

Correlates of Job Satisfaction among Female Non-Academics

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between motivation, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among female non-academics in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). A total of 154 respondents were involved in the study. A self-administered questionnaire was used in the data collection. Result revealed that respondents had high levels of extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$), intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$) and emotional intelligence ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$) were significantly correlated with job satisfaction. There was also a significant difference in job satisfaction between marital status, ($F(2,150) = 8.16$, $p < 0.05$), where the divorced female respondents exhibited higher job satisfaction than the single and married female respondents. Multiple regression analysis revealed that intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$) and emotional intelligence ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$) were the significant predictors of job satisfaction. Respondents' intrinsic motivation and emotional intelligence were important in influencing job satisfaction. Thus, by understanding the positive impact of motivation and emotional intelligence towards job satisfaction among female non-academics, it helped to ensure the high quality of job satisfaction while maintaining the performance of higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

Keywords: Motivation, Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Non-Academics, Higher Learning Institutions

Introduction

In this globalized world, the human capital has been highlighted as the key factor of competitiveness for an organization. Every organization strives towards achieving their goals. Without the strong support system from the employees, organizational goals cannot be obtained. The human resource division is responsible to ensure that the employee's well-being at the workplace is maintained. Normally, employees whose welfare are well taken care of will likely have job satisfaction as they feel appreciated through the job. Also, the same concept is applied in the context of high educational institutions which consist of two categories of employees that are academic staff and non-academic staff. However, often the presence of the non-academic staff has been overlooked. Barakos-Catwright (2012) recognized that the performance of a higher learning institution also comes from the non-academic staff, but sometimes this working party is the least-represented, the greatest

uncompensated and least respected category for contributions to corporate objectives and decisions.

Onyebuchi et al (2019) claimed that less retention and absenteeism are found when employees are satisfied with their work. In contrast, low satisfied employees may be under pressure to do the job because they find that it is meaningless and do not benefit them in any way. As a result, they become incapable of accomplishing the task successfully and this leads to decreases in productivity. When employees are dissatisfied, the tendency for them to leave the company is high or they will remain working there but contribute passively to help the organizations thrive (Huynh, 2020). Similarly, dissatisfied employees may have disruptive impacts on organization for example, issues of unemployment and absenteeism which are caused by their lack of motivation, and underperform (Omar et al., 2021).

Due to the potential effects of low job satisfaction, there is a crucial need to pay a close attention on the extent to which factors affect job satisfaction. Motivation is one of the significant factors of every employee's personal growth. According to Robins and Judge (2011), motivation is described as a mechanism which provides strength, orientation and willingness to exert efforts of an individual towards the achievement of goals. Motivation is categorized as two types which are extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the participation of intrinsically rewarding or pleasant behaviour (Legault, 2016). Meanwhile, Ryan and Deci (2000) defined intrinsic motivation as the inherent and natural urges to confront people, to learn and discover in activities. It has been found from previous studies that motivation predicts job satisfaction directly.

Based on Bajpai and Rajpot (2018), employee motivation has a vital role in their productivity, which contributes to increased job satisfaction and engagement to organization. The correlation of motivation and job satisfaction is explained in a situation when one feels motivated, effective decisions are made to complete the tasks since it manages to satisfy them through the job (Aryanta et al., 2019). Specifically, extrinsic motivation affects employee's job satisfaction in a way that they desire the favorable outcomes of doing the job. A well-designed policy on the employee advancement and promotion provides employees the ability to expand their career resulting in a sense of accomplishment (Jalagat Jr, 2018). Meanwhile, intrinsic motivation has been found to impact employee's job satisfaction through their achievements that are being appreciated by their managers (Al-Hanhanah & Al-Harethi, 2019).

In addition, research found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence has been described as a person's ability to acknowledge their emotion and also other's emotions that leads in developing positive relationships with them (Sony & Mekoth, 2016). It is often reported that employees with a low ability to regulate their emotions would have a low level of job satisfaction (Huang, 2016; Rashid, 2016). Based on Lim (2016), employees who's attentive to other's emotions are found to be more likely do their job excellently in order to obtain the goals and they are also considered the ones who are satisfied with their jobs.

Women have found to play a critical role for the growth of the economy in a country. It is evident that women's contribution in the economy has escalated, reaching half of the total population throughout the years. Based on the Key Statistics of the Labour Force in Malaysia for May 2021, the female labour force has increased to 6.31 million persons compared to the April in previous year, 2020 which is 6.14 million persons (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021). Additionally, findings from a previous study reported that the correlation between education and economic development is substantial, whereby tertiary education has shown

the greatest impact on Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Seuk, 2017). This indicates that both academics and non-academics in the higher learning institutions play a crucial role in ensuring that the education sector drives economic growth effectively.

For an organization to be productive, it does not simply depend on the quantity of employees, instead the quality of employees should be emphasized on. In order to attain high quality of employees, employers are required to understand a critical aspect of job satisfaction. Also, it is because a strong economic development has primarily been caused by the massive expansion in the education sector in which there is a greater number of female employees comprises of the non-academics. Thus, it is essential to determine factors that satisfy the female non-academics in the universities.

It is claimed that females have low ability in decision making as they tend to make decisions by following their emotions. Based on Anuar et al. (2017), women's emotions through the process of decision-making could be an obstacle to their retention. In addition, female non-academics also face a heavy workload as their task requires them to do a lot of documentation and management of students and staffs on a daily basis. Consequently, they might feel burnt out to carry out their duties which sometimes exceeds their ability. According to Ekechukwu and Isiguzo (2016), the daily activities of non-academics are sufficient to allow a normal person to feel burnt out. Thus, they will likely experience negative outcomes which is lower job satisfaction. Besides, female non-academics often have issues with flexibility of working hours. This mainly affects the married female non-academics who have children, since they have to struggle balancing the obligations as a wife, a mother and an employee. According to Akhter et al (2019), female employees stated that their workload has increased due to juggling between family and work responsibilities. As a result of dealing with excessive workload, they feel demotivated that gradually decreases their job satisfaction.

Therefore, in an effort to maintain female employment which assists economic growth excellently, they must equip themselves with a skill known as emotional intelligence so that they can overcome the challenges and issues within an organization effectively. Also, motivation must be instilled as a driving force to keep them consistently motivated and productive which leads towards a better job satisfaction. Hence, it is necessary to understand the relationships between motivation and emotional intelligence with job satisfaction among female non-academic staff. Previous research mostly focuses on the academics which includes both genders in determining their job satisfaction (Ahmad & Jameel, 2018; Thevanes & Saranraj, 2018). Limited research has been conducted among the female non-academics. Therefore, it is essential to prioritize the female non-academic staff as a category that assists the institution's performance. With that being said, their job satisfaction must be taken into consideration in order to create excellence in higher educational institutions for a better future.

Most previous studies only focused on job satisfaction which influenced by motivation, such as among the professional occupations i.e., accountants (Asaari et al., 2020), quantity surveyors (Nur et al., 2018) and academic staffs (Tentama et al., 2020; Omar et al., 2021) or the influence of job satisfaction by emotional intelligence (Mohammadi & Yekta, 2018; Javed et al., 2020). To date, there is no study that combine the two variables (i.e., motivation and emotional intelligence) in particular among female non-academics at the higher learning institutions. Hence, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationships between motivation and emotional intelligence with job satisfaction among female non-academics in UPM.

Materials and Methods

This is a cross sectional research, which has been conducted using a survey method. A self-administered questionnaire was used for the data collection. The data have been interpreted using the descriptive and correlational statistical analysis. The study was conducted in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), a top 200 in the World University Ranking (QS Quacquarelli Symonds Limited, 2021). A simple random sampling technique was used to gather the respondents. The sample size was 154 respondents after calculated using the Cochran formula 1963.

The Work Preference Inventory (WPI) by Amabile et al (1994) was used to measure employee's intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. It consisted of 30 items which scored on a 4-point Likert scale (1= never true of me, 4=always true of me). The higher the scores, the greater the motivation. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation were found to be 0.79 and 0.70 respectively.

The Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 (BEIS-10) by Davies et al (2010) was used to emotional intelligence. It consisted of 10 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree). This BEIS-10 was comprised of five dimensions that were self-emotion appraisal, others emotion appraisal, regulation of emotions, regulation of other's emotions and the use of emotion. The higher scores represented a high degree of emotional intelligence. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients was 0.84.

The Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997) has been used to measure the employee's satisfaction with their job. The instrument comprised of 10 items and scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients was 0.89.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of 154 female non-academics in UPM who were involved in this study. More than half of the respondents (55.2%) were non-academics aged between 21 years old until 39 years old. About 35.1% of the respondents aged from 40 to 49 years old and the rest (9.7%) aged 50 years old and above. In terms of marital status, about 64.3% of respondents were married, 31.2% singles, and only 3.9% were divorcees.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Female Non-academics in UPM (n=154)

Variables	n (%)
Age (years)	
21 – 39	85 (55.2)
40 – 49	54 (35.1)
50 and above	15 (9.7)
Marital Status	
Single	48 (31.4)
Married	99 (64.7)
Divorced	6 (3.9)
Monthly Income	
RM1000 – RM2000	18 (11.7)
RM2001 – RM4999	87 (56.5)
RM5000 and above	49 (31.8)

Number of Children	
0	59 (38.3)
1 – 3	62 (40.3)
4 – 6	31 (20.1)
More than 6	2 (1.3)
Level of Education	
SPM	19 (12.5)
Diploma/STPM	25 (16.2)
Bachelor Degree	81 (52.6)
Postgraduate	29 (18.7)
Years of Working Experience	
1 – 5 years	26 (16.9)
6 – 10 years	16 (10.4)
More than 10 years	112 (72.7)

In terms of education level, about 71.3% of the respondents have obtained their tertiary education. The remaining of the respondents (28.7%) have attained their upper secondary education either at Diploma/STPM or SPM level (Table 1). In addition, about 72.7% of the respondents have more than 10 years of working experience. The rest of the respondents reported that they have between 1 to 5 years (16.9%) and 6 to 10 years of working experience (10.4%).

Table 2 describes the levels of respondents' motivation, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Motivation has been measured using the Work Preference Inventory (WPI) by (Amabile et al., 1994). There are two types of motivation i.e., extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Based on Table 2, result shows that the highest score for the respondents' extrinsic motivation is 55 and the lowest score is 28 ($M = 41.23$, $SD = 5.01$), while the highest score for their intrinsic motivation is 58 and the lowest score is 33 ($M = 45.08$, $SD = 5.39$). Most of the respondents (78.6%) have a high to a very high level of extrinsic motivation. As for intrinsic motivation, result shows that, majority of them (92.2%) have a high to very high level of intrinsic motivation.

Table 2

Levels of Motivation, Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among Female Non-academics in UPM (n=154)

Variables	n (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Motivation					
a. Extrinsic					
Very High (48.76 – 60)	12 (7.8)	41.23	5.01	28	55
High (37.51 – 48.75)	109 (70.8)				
Low (26.26 – 37.5)	33 (21.4)				
a. Intrinsic					
Very High (48.76 – 60)	46 (29.9)	45.08	5.39	33	58
High (37.51 – 48.75)	96 (62.3)				
Low (26.26 – 37.5)	12 (7.8)				
Emotional Intelligence (EI)					
Very high EI (45 – 50)	29 (18.8)	40.12	4.88	28	50

High EI (36 – 44)	100 (64.9)				
Average EI (27 – 35)	25 (16.2)				
Job Satisfaction (JS)		40.42	5.84	22	50
Very high JS (42 – 50)	68 (44.2)				
High JS (39 – 41)	27 (17.5)				
Average JS (32 – 38)	49 (31.8)				
Low JS (27 – 31)	9 (5.8)				
Very low JS (10 – 26)	1 (0.6)				

Note: SD. = Standard deviation, Min. = Minimum, Max. = Maximum

A Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 (BEIS-10) by Davies et al (2010) has been used to assess the level of emotional intelligence of female non-academics in UPM. Result in Table 2 shows that the highest score for emotional intelligence is 50, and the lowest score is 28 ($M = 40.12$, $SD = 4.88$). Majority respondents attained a high to a very high level of emotional intelligence (83.7%) and only 16.2% of them have an average level of emotional intelligence.

Moreover, the Generic Job Satisfaction by Macdonald and MacIntyre (1997) has been used to measure the degree of job satisfaction among the female non-academics. Result in Table 2 shows that the highest score for job satisfaction is 50 and the lowest score is 22 ($M = 40.42$, $SD = 5.84$). About 61.7% of the respondents reported to have a high to a very high level of job satisfaction, 31.8% of them have an average level of job satisfaction. Unfortunately, about 6.4% of the respondents reported to have a low to a very low level of job satisfaction.

Table 3 explains the relationships between motivation, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among female non-academics in UPM. The result of the Pearson correlation coefficient shows that there is a significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and job satisfaction ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$). This finding is consistent with the previous study in which adequate hours is one of the extrinsic factors that could make the employees satisfied with their job (Davies et al., 2010). The positive correlation indicates that the higher the extrinsic motivation, the higher the job satisfaction exhibited by the female non-academics.

Table 3
Relationships between Motivation, Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among Female Non-academics in UPM (n=154)

Variables	Job Satisfaction	
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Motivation:		
Extrinsic	0.33	.000**
Intrinsic	0.44	.000**
Emotional intelligence	0.48	.000**

Note: **=significant at 0.01

The result of the Pearson correlation coefficient also shows that there is a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$). Similar finding in the previous study illustrates that intrinsic motivation such as self-innovation could lead to the employees' job satisfaction (Karamanis et al., 2019). The positive correlation also

indicates that the higher the intrinsic motivation, the higher the job satisfaction exhibited by the female non-academics.

The result also shows the positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence with job satisfaction ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.01$). This finding is aligned with the previous studies which perceived that employees with high emotional intelligence had high potential to control their emotions which lead to a higher job satisfaction (Shukla et al., 2016).

Table 4

Extrinsic Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, Emotional Intelligence, and Job Satisfaction Mean Scores by Marital Status

Variables		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig,
Extrinsic Motivation	Between Groups	511.62	2	31.24	1.24	0.29
	Within Groups	4702.04	150	25.19		
	Total	5213.66	152			
Intrinsic Motivation	Between Groups	94.77	2	37.37	1.29	0.28
	Within Groups	3549.47	150	29.07		
	Total	3644.23	152			
Emotional Intelligence	Between Groups	94.77	2	47.38	2.00	0.14
	Within Groups	3549.47	150	23.66		
	Total	3644.23	152			
Job Satisfaction	Between Groups	511.62	2	255.81	8.16	0.00*
	Within Groups	4702.04	150	31.35		
	Total	5213.66	152			

Note: *=significant at 0.05

Table 4 demonstrates the differences of the respondents' extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction by marital status. The result of the One Way ANOVA shows that only job satisfaction is differed by marital status of the respondents (i.e. single, married and divorced) ($F(2,150) = 8.16$, $p = 0.000$). This finding is in line with the previous study by (Barlas, 2016). A further Tukey's post hoc test shows that there is a significant difference between divorced female non-academics ($M = 43.50$, $SD = 2.95$) and single female non-academics ($M = 37.79$, $SD = 4.83$), whereby the divorced respondents reported a higher job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the results in Table 4 also show no statistically significant differences in extrinsic motivation ($F(2,150) = 1.24$, $p = 0.29$), intrinsic motivation ($F(2,150) = 1.29$, $p = 0.28$), and emotional intelligence ($F(2,150) = 2.00$, $p = 0.14$) among the married, single and divorced

female non-academics in UPM. Similar findings can be also be found in the previous studies by (Dey et al., 2020; Zainal et al., 2018).

As depicted in Table 5, a multiple linear regression analysis has been conducted to predict the unique factor for job satisfaction based on the female non-academics motivation and emotional intelligence. The result shows that all variables in the regression model explains about 28% ($R^2 = 0.28$) of variance in job satisfaction ($F(3,150) = 19.32$, $p < 0.000$) among female non-academics in UPM.

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis on the Predictors of Job Satisfaction (n=154)

Variables	B	Std. Error	β	t	p
(Constant)	10.01	4.16		2.43	
Motivation					
a. Intrinsic Motivation	0.24	0.09	0.22	2.56	0.012*
b. Extrinsic Motivation	0.11	0.09	0.09	1.14	0.26
Emotional Intelligence	0.38	0.11	0.31	3.58	0.000***

Note: $R^2 = 0.28$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.26$; $F = 19.32$; * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5 shows that intrinsic motivation and emotional intelligence significantly predict job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$) in explaining job satisfaction, when the variance explained by other predictor variables in the model is controlled for. Finding suggests that one standard deviation increase in emotional intelligence is followed by 0.31 standard deviation increase in job satisfaction. Likewise, intrinsic motivation is also important in explaining the variation in job satisfaction among female non-academics ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$). As such, the present study provides a vital insight to any effort in achieving high job satisfaction among female employees, which would be effective when emotional intelligence and intrinsic motivation are taken into consideration.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study shows that most of the female non-academics in UPM who are of different marital status, levels of education and working experiences are highly motivated extrinsically and intrinsically, attained high emotional intelligence and also highly satisfied with their job. However, they are some respondents whom reported of having moderate to low level of job satisfaction, low motivation and moderate emotional intelligence. This imply that the issue of job satisfaction, motivation and emotional intelligence may exist and should be of concern to the employers. The human resource division of UPM can enhance the female non-academic's job satisfaction by providing incentives in career growth development and flexible working hour.

In the present study, the respondents' motivation and emotional intelligence are also significantly correlate with their job satisfaction. Additionally, emotional intelligence is found to be the most unique predictor of job satisfaction among female non-academics in UPM, followed by intrinsic motivation. Hence, by understanding the impact of motivation and

emotional intelligence towards job satisfaction among female non-academics, it helps to provides a guideline to assist the employers to address these issues such as by providing specific program to enhance employees' emotional intelligence and motivation. Supportive environment at the workplace will help to boost the career growth of female non-academics, contribute towards their well-being and ultimately help the organizations thrive.

The organizational achievement relies upon the satisfaction of its workforces to perform effectively to accomplish the institution's goals. Therefore, this research findings contribute to extend the existing knowledge on the field of work ecology and human development where employees motivation and emotional intelligence are closely linked to the efficiency and productivity at the workplace. Specifically, the findings when applied in the context of higher learning institution highlight the importance role of the non-academics in ensuring that the tertiary education sector can contribute to drive an effective economic growth for our Country. For future research studies, it is recommended that the same research should be conducted among a wider range of non-academics from public and private higher learning institutions in Malaysia and also to identify gender differences in this context.

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