased by a significant amount while not ignoring adequate paid leave for the employees' qualifications, position, and workload (Perera and Kajendra, 2016).

Work Environment (F): With 16 out of 28 studies focusing on it, the working environment is one of the most focused job satisfaction variables. A work environment can be defined as the physical factors that influence employees' ability to complete their assigned tasks (Narasuci, Setiawan, and Noermijati, 2018). According to Milledzi et al. (2018), having a pleasant work environment with minimal physical and psychological stress helps attain work objectives and leads to high job satisfaction. According to the author, the degree to which academics feel supported in providing adequate facilities is also critical to the work quality. Job satisfaction could be improved by creating a fair and stable work environment and providing basic amenities and services (Hesampour et al., 2016). According to the authors, unfavourable conditions, such as light, temperature, high work pressure, and a noisy environment can lead to occupational stress and reduced job satisfaction. Job satisfaction would improve if these stressful factors were eliminated. Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015) believe that having a good working environment lessens employee turnover and reduces job stress. The author says that dissatisfaction with the working environment can negatively impact employee commitment, influencing the decision to leave. Academics are more content and stay longer in institutions with a positive work environment, and providing a supportive work environment can help students achieve better learning outcomes (Hee et al., 2019). Singh and Mohan (2020) claim a positive link between work environment and job satisfaction. As a result, a healthy university environment enhances academic staff job satisfaction, productivity, and university learning (Yee, 2018).

Work Relationship (G): Workplace relationships were the subject of about 16 studies. According to Milledzi et al. (2018), the connection between coworkers is a significant determinant of job satisfaction. This is because the social connection that an employment contract gives to employees is essential for its satisfaction. When coworkers' relationships are normal, employees are more content with their occupations, a significant determinant of job satisfaction (Naseem & Salman, 2015). Job satisfaction is connected to solid interpersonal interactions, according to Addisu (2018), and having pleasant and helpful coworkers leads to improved job satisfaction. An employee is more likely to remain with the company because of the strong bonds with coworkers (Thomas et al., 2021). According to Lien (2017), an employee's coworkers, the groups they belong to, and the culture to which they are exhibited

can all impact job satisfaction. Working with supportive, encouraging, motivating, and problem-solving coworkers has a positive impact, according to Naveena and Geevarghese (2019), as it ensures that they stay longer with their job in an organization. Peers are valuable to employees because they can provide a sense of social belonging and meet social and psychological needs (Ahmad & Abdurahman, 2015). Academic staff cannot operate without the cooperation, help, and support of colleagues who would make the university unable to function smoothly.

Supervision (H): A total of 15 studies focus on supervision as a factor in job satisfaction. Employees are aware that their supervisor values their contribution and is concerned about their well-being. Supervisors have an interpersonal bond with their subordinates, all of which contribute to job satisfaction (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2015). The supervisory role is critical because it creates a happy workforce. After all, leaders are the ones who manage and have complete responsibility for their employees at work (Hee et al., 2019). Employees who have good relationships with their supervisors are much more content with their jobs, according to Naseem and Salman (2015). When the immediate supervisor is compassionate, kind, gives praise for good work, listen to the employees' thoughts, and shows a genuine interest in them, employee satisfaction rises, according to Lien (2017). Supervisors who bring a humanistic element to the job augment employee job satisfaction (Stankovska et al., 2017). Employees' job satisfaction rises when they see their supervisors as fair, competent, and sincere, according to Basak and Govender (2015). As a result, supervision is critical, and supervisors should motivate employees to achieve their objectives, define job responsibilities, and recommend employees' work for advancement. They should also share their knowledge and expertise and encourage employees to improve their work-related knowledge and skills. (Perera & Kajendra, 2016).

Job Security (I): Job security is a job satisfaction variable that appears in 11 of 28 studies. Job security is an organisation's display to an employee that they have a slim chance of being laid off, hoping that they will fully commit to the organisation (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2015). Another meaning is the degree to which an organisation provides steady employment to its employees (Yee, 2018). Job security is an essential antecedence of academics, demonstrating its importance to a working individual. The author also mentions how job satisfaction is linked to job performance, emphasising how the university can ensure stable employment and completely satisfy. According to Basak and Govender (2015), job security affects university

academics' job satisfaction. Naveena and Geevarghese (2019) both established this. The authors claim that job satisfaction and job security are inextricably linked and that employees with permanent jobs are more satisfied than those with temporary jobs. A person with job security is also thought to perform tasks assigned to them calmly and even create innovations and initiatives in their work (Hesampour et al., 2016).

Policy (J): Policy was the focus of nine of 28 studies. A socio-psychological component that contributes to the efficacy of the educational system, notably in colleges and universities, is defined as an organisational policy, and it is vital to incorporate academic staff in the decision-making process to enhance their morale (Milledzi et al., 2018). S.S. Thomas et al. (2021) show a link between job satisfaction and robust human resource policies that lead to employee retention. Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015) discussed this and stated that policy inspires employees to stick to their commitments and remain motivated, resulting in enhanced organisational performance. As a result, policymaking is an important aspect. Leaders or employers who create policies must ensure that the policies are not vague or ambiguous and fair and unbiased (Hee et al., 2019). They must also explain the importance of policies and listen to employee feedback on improving them to create a better working environment.

Status (K): Status is a job satisfaction variable that appears in three of 28 studies. The control, influence, and power that come with a person's relative status in a society's cultural and economic authority and the control, influence, and power that comes with it is referred to as status (Autin et al., 2017). The social service and social status, independence, accomplishment, and activity components of their profession tended to be quite satisfying to the respondents, according to Abdullah, Naser and Al-Enezi (2017). It has also been established that respondents' current status and marital status significantly impact their job satisfaction.

Motivator Factors

Recognition (L): A total of ten out of 28 studies spoke on recognition. The approval or appreciation that an employee hopes to receive from their employer, supervisors, coworkers, or others in the organization is known as recognition (Yee, 2018). It is a crucial job satisfaction factor that helps improve the academic staff's job performance and productivity, morale, and job retention. Hee et al. (2019) append that recognition is part of the needs of life. Employers must continually acknowledge the employees' efforts. This is because employers who

appreciate and recognize the contributions would ensure the employees put more effort into their work. According to Szromek and Wolniak (2020), the factor that arbitrarily influence the satisfaction of academic staff is the belief that their work enjoyed recognition, and added that the lack of proper recognition specifically for scientific work would lead to a decrease of the research level in the country. Even Masanja (2018) agree that the lack of recognition would cause job dissatisfaction for universities and state that management should acknowledge and recognize lecturers' contribution toward the organization's achievement.

Nature of Work (M): Nature of work is a variable that appears in 11 of 28 studies. According to Milledzi et al. (2018), the nature of work is the actual performance or the job's tasks as a root of positive feelings about it. Academics, according to the authors, have a wide range of job responsibilities. Basak and Govender (2015) also stated the nature of work as a sense of accomplishment, victory, self-esteem, and other similar emotions gained through work. According to Slavić, Avakumović, and Berber (2019), academic staff is most content with the nature of their work. Hee, et al. (2019) supported this, stating that job satisfaction significantly impacts employees' nature of work. According to the authors, employees are most satisfied with their jobs if they have enough variety, challenge, discretion, and the chance to put their strengths and skills to good use. This indicates that job satisfaction is likely to be impacted by the nature of personally interesting work to employees.

Responsibility (N): Responsibility was examined as a factor in job satisfaction in seven studies. "Responsibility" is regarded as both what must be done to fulfil a task and the obligation imposed by the assignment (Milledzi et al., 2018). Scholars place a high value on factors like their job being vital to them and being allowed to take responsibility, according to Kayacana et al. (2016). Another finding was that female scholars place a higher value on taking responsibility than male academics. This demonstrates that responsibility is a broad variable, and educational institutions should give academics some autonomy in carrying out their responsibilities (Perera & Kajendra, 2016).

Promotion (O): In 15 of 28 studies, promotion was mentioned. Promotion is defined as an employee's perception of their chances of advancement within the organisation (Milledzi et al., 2018). People should be compensated with pay and opportunities to advance within their organisations, according to the authors. According to Naveena and Geevarghese (2019), promotion is essential for an employee's career and life. According to Basak and Govender

(2015), promotional opportunities positively affect employees' job satisfaction, which Naseem and Salman (2015) also found, signifying a connection between job satisfaction and promotion. Employees are more motivated and willing to perform in an organisation if promotion criteria are right and promotion prospects are accessible, according to the authors. Employees will be dissatisfied and distrustful of the organisation, according to Addisu (2018). Promotions based on favoritism, political pressure, or other factors will leave employees dissatisfied and distrustful of the organisation. Promotion opportunities would increase employees' sense of belonging at work while also advancing their careers (Jawabri, 2017). Perera and Kajendra (2016) stated that institutes should implement some promotion schemes to keep their employees. Employees should also be promoted based on their performance level and appropriate time, as stated by Szromek and Wolniak (2020).

Rewards (P): Reward is a variable of job satisfaction that is present in seven out of 28 studies. There are two types of rewards employed in the workplace: financial and non-financial (Tănăsescu & Leon, 2019). Financial benefits include wages, performance bonuses, and benefits, while the latter is concerned with recognition, morale-boosting, internal communication, work atmosphere, and career advancement. Basak and Govender (2015) affirm that job satisfaction was most eminent amongst employees who receive rewards. However, Jawabri (2017) proved contrarily, stating that job satisfaction decreases in academic staff as rewards increase. This is because as rewards increase, the obligation to perform would increase even more. On the other hand, Lien (2017) says that employee dissatisfaction may happen if rewards are not equitable. The author also adds that every single activity related to reward has an impression on job satisfaction.

Compensation (Q): Compensation was the subject of three of 28 studies. In a company or organization, compensation is considered a significant role (Ramli, 2019). Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015) concluded that compensation is the most prominent factor among the dimensions of job satisfaction for any organization, indicating a positive correlation between compensation and job satisfaction. Abdullah, Naser, and Al-Enezi (2017) believe that academics' efforts should be recognized and compensated to keep them on the faculty. The authors also showed that when it comes to compensation, academics are reasonably satisfied. According to Basak and Govender (2015), having an appropriate compensation impacts job satisfaction among public and private university academics.

Benefits (R): Benefit is a factor that appears in five of 28 studies. Bonuses, stock options, regular health coverage, and severance packages are just a few of the means to retain employees. According to Lien (2017), fringe benefits are divided into monetary and non-monetary benefits. Expanding fringe benefits would improve employee performance and induce higher organizational levels of commitment. Wages and other benefits arbitrarily affect lecturers' work motivation, according to Anh Duc et al. (2020).

Support (S): Support was mentioned in three studies as a factor in job satisfaction. Support, in general, contributes to job satisfaction by informing employees that help and support are readily available. According to Szromek and Wolniak (2020), organizational support is a critical factor influencing scientific work effectiveness, reflecting how employees perceive that others value their resources and are concerned about their development. According to Naveena and Geevarghese (2019), employee job satisfaction is linked to peer group support. They claim that having an understanding and good rapport with their co-workers will boost employee job satisfaction. Jawabri (2017) conducted a study on co-worker support and found that as co-worker support grows, so does the level of job satisfaction.

Training and Development (T): Four of 28 studies mention training and development. Lecturers require training and development, according to Anh Duc et al. (2020). It enhances their knowledge and abilities and confidence in their ability to compete in the industry and produce high-quality human resources. The study successfully demonstrated how this variable has a positive impact on lecturers' work results. According to Masum, Azad, and Beh (2015), training and development are critical human resource management functions. It assists people in gaining the essential skills and knowledge to achieve targeted results in a competitive setting. Training and development programs, according to the authors, improve job satisfaction and productivity. These programs would provide employees with the knowledge and skills they need to do their jobs effectively. In their study, Perera and Kajendra (2016) found that the institute or education establishment's management should provide adequate training to improve employees' skills and knowledge.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research systematically reviews the predated literature on academic job satisfaction in higher education. Gender, academic qualification, work experience, age, salary,

work environment, work relationship, supervision, job security, policy, status, recognition, nature of work, responsibility, promotion, rewards, compensation, benefits, support, and training and development are among the 20 job satisfaction variables related to academics in higher education identified by the systematic review. Higher education institutions must make a concerted effort to improve the job satisfaction of these academics. Academics are crucial to enhancing the quality of higher education. Their job performance and productivity can only be improved by boosting their job satisfaction. This research is vital because it allows higher education institutions to concentrate on the variables that need improvement. It will also add to the understanding by presenting new findings on academic job satisfaction from higher education. This research, however, has some limitations. For starters, it focuses solely on academics in general and dismisses the viewpoint of non-academics. Furthermore, the study only looks at higher education and disregards other education areas such as primary and secondary education.

Statements of Ethics and Conflict of Interest

“I, as the Corresponding Author, declare and undertake that in the study titled as “*Job Satisfaction among Academics in Higher Education: A Systematic Review*”, scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed; Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry Journal Editorial Board has no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, that all responsibility belongs to the author/s and that this study has not been sent to any other academic publication platform for evaluation”

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