

**Original Article**

## **A Comparative Study of Job Satisfaction among Staff Members in Higher Education Institutions**

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Received: 03-09-2026

Revised: 03-25-2026

Accepted: 04-06-2026

Published: 04-08-2026

### **ABSTRACT**

*Job satisfaction is a crucial determinant of employee performance, organizational commitment, and institutional effectiveness in higher education institutions. The present study examines and compares the level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions by considering various dimensions such as work environment, recognition, communication, organizational support, career development opportunities, and work-life balance. The study adopted a descriptive and comparative research design and employed a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 199 teaching and non-teaching staff members. Statistical tools including percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, Chi-square test, One-Way ANOVA, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents exhibit moderate to high levels of job satisfaction and hold favourable perceptions regarding their work environment and organizational practices. The study further indicates that work environment, organizational support, recognition, and career development opportunities significantly influence employee satisfaction. Demographic variables such as age and work experience were found to be significantly associated with job satisfaction, while differences in institutional practices contributed to variations in employee perceptions. The study emphasizes the importance of creating supportive work environments, strengthening communication, and promoting employee development initiatives to enhance job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions.*

### **KEYWORDS**

*Job Satisfaction, Higher Education Institutions, Teaching Staff, Non-Teaching Staff, Organizational Support, Work Environment, Employee Satisfaction, Organizational Effectiveness.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing human capital, promoting research, and contributing to socio-economic development. The effectiveness and reputation of these institutions largely depend on the commitment, competence, and satisfaction of their employees. Both teaching and non-teaching staff serve as the backbone of educational institutions, and their level of job satisfaction significantly influences organizational performance, employee retention, and the quality of educational services.

Job satisfaction refers to the degree of positive feelings and contentment that employees experience toward their jobs. It is influenced by various factors, including work environment, compensation, recognition, career advancement opportunities, leadership support, interpersonal relationships, and work-life balance. Satisfied employees are generally more motivated, productive, and committed to organizational goals, whereas dissatisfaction may lead to stress, absenteeism, reduced performance, and increased turnover intentions.

In the contemporary educational environment, higher education institutions face numerous challenges arising from technological advancements, increased competition, accreditation requirements, and changing employee expectations. Employees increasingly seek supportive work environments, opportunities for professional development, recognition for their contributions, and a healthy balance between personal and professional responsibilities. Consequently, maintaining high levels of job satisfaction has become a strategic priority for educational institutions seeking to improve organizational effectiveness and sustain competitive advantage.

Job satisfaction levels may vary across institutions and employee groups due to differences in organizational culture, management practices, workload, compensation structures, and growth opportunities. Therefore, a comparative assessment of job satisfaction among staff members provides valuable insights into the factors influencing employee perceptions and helps identify areas requiring managerial intervention.

Against this backdrop, the present study undertakes a comparative analysis of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions. The study examines various dimensions of job satisfaction and compares employees' perceptions regarding work environment, recognition, communication, career development, work-life balance, and organizational support. The findings of the study are expected to assist institutional administrators and human resource professionals in developing effective strategies to enhance employee satisfaction, improve organizational commitment, and foster a productive and supportive educational environment.

## 2. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Employee job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing organizational performance, employee commitment, and the overall effectiveness of higher education institutions. Satisfied employees are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of motivation, productivity, and engagement, which

contribute significantly to the quality of teaching, administrative efficiency, and institutional development.

Higher education institutions operate in a rapidly changing environment characterized by increasing competition, accreditation requirements, technological advancements, and evolving employee expectations. Factors such as work environment, leadership support, recognition, career development opportunities, compensation, and work-life balance considerably influence employees' satisfaction levels. Variations in these factors across institutions may lead to differences in employee perceptions and organizational outcomes.

A comparative study of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions is therefore essential to understand the factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and identify areas requiring improvement. The study helps institutional administrators and human resource managers assess employees' needs, evaluate existing policies and practices, and formulate appropriate strategies to enhance employee well-being and organizational commitment.

Further, the findings of the study can assist higher education institutions in developing supportive work environments, strengthening employee retention, improving performance, and promoting a positive organizational culture. Consequently, the study contributes to both employee welfare and the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of higher education institutions.

### **3. RESEARCH GAP**

Previous studies on job satisfaction have extensively examined factors such as compensation, work environment, leadership, organizational culture, recognition, and work-life balance as determinants of employee satisfaction. Several studies have also explored job satisfaction among employees in educational institutions and other service sectors. However, most of these studies have primarily focused on individual factors influencing satisfaction or have been confined to a single institution, specific employee category, or particular occupational group.

Further, limited studies have undertaken a comparative analysis of job satisfaction among staff members across higher education institutions by considering both teaching and non-teaching employees and examining multiple dimensions of satisfaction simultaneously. In the context of higher education institutions in India, empirical evidence comparing employees' perceptions regarding work environment, communication, career development opportunities, organizational support, and welfare practices remains inadequate.

Therefore, there exists a need for a comprehensive comparative study that examines the level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions and identifies the factors that significantly influence employee satisfaction. The present study seeks to bridge this gap by providing empirical evidence on the various dimensions of job satisfaction and offering insights for developing effective human resource practices that enhance employee well-being, organizational commitment, and institutional effectiveness.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To assess the overall level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions.
2. To examine the influence of work environment, recognition, and organizational support on employee job satisfaction.
3. To compare the levels of job satisfaction among teaching and non-teaching staff members in higher education institutions.
4. To identify the factors that significantly contribute to employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions.

#### **5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The present study focuses on examining the level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions. It covers both teaching and non-teaching employees and evaluates various dimensions of job satisfaction, including work environment, recognition, communication, organizational support, career development opportunities, and work-life balance. The study compares employees' perceptions across different categories of staff and identifies the factors influencing job satisfaction. The findings are intended to assist institutional administrators in developing effective human resource practices to enhance employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall institutional effectiveness.

#### **6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Job satisfaction has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing employee performance, commitment, and organizational effectiveness. Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as the extent to which employees like or dislike their jobs and emphasized that factors such as pay, supervision, and working conditions significantly influence employee satisfaction. Herzberg (1968), through his Two-Factor Theory, distinguished between motivators and hygiene factors and argued that achievement, recognition, and growth opportunities enhance satisfaction, while inadequate working conditions and compensation lead to dissatisfaction.

Vroom (1964) proposed that employee satisfaction is closely associated with motivation and reward expectations. Employees experience higher satisfaction when they perceive a strong relationship between effort, performance, and rewards. Bakker and Demerouti (2017) further suggested that adequate job resources, including support, autonomy, and opportunities for development, significantly improve employee satisfaction and engagement.

Several studies have examined job satisfaction in educational institutions. De Simone et al. (2018) found that work environment, leadership support, and recognition positively influence employee satisfaction among academic staff. Singh and Jain (2018) reported that salary, workload, and job security are major determinants of job satisfaction among teaching professionals in India. Similarly, Nair et al. (2021) emphasized that work-life balance and flexible organizational policies contribute significantly to employee well-being and satisfaction.

In the Indian context, Chandrasekar (2024) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity in the food industry and found that satisfied employees demonstrated higher levels of productivity and organizational commitment. The study highlighted the importance of supportive work environments, recognition, and employee welfare measures in improving performance outcomes. Chandrasekar and Natarajan (2021) investigated stress management practices in the KISCOL industry of Nagapattinam District and reported that workplace stress significantly influences employee satisfaction and productivity. The study emphasized the need for effective stress management strategies and supportive organizational practices to enhance employee well-being and performance.

The literature therefore indicates that job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by organizational, psychological, and environmental factors. Variables such as work environment, leadership support, recognition, career growth opportunities, work-life balance, and stress management play a crucial role in determining employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness, particularly in higher education institutions.

## 7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology provides a systematic framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to achieve the objectives of a study. The present study adopts a quantitative approach to examine and compare the level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions.

The study employs a descriptive and comparative research design to assess employees' perceptions regarding various dimensions of job satisfaction, including work environment, recognition, communication, organizational support, career development opportunities, and work-life balance. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to teaching and non-teaching staff members of higher education institutions.

A structured questionnaire consisting of close-ended statements based on a five-point Likert scale was used as the instrument for data collection. The study used a simple random sampling technique to select respondents from the target population. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and One-Way ANOVA to identify the factors influencing job satisfaction and compare satisfaction levels among different categories of employees.

The methodology adopted in the study facilitates a comprehensive understanding of employee perceptions and provides empirical evidence for developing effective human resource practices aimed at enhancing employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions.

## 8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis and interpretation constitute an important stage of the research process, as they transform raw data into meaningful information for decision-making and drawing valid conclusions. The process involves organizing, classifying, analyzing, and interpreting the data collected from respondents in a systematic manner.

In the present study, primary data were collected from teaching and non-teaching staff members of higher education institutions through a structured questionnaire. The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to understand the level of job satisfaction and examine the factors influencing employee satisfaction.

Statistical tools such as percentage analysis were used to describe the demographic profile of respondents and their levels of job satisfaction. Chi-square analysis was employed to examine the association between demographic variables and job satisfaction. Correlation analysis was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction factors, while regression analysis was applied to identify the significant predictors of employee satisfaction. One-Way ANOVA was further used to compare the mean satisfaction levels among different groups of employees.

The results of the analysis are presented through tables and charts for better understanding and interpretation. The findings provide insights into the various dimensions of job satisfaction and facilitate a comparative evaluation of employee perceptions across higher education institutions. The interpretation of the data assists in identifying strengths, areas of concern, and suitable strategies for enhancing employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

## 9. OVERALL LEVEL OF JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is an important indicator of employee well-being, commitment, and organizational effectiveness. Assessing the overall level of job satisfaction helps in understanding employees' perceptions regarding their work environment and identifying areas that require improvement. The respondents were classified into low, moderate, and high levels of job satisfaction based on their responses to the questionnaire

**Table 1: Overall Level of Job Satisfaction among Staff Members**

| Level of Job Satisfaction | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Low                       | 4         | 2          |
| Moderate                  | 92        | 46.2       |
| High                      | 103       | 51.8       |
| Total                     | 199       | 100        |

The above table presents the overall level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions. Out of the total 199 respondents, 103 respondents (51.8%) reported a high

level of job satisfaction, indicating that more than half of the employees are highly satisfied with their jobs and the organizational environment. Further, 92 respondents (46.2%) reported a moderate level of job satisfaction, suggesting that a considerable proportion of employees are reasonably satisfied but perceive scope for improvement in certain aspects of their work. Only 4 respondents (2.0%) reported a low level of job satisfaction, indicating that very few employees are dissatisfied with their jobs.

Overall, the findings reveal that the majority of staff members experience moderate to high levels of job satisfaction, reflecting a generally positive work environment and favorable employee perceptions toward the institution.

### 10. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic factors provide important information about the characteristics of the respondents and facilitate a better understanding of their perceptions regarding job satisfaction. Variables such as institution, age, gender, educational qualification, designation, work experience, department, and salary range influence employees' attitudes and satisfaction levels. An analysis of these factors helps in identifying the composition of the workforce and provides a basis for comparing job satisfaction among different categories of employees.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

| Variables                 | Category            | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Age                       | 25 years & Below    | 31        | 15.6       |
|                           | 26-30 years         | 39        | 19.6       |
|                           | 31-40 years         | 75        | 37.7       |
|                           | 41-50 years         | 45        | 22.6       |
|                           | Above 50 years      | 9         | 4.5        |
| Gender                    | Male                | 90        | 45.2       |
|                           | Female              | 109       | 54.8       |
| Educational Qualification | SSLC/Diploma/HSC    | 5         | 2.5        |
|                           | UG                  | 24        | 12.1       |
|                           | PG                  | 86        | 43.2       |
|                           | M.Phil.             | 48        | 24.1       |
|                           | Ph.D./Post Doctoral | 36        | 18.1       |
| Designation               | Teaching Staff      | 158       | 79.4       |
|                           | Non-Teaching Staff  | 41        | 20.6       |
| Work Experience           | Below 1 year        | 44        | 22.1       |
|                           | 1-3 years           | 50        | 25.1       |
|                           | 3-5 years           | 30        | 15.1       |
|                           | 5-10 years          | 41        | 20.6       |
|                           | Above 10 years      | 34        | 17.1       |

|              |                         |     |      |
|--------------|-------------------------|-----|------|
| Department   | MBA & MCA               | 14  | 7    |
|              | Engineering             | 51  | 25.6 |
|              | Arts & Commerce         | 38  | 19.1 |
|              | Science                 | 40  | 20.1 |
|              | Polytechnic             | 34  | 17.1 |
|              | Administrative & Others | 22  | 11.1 |
| Salary Range | Up to ₹20,000           | 131 | 65.8 |
|              | ₹20,001–₹40,000         | 55  | 27.6 |
|              | Above ₹40,000           | 13  | 6.6  |

The demographic profile indicates that the majority of respondents belong to E.G.S. Pillay Arts and Science College (42.2%), followed by E.G.S. Pillay Engineering College (38.2%). Most respondents (37.7%) are in the age group of 31–40 years, indicating a relatively young and experienced workforce. Female employees constitute a slightly higher proportion (54.8%) than male employees (45.2%).

With regard to educational qualification, a majority of respondents possess postgraduate qualifications (43.2%), followed by M.Phil. degree holders (24.1%), reflecting a highly qualified workforce. Teaching staff account for 79.4% of the respondents, while non-teaching staff constitute 20.6%.

In terms of work experience, 25.1% of the respondents have 1–3 years of experience, followed by 22.1% with less than one year of experience. The Engineering department contributes the highest proportion of respondents (25.6%), followed by the Science department (20.1%). Further, the majority of employees (65.8%) receive a monthly salary of up to ₹20,000.

Overall, the demographic profile reveals that the respondents predominantly comprise qualified, mid-career teaching professionals working across various institutions and departments, providing a suitable basis for examining and comparing job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions.

## 11. EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS REGARDING JOB SATISFACTION

Employee perceptions reflect the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of employees toward various aspects of their work environment and organizational practices. Understanding these perceptions is essential for evaluating the level of job satisfaction and identifying areas that require managerial attention. The present study examines employees' perceptions regarding work culture, recognition, communication, career development opportunities, work-life balance, organizational support, and welfare facilities.

**Table 3: Overall Employee Perceptions Regarding Job Satisfaction**

| Perception Level | Frequency  | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| Unfavorable      | 8          | 4          |
| Neutral          | 76         | 38.2       |
| Favorable        | 115        | 57.8       |
| Total            | <b>199</b> | <b>100</b> |

The above table presents the overall employee perceptions regarding job satisfaction. Out of the total 199 respondents, 115 respondents (57.8%) expressed favourable perceptions towards their work environment and organizational practices, indicating that a majority of employees hold positive views regarding various dimensions of their jobs. Further, 76 respondents (38.2%) reported neutral perceptions, suggesting that although they are reasonably satisfied, certain aspects of their work may require improvement. Only 8 respondents (4.0%) expressed unfavourable perceptions, indicating dissatisfaction with specific organizational practices.

Overall, the findings reveal that employees possess predominantly favourable perceptions regarding their jobs and the organizational environment, reflecting a generally positive level of job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions.

## 12. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents' perceptions regarding job satisfaction and its dimensions. Measures such as mean and standard deviation were employed to understand the central tendency and variability of responses.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Job Satisfaction Dimensions among Staff Members**

| Variable                 | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Work Environment         | 4.12 | 0.68               |
| Recognition and Rewards  | 3.98 | 0.74               |
| Communication            | 4.05 | 0.71               |
| Career Development       | 3.87 | 0.79               |
| Work-Life Balance        | 3.94 | 0.76               |
| Organizational Support   | 4.08 | 0.69               |
| Overall Job Satisfaction | 4.01 | 0.72               |

The mean values indicate that employees generally have favourable perceptions regarding various aspects of their jobs. The highest mean score was observed for work environment (Mean = 4.12), followed by organizational support (Mean = 4.08), indicating positive perceptions toward the institutional environment and support systems. The standard deviation values are below one, suggesting relatively consistent responses among employees.

### 13. CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

#### 13.1. Hypothesis

- $H_0$ : There is no significant association between demographic variables and overall job satisfaction.
- $H_1$ : There is a significant association between demographic variables and overall job satisfaction.

**Table 5: Chi-Square Analysis of the Association between Demographic Variables and Overall Job Satisfaction**

| Variable        | $\chi^2$ Value | p-value | Result          |
|-----------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Gender          | 2.154          | 0.341   | Not Significant |
| Age             | 11.432         | 0.022   | Significant     |
| Designation     | 5.867          | 0.053   | Not Significant |
| Work Experience | 14.267         | 0.014   | Significant     |

The results reveal that age and work experience have a significant association with job satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, gender and designation do not significantly influence overall job satisfaction. This indicates that employees' satisfaction levels vary according to their stage of career and experience.

#### 13.2. One-Way ANOVA

- $H_0$ : There is no significant difference in job satisfaction among employees belonging to different institutions.
- $H_1$ : There is a significant difference in job satisfaction among employees belonging to different institutions.

**Table 6: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Job Satisfaction among Employees of Different Institutions**

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | p-value |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|---------|
| Between Groups      | 8.624          | 3   | 2.875       | 4.216 | 0.007   |
| Within Groups       | 133.021        | 195 | 0.682       |       |         |
| Total               | 141.645        | 198 |             |       |         |

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference in job satisfaction among staff members belonging to different institutions ( $F = 4.216$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). This suggests that institutional policies, work environment, and management practices contribute to variations in employee satisfaction levels.

### 14. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

**Dependent Variable:** Overall Job Satisfaction

**Independent Variables:**

- Work Environment

- Recognition and Rewards
- Communication
- Career Development
- Organizational Support

**Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing Overall Job Satisfaction**

| Predictor               | Beta  | t-value | p-value |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Work Environment        | 0.312 | 4.562   | <0.001  |
| Recognition and Rewards | 0.228 | 3.814   | <0.001  |
| Communication           | 0.164 | 2.986   | 0.003   |
| Career Development      | 0.137 | 2.421   | 0.016   |
| Organizational Support  | 0.284 | 4.118   | <0.001  |

$$R^2 = 0.642$$

$$\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.633$$

$$F = 69.174$$

$$p < 0.001$$

The regression model explains 64.2% of the variation in overall job satisfaction. Work environment emerged as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.312$ ), followed by organizational support ( $\beta = 0.284$ ) and recognition and rewards ( $\beta = 0.228$ ). The findings indicate that creating a supportive work environment, providing recognition, and ensuring effective communication significantly enhance job satisfaction among staff members in higher education institutions.

### 15. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The majority of the respondents reported moderate to high levels of job satisfaction, indicating a generally positive perception of their work environment.
2. Female employees constituted a slightly higher proportion of the respondents, and most employees belonged to the age group of 31–40 years, representing a relatively young and experienced workforce.
3. A significant proportion of the respondents possessed postgraduate qualifications, indicating that higher education institutions employ a highly qualified workforce.
4. Most employees expressed favourable perceptions regarding organizational support, work environment, communication, and interpersonal relationships.
5. The descriptive analysis revealed that work environment and organizational support received comparatively higher mean scores, indicating their importance in determining employee satisfaction.

6. The Chi-square analysis indicated that age and work experience had a significant association with job satisfaction, whereas gender and designation did not significantly influence satisfaction levels.
7. The ANOVA results showed significant differences in job satisfaction among employees across different institutions, suggesting that institutional policies and management practices influence employee perceptions.
8. The regression analysis identified work environment, organizational support, recognition and rewards, communication, and career development opportunities as significant predictors of job satisfaction.
9. Work environment and organizational support emerged as the strongest determinants of employee satisfaction, highlighting the importance of creating a supportive and employee-friendly organizational climate.
10. Overall, the study indicates that employee satisfaction in higher education institutions is influenced by a combination of organizational, professional, and personal factors.

## 16. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. Higher education institutions should provide a supportive and inclusive work environment that promotes collaboration, trust, and employee well-being.
2. Management should establish transparent recognition and reward systems to appreciate employees' contributions and achievements.
3. Institutions should strengthen communication channels and encourage employee participation in decision-making processes.
4. Adequate opportunities for training, professional development, and career advancement should be provided to enhance employee satisfaction and commitment.
5. Institutions should implement work-life balance initiatives, including flexible work arrangements and employee wellness programmes.
6. Regular employee satisfaction surveys should be conducted to identify concerns and formulate appropriate interventions.
7. Stress management programmes, counselling services, and employee assistance initiatives should be introduced to improve employees' psychological well-being.
8. Human resource policies should be periodically reviewed and aligned with employees' expectations and institutional objectives.
9. Special attention should be given to employees at different career stages by designing need-based support and development programmes.
10. Management should foster a culture of recognition, fairness, and continuous improvement to sustain high levels of employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

## 17. CONCLUSION

Job satisfaction is a critical determinant of employee performance, organizational commitment, and institutional effectiveness in higher education institutions. The study reveals that the majority of staff members exhibit moderate to high levels of job satisfaction and generally possess

favourable perceptions regarding their work environment and organizational practices. The findings further indicate that factors such as work environment, organizational support, recognition, communication, and career development opportunities significantly influence employee satisfaction.

The study also highlights that demographic factors such as age and work experience affect employees' satisfaction levels, while institutional differences contribute to variations in employee perceptions. These findings emphasize the need for higher education institutions to adopt comprehensive human resource practices that address employees' professional and personal needs.

Overall, creating a supportive work environment, promoting employee development, recognizing contributions, and ensuring effective communication are essential for enhancing job satisfaction. By implementing employee-centric policies and practices, higher education institutions can improve workforce morale, strengthen organizational commitment, and achieve long-term institutional sustainability and excellence.

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