

Do High Salaries Ensure Job Satisfaction? : An Investigation on the Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction of Educators in Indonesia

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Abstract. Job satisfaction is demonstrated to boost productivity. It is not easy, nevertheless, to create conditions to enhance job satisfaction. Objective workplace factors such as a big salary and a high-ranking position are insufficient to provide job satisfaction. Job satisfaction necessitates job characteristics that promote meaningful employment and also individuals' potential to develop. This study aims to explore the factors that influence job satisfaction in educators. A total of 522 educators (i.e., teachers, lecturers, and trainers) participated in this study. The results of the research show salary had no impact on educators job satisfaction. Jobs position has a positive effect on job satisfaction but is not greater than job characteristics, which include job authenticity, quality of work performed, meaningful feelings obtained through work, work that stimulates personal development, and work that recognizes one's accomplishments. This study provides helpful insights for organizations to identify the importance of job characteristics that contribute the most to educators job satisfaction.

Key words: job satisfaction, salary, job characteristics, educators

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INTRODUCTION

Educators' (i.e., teachers, lecturers, trainers) job satisfaction is crucial not just for themselves but also for their students. Educators' job satisfaction is linked to job productivity (Heller et al., 1992) and strong work commitment (Gersten, 2001). Meanwhile, educators' poor levels of job satisfaction will lead to increased job stress, which will affect not just performance but also the quality of relationships between educators and students. Capara et al., (2006) noted that work satisfaction will eventually alter educators' self-efficacy in their skills, which will affect student academic progress. The higher the level of job satisfaction, the better self-efficacy of the job achievement.

Studies have noted that salary and job position are major determinants in affecting job satisfaction (Card, Mas, Moretti, & Saez, 2012; Diener & Seligman, 2004; Lestari, Fahmie, & Zulaifah, 2021). Work motivation and performance are also strongly correlated with the level of salaries (Card et al., 2012; Judge & Church, 2000). Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, 1966) also mentions that salary is a hygiene factor – a factor in which its absence would cause an employee to feel unmotivated to work – which isn't surprising when it comes to choosing a job, considering the most important factor to consider is the salary (Johnson & Sohi, 2014). Mohanty (2007) stated a positive work attitude will rise in parallel with a pay increase. Similarly, research shows a positive con-

nection between employment positions and job satisfaction (Converse et al., 2012; Salovey et al., 2003). The higher one's position in the job, which generally translates to a higher salary, the more satisfied one is with the work.

However, other studies have discovered that money is not the most significant factor in job satisfaction (Estafianto, Fakhruddin, & Sutarto, 2020; Gersten, 2001). A theory of job satisfaction finds that money has little bearing on job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1974; 1976). Hackman and Oldham (1974; 1976) stated job characteristics are the most important substances that have an impact on a person's psychological well-being at work. Five job characteristics (i.e., the variety of skills used in the job, a clear job identity, tasks that have important values, independence in doing a task, and feedback obtained during/after the task) determine whether a person is happy or unsatisfied with his or her job. Following Hackman and Oldham theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Synderman, 1959) states that a hygiene factor (i.e., salary) might inhibit job dissatisfaction but not lead to satisfaction. A decent salary without accompanying motivating factors (i.e., achievement, recognition, growth, responsibility, advancement, and the work itself), will only get someone to be willing to work, but not motivate them. In this situation, someone is merely doing a job to get paid; the employee feels satisfied with the salary but the salary does not ensure work satisfaction.

These job characteristics or motivating factors are claimed to lead to positive psychological conditions such as feelings of meaningfulness and deep job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1974; 1976). Several studies have proven (Birnbbaum, Farh, & Wong, 1986; Young et al., 2014) that the more varied one's tasks the more job satisfaction will increase. Task variation means avoiding monotonous activities, which ultimately leads to little to no job boredom that could trigger job dissatisfaction. Another study (Hunter, 2006) states that when a person works in a team, has varied work assignments, has a clear task identity, has important tasks, and gets feedback on what is being done, the level of job satisfaction will be higher (Hunter, 2006). Meanwhile, other research states that jobs that are meaningful to others, jobs that create a sense of respect, and jobs that can maximize potential are positively correlated with job satisfaction (Kwantes, 2010). Furthermore, studies have found that the best determinant of job satisfaction is the opportunity for an individual to grow and succeed (Johnson & Sohi, 2014; Lyons Lapin, & Young, 2003).

Unfortunately, the approach to the influence of job characteristic factors and Herzberg's Theory on job satisfaction has been heavily criticized. Critics of this approach highlight the subjectivity of a person in interpreting the characteristics of the work undertaken (Birnbbaum, Farh, & Wong, 1986). A person's interpretation of job characteristics and motivating factors in the same job/position will be largely determined by the values, preferences, and work goals of each person (Birnbbaum, Farh, & Wong, 1986). Another criticism is that the importance/unimportance of a task/job can only be judged if one compares one's work with that of others' (Ferris & Fried, 1987). That is, two people in two different companies doing the same job may give different ratings of the importance of their task by comparing their work with that of their co-workers.

Furthermore, according to the career model, a person's attitude towards work will change depending on the stage of his career. A person's viewpoint and attitude about employment will change as someone get older. For instance, when a person becomes older, there is less of a desire to maximize potential, probably because they feel that all of their potentials have already been developed. As a person grows older, their accomplishment orientation fades and is replaced by a desire to enjoy life. Therefore, age is an important factor in determining job satisfaction (Rhodes, 1983).

There are three different views on the relationship between age and job satisfaction. The U-Shaped function model (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) holds that job satisfaction will be inversely related to age (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). The

older a person is, the less his/her job satisfaction will be. On the other hand, the second view (Hulin & Smith, 1965) is of the view that job satisfaction increases with age. Meanwhile, the third view argues that age is positively correlated with job satisfaction until a certain period whereby finally, job satisfaction will decrease along with chronological age (Carrell & Elbert, 1974; Saleh & Otis, 1964).

The contradictions of several views on the age factor and job satisfaction certainly require further explanation. There may be other factors that mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and age. Therefore, variables such as work experience, education level, and salary – which are linearly related to increasing age (Bomundo & Kopelman, 1980) – need to be investigated as variables that are thought to influence the inconsistency of the relationship between age and job satisfaction.

Based on the above background, it is deemed necessary to understand the factors that influence the job satisfaction of educators as a whole. Combining subjective aspects (job characteristics) and objective factors (salary and position), as well as demographic factors (gender, age, education level, and job tenure), it is important to understand the factors that affect job satisfaction in educators in Indonesia. Educators are the subject of this research because the teaching profession is considered different from other professions. Judging from the views of Hackman and Oldham (1974; 1976), the duties and responsibilities of educators have met the criteria for the characteristics of the work in question. Educators are required not only to be professional in their work and have mature pedagogical abilities, but are also required to have qualified personality and social competencies. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effect of the job characteristics on educators and objective factors in work (salary and position) on job satisfaction by controlling for demographic variables (gender, age, education level, and years of service).

METHOD

The research design is a cross-sectional quantitative study. A cross-sectional design is a survey study that measure the outcome (dependent variable) and exposure (dependent variable) from a population or a representative of a population simultaneously. In the social sciences, a cross-sectional study design is frequently used to anticipate the dependent variable's impact on the independent variable.

The two main variables in this study are work satisfaction as the independent variable, and job characteristics as the dependent variable. Job position, age, education level, job tenure, and gender are all included as control variables in this study. Job satisfaction is

described as an individual's level of satisfaction with their work. Job characteristics, on the other hand, are defined as the duties or features that a job possesses (i.e., work that creates a sense of respect, work that upholds the quality of work, meaningful work for others, work that demands authentic ideas, and work that can influence others). A person's position is referred to as a position in a job (i.e., managerial and non-managerial). The level of education is determined based on formal education, ranging from bachelor to doctorate degrees.

The population are Indonesian educators (i.e., teachers, lecturers, and trainers) with at least one year of job tenure, and a minimum bachelor's degree. Assuming a medium effect size ($f^2 = .0.35$), $\alpha = .05$, and statistical power of .95, the minimal sample size is 46. Non-probability sampling (i.e., convenience sampling) was used as the sampling technique. The participants were 522 school teachers from elementary to senior high school levels in Indonesia. Participants were recruited both online and offline. Participants' age ranged from 22 to 59 years, mean (standard deviation [SD]) = 48.14 (9.04) years, with work experience ranging from 1 to 30 years, mean (SD) = 23.16 (7.77). 67.8% were male, 52.3% held positions like school principals and the remaining 47.7% were teachers without managerial positions.

Measuring tool to measure job characteristics is five aspects (20 items) of SCSJ Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSJ; Shockley et al., 2016) which have been modified. These aspects are quality of work, meaningful work, influence, authenticity, and growth and development. Participants were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement; 1 for strongly disagree, 5 for strongly agreed. The 10 items of overall job satisfaction measurement has been developed based on the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSS; Pepe, Addimando, & Veronese, 2017). The TJSS scales were translated using a back to the back-translation technique by two independent translators from English to Indonesian and vice versa.

The participants were informed about the study's purpose, granted their consent before completing the measures, and were debriefed at the end of their participation. Data were analyzed using two steps multiple regression analysis techniques using IBM SPSS 25.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 contains descriptive statistics, Zero Order Correlations, Point Biserial Correlations, and internal

consistencies (Alpha Cronbach) for each variable. The results show that all subjective aspects (rewards, work quality, job meaning, influence, authenticity, and growth) and objective aspects of work (salary and position) were positively correlated with satisfaction. Meanwhile, among the demographic variables studied, only education level is positively correlated with job satisfaction.

Furthermore, to determine the role of each aspect in predicting satisfaction, multiple regression analysis was performed (Table 2). Two stages of regression were carried out. The first stage examines the role of job characteristics on job satisfaction, and the second stage examines the role of job characteristics together with objective factors (salary and position) and demographic factors (i.e., age, education, gender, and job tenure) on job satisfaction.

The results of the analysis show that in both the first and second stages of regression, all job characteristics, except for factors affecting other people, affect the condition of educators' job satisfaction. The position factor in work also affects job satisfaction, but the salary is not able to increase job satisfaction for educators. The second stage of regression was carried out by controlling for the variables of gender, age, work experience, and education level and found the same conclusion as the regression stage 1. However, in the stage 2 regression, the effect size of each variable increased compared to the stage 1 regression. Of the four demographic variables, none affects job satisfaction.

The results showed that job characteristics (i.e., quality of work, meaningful work, authenticity, and growth and development) and job objective factors (position) affect educators' job satisfaction. Meanwhile, job characteristics (i.e., influence others), and salary are not able to predict educators' job satisfaction. Education level is positively correlated with job satisfaction. However, when juxtaposed with other variables, education cannot predict job satisfaction. The results of this study prove the findings of previous studies which state that salary is not the main determinant of job satisfaction (Beutell & Wittig-Berman, 1999; Chiu & Kosinski, 1999). It is job characteristics that play a major role in shaping job satisfaction (Young et al., 2014; Youssef & Luthans, 2012). The results of this study differ from the three views on the effect of age and job satisfaction: age is not a variable that affects job satisfaction.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic, Zero-Order Correlations, Point Biserial Correlations, dan Cronbach's α (in bracket) for all variables, N = 522

Variables	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Job satisfaction [.738]a	11.54 (1.67)	-											
Reward [.720]a	11.40 (1.86)	.411***	-										
Quality of work [.749]a	9.53 (2.43)	.465***	.544***	-									
Meaningful work [.735]a	12.32 (1.50)	.394***	.438***	.413***	-								
Influence [.750]a	11.29 (1.98)	.337***	.450***	.404***	.487***	-							
Authenticity [.760]a	11.38 (1.73)	.361***	.257***	.230***	.210***	.176***	-						
Growth & Development [.757]a	12.11 (1.23)	.393***	.342***	.375***	.443***	.263***	.324***	-					
Salary	6.25 (2.32)	.119**	.078	.043	.075	.197***	.002	.083	-				
Job position ^b		.165***	.138**	.100*	.081	.369***	-.012	.066	.497***	-			
Age	48.14 (9.04)	.021	-.050	-.033	.022	.122	-.019	-.011	.649***	.304***	-		
Education ^c		.151**	.185***	.164***	.107*	.343***	.006	.077	.430***	.808***	.229***	-	
Job tenure	23.16 (7.77)	-.061	-.116*	-.033	-.015	.025	.001	-.060	.361***	.018	-.028	-	-.028
Gender ^d		-.049	-.074	-.110*	-.092*	-.233***	.077	-.088*	-.266***	-.475***	-.376***	-	-.192***
													.046

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

^ainternal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha)

^beducator with managerial position = 1, educator without managerial position = 0

^cBachelor degree = 1, master degree = 2, doctoral degree = 3

^dMale = 1, Female = 2

Table 2. Two Steps Multiple Linier Regression with and without Control Variables (N = 522)

Variables	STEP 2				STEP 1			
	B	SE	p	CI 95% LB - UB	B	SE	p	CI 95% LB - UB
<i>Job Satisfaction</i>								
Recognition	.096	.044	.029	.010 - .183	.092	.041	.026	.011 - .172
Quality of Work	.173	.032	.000	.110 - .236	.166	.031	.001	.105 - .226
Meaningful Work	.142	.052	.007	.039 - .245	.144	.051	.005	.044 - .244
Influence	.028	.040	.495	-.052 - .107	.019	.039	.628	-.058 - .096
Authenticity	.175	.039	.000	.098 - .252	.201	.037	.001	.128 - .273
Growth & Development	.196	.060	.001	.078 - .313	.177	.057	.002	.064 - .289
Salary	.037	.038	.335	-.038 - .112	.024	.029	.423	-.034 - .082
Job Position	.559	.226	.014	.116 - 1.003	.288	.146	.048	.002 - .574
Age	-.008	.016	.753	-.039 - .023				
Education	-.282	.207	.620	-.689 - .125				
Job Tenure	-.004	.014	.174	-.031 - .022				
Gender	.244	.155	.067	-.039 - .549				
R^2	.363				.356			
F for change in R^2	45.458 <.001				35.433 <.001			

The results of this study are supported by several other studies (Al-Zoubi, 2012; Young et al., 2014) which say that the relationship between salary and job

satisfaction is very low. Research (O'Donnell & Mirtcheva-Broderson, 2015) indicates that employees who receive a salary increase of more than half of

their previous salary so far reported the same level of job satisfaction as the level of job satisfaction in employees who experience smaller salary increases. Sorenson's research results (2013) also support this statement that there is no significant increase in work engagement when someone gets a raise. The results of other studies also prove that the amount of salary taken home (absolute salary) will not affect job satisfaction. What affects job satisfaction is the comparison between the salary received and the salary received by others in the same job (relative salary) (O'Donnell & Mirtcheva-Broderson, 2015). Sorenson (2013) states that people will be more satisfied with work if the salary they receive is greater than the salary received by other people in the same position.

This study also proves that job satisfaction is more influenced by subjective factors in work, namely job characteristics. This research proves Hackman and Oldham's theory and Herzberg's theory. It is proven that subjective factors in work lead to job satisfaction. It can be said that someone will interpret his work positively or negatively depending on the point of view of each person. Job characteristics that influence others do not affect job satisfaction, especially for the work of educators. This is possible because the characteristics of work as teaching staff are more tailored toward service, not power.

The results of the study which say that job characteristics affect job satisfaction are supported by several previous studies. Lam and Feldman (2012), note that the job itself (i.e., job authenticity) plays a key role in employee job satisfaction. Employees' creativity to create authentic work enhances the company's ability to gain a competitive advantage. This study reflects that to use the creativity of the employees, the company must provide them with challenging, competitive environments, and a variety in their tasks. It will also enable the employees to enjoy their job and have a sense of pride in it. Employees would feel motivated after getting a variety in their tasks on the same job and they appreciate their freedom.

Moreover, this study indicates a role of job responsibility (i.e., job position) to positively predict job satisfaction which was reported in past studies (Djibu & Duludu, 2020; Lee & Wilbur, 1985). The result of this research reflects that higher work responsibility will engage employees in a wide range of duties and promote active engagement in problem-solving activities. A job that places a greater emphasis on employees' continuous learning will increase job responsibility and problem-solving activities which lead to job improvements. As a result, employees' talents, knowledge, and skills are expanded, allowing for increased production of complicated items. In other words, employees' work satisfaction is influenced by feelings of accomplishment (Kovach,

1995). The results of this study are also in line with the research conducted by Kovach (1995) which states that employees view work qualities as the most important, with compensation coming in fifth. The work itself is the best indicator of total job satisfaction (job responsibilities and various tasks) (Ferris & Fried, 1987; Parisi & Weiner, 1999; Weiner, 2000).

Another finding in this study is that age is not a variable that affects job satisfaction. However, age is thought to affect job satisfaction through the variables of education level and job position. There was a positive correlation between age and education level ($r = .229, p < .001$) and job position ($r = .304, p < .001$). The older a person is, the higher the level of education as well as the position. Therefore, it can be said that age will indirectly affect job satisfaction by increasing the level of education and position.

The current study had several limitations that warrant further discussion. Even though this study answers the question of the involvement of subjective and objective factors in work satisfaction, it has weaknesses. First, this study was a cross-sectional design, which cannot be used to explain the causal link between research variables. As a result, the discussion of study findings is more speculative, depending on theory and past research findings. Therefore longitudinally researching the job satisfaction of different educators cohorts will be an intriguing topic. The second is that the sample size does not represent all Indonesian instructors. Although the number of sample sizes is statistically adequate, the representation of sample sizes from other educators (e.g., educators from non-formal education) is considered to be still lacking. Third, even though back-to-back translations, group discussions, and shared perspectives with specialists were conducted, it would be preferable if the scale was created based on the real-life situations of Indonesian educators.

CONCLUSION

This research noted that educators job satisfaction is not only affected by the increase in salary. Job satisfaction is a psychological state that is influenced by various subjective variables (i.e., work that creates a sense of respect, work that upholds the quality of work, meaningful work for others, and work that always demands authentic ideas). This study provides helpful insights for organizations to identify the importance of job characteristics that contribute the most to educators job satisfaction. These results could have implications for the organizations, whichever the organizations are, to not only give a good salary for their employees but also provides work that can express individual uniqueness, autonomy, accomplishment, and opportunities to develop.

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