

Job Satisfaction Priorities of Faculty in the College of Agriculture, University of Nebraska

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"With the ever increasing pressure on higher education for accountability, the advent of consumerism, legalism, and the tight economic situation, it is necessary that higher education administration be aware of those factors which help recruit and retain faculty who are of the highest caliber relative to teaching, research and public service" (Wittenauer, 1980). Individuals who are positively motivated toward their work are more likely to work effectively than those who are dissatisfied (Myers, 1964)

As these quotes indicate, research on the topic of job satisfaction is as broad in content as it is in quantity, with a majority coming from the area of industrial management and a very limited amount from higher education. Overall, in the time period beginning in the 1930's and ending in the late 1970's, over 4,000 research studies had been conducted in areas other than education with respect to job satisfaction and motivation (Winkler, 1982).

Several studies have attempted to define the difference between the two terms. Tarvin (1972) said that the two terms were synonymous. Berelson and Steiner (1964) defined motivation as an "inner state that energizes, activates, or moves... and that directs or channels behavior toward goals." They concluded that the result of motivation is a purposive, goal-directed behavior that leads to satisfaction. Herzberg (1959) defined job satisfaction as an overall attitude or liking of one's job.

Smith, Kendall and Julin (1969) conducted research relative to the need to measure job satisfaction. They concluded that the usefulness of such research has far reaching implications for mental health, supervisory training, organizational structures, job enrichment, automation, and the level of payment of workers. Their research focused on the development of the Job Descriptive Index, which measures job satisfaction within both general and specific frameworks.

Perhaps the most recognized of all job satisfaction research comes from Herzberg (1967). Herzberg studied engineers, accountants and other professionals and divided job satisfaction into the two categories of needs outside of work (extrinsic factors) and needs that concern work itself (intrinsic factors). He further identified five factors that stood out as strong determiners of job satisfaction and five factors that stood out as strong determiners of job dissatisfaction. The job satisfiers, or motivators are: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement. The factors identified by Herzberg that contribute to personal dissatisfaction, called hygiene factors, are

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Table 1. Ranking of Satisfier and Dissatisfier Factors by Faculty in The University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture

Factor	Mean*	Standard Deviation	Rank
Job Satisfiers			
Responsibility	3.94	.85	1
The Work Itself	3.79	.74	2
Recognition	3.65	.95	3
Advancement	3.64	1.47	4
Achievement	3.58	.88	5
Job Dissatisfiers			
Salary	2.86	1.39	10
Policy & Administration	3.10	.89	9
Supervision-Technical	3.51	1.24	8
Interpersonal	3.53	.83	7
Working Conditions	3.57	.72	6

* Means calculated with 1 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Neutral feeling, and 5 = Satisfied.

Table 2. Correlations Between Job Satisfaction Factors and Selected Demographic Variables

	Years Work Experience All Levels	Years Work Experience Higher Education	Years Position Held at UNL	Credit Hours Taught
Achievement	.12095	.10279	.08529	-.27427**
Recognition	.06799	.08443	.03927	-.30993**
Work Itself	.06055	.06598	.02501	-.26226*
Responsibility	.05559	.00646	.02653	-.25417*
Advancement	-.01726	-.00633	-.3069	-.27041**

*p < .05. **p < .001.

Table 3. Correlations Between Job Dissatisfaction Factors and Selected Demographic Variables

	Years Work Experience All Levels	Years Work Experience Higher Education	Years Position Held At UNL	Credit Hours Taught
Institutional Policy and Administration	.08585	.09673	.05204	-.27044**
Supervision Technical	-.05402	.08081	-.08985	-.19653*
Salary	.01996	.04047	.06091	-.14816
Interpersonal Relations	.03539	.03218	.00076	-.29787**
Working Conditions	.09484	.10381	.09325	-.09390

*p < .05. **p < .001.

policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. His conclusion was that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction were not two extremes but two unipolar variables dependent upon different stimuli.

Since the review of the literature dealing with job satisfaction provides an abundance of information regarding the area of business and industry but a very limited amount of information in the area of higher education, a growing need exists to understand the impact of job satisfaction upon higher education. This

Figure 1.
An Analysis of Responses From the Present Study as Compared
to Herzberg's Findings Using Herzberg's Two-Factor Job
Satisfaction Analysis Theory

	Job Dissatisfaction					Job Satisfaction				
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency				
I. Job Satisfiers										
Achievement (H)	8	14	42	48.95						
(N)	20.14									
Recognition (H)	17	33	48.25							
(N)	15.5									
Work Itself (H)	16	26	44.75							
(N)	14.16									
Responsibility (H)	7	22	61.01							
(N)	14.51									
Advancement (H)	11	20	50.34							
(N)	16.68									
II. Job Dissatisfiers										
Institutional Policy and Administration (H)	32	4	29.37							
(N)	24.55									
Supervision Technical (H)	20	4	47.20							
(N)	21.67									
Salary (H)	17	5	33.21							
(N)	40.20									
Interpersonal Relations (H)	15	5	44.75							
(N)	18.00									
Working Conditions (H)	12	1	50.11							
(N)	21.52									

†: Herzberg's findings (H)
 **: University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture Faculty Findings (N)
 * Figures for neutral percentage frequency are not listed. (Neutral percentage frequencies can be determined by adding job dissatisfaction and job satisfaction percentage frequencies and subtracting from 100 percent.)

study is designed to address the measurement of job satisfaction of faculty in one institution of higher education.

Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted to determine the perceived job satisfaction factors and priorities of faculty members in the College of Agriculture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Its tasks included these areas:

1. Identifying the major job satisfaction factors of importance to college faculty.
2. Prioritizing the major job satisfaction factors as perceived by college faculty.
3. Determining if significant relationships exist between job satisfaction factors and selected demographic variables.
4. Comparing findings of the present study with the findings of previously completed research on job satisfaction.

Methodology

Based upon a review of the literature, a slightly revised instrument, originally developed by Wittenauer (1980), using Herzberg's (1959) Two Factor Theory, was used to collect data for this study. The final questionnaire contained 58 statements dealing with job satisfaction. Each of the items on the questionnaire was reflective of attitudes with regard to each of the ten variables identified by Herzberg as being either satisfiers or dissatisfiers in an individual's job. Respondents were asked to respond to each item as being satisfied, neutral or dissatisfied. The number of questions relating to each of Herzberg's 10 factors ranged from 2 to 18. Forty-two percent of the questions were classified as job satisfiers and 58 percent were classified as dissatisfiers. For this study, the

questionnaire was pilot tested for content validity, and reliability. A reliability co-efficient, (Cronbach's Alpha) of .93 was observed for the entire questionnaire.

The demographic section of the questionnaire contained items relating to: age, years of work experience in education, years of work experience in higher education, years of work experience at present institution, academic rank, and teaching load in semester hours.

All faculty members of the College of Agriculture, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (N = 197) were included in the study. The current list of faculty members was obtained from the Office of the Dean of the College of Agriculture. Nineteen names were eliminated from the original list due to leaves of absence, faculty development leaves, retirements and resignations. Of the 178 questionnaires mailed, (with one follow-up mailing) a total of 143 or 80 percent of the respondents returned completed questionnaires.

The data gathered were analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (Barr and Associates, 1976) packages for frequencies, the Pearson Correlation coefficient and reliability co-efficients.

Findings

Table 1 shows the mean rating, by faculty in the College of Agriculture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, of each of Herzberg's job satisfiers and dissatisfiers and their corresponding overall rank. This data indicates that faculty members participating in this study view themselves as similar to those of the earlier recognized Herzberg (1967) study of professionals in business and industry. The top five factors identified by Herzberg as being positive were ranked the highest by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture faculty as well. The five factors which Herzberg identified as being negative were ranked the lowest in this study. Of particular note is that faculty ranked "responsibility" as being the highest ranked satisfier with "the work itself" being second. At the other extreme, "salary" was ranked as most dissatisfying with "policy and administration" being identified as the second most dissatisfying factor.

The data represented by Figure 1 not only show the findings of the present study in terms of responses in overall percentages of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction but also compares the present findings with those of the highly recognized work of Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959). While viewing the present data from a positive perspective, the relatively high satisfaction with the job satisfiers of achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement is very obvious. In fact, respondents in the present study were, in all cases, more satisfied than were the respondents in the Herzberg study. Of higher interest, however, were the more extreme responses provided by respondents in the present study. With respect to percentages, four of the five job dissatisfiers were determined to be much more satisfying than

dissatisfying by the faculty respondents. Those four were: institutional policy and administration, supervision, technical, interpersonal relations and working conditions. The factor with the most dissatisfaction was that of salary which received nearly twice as many negative responses as any other factor in both the job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction categories. Forty percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with salary. Institutional policy and administration was ranked second, with regard to dissatisfaction by respondents, where nearly 25 percent were dissatisfied.

The data presented in Tables 2 and 3 indicate the relationships that exist between the five job satisfiers and the five job dissatisfiers with selected demographic variables using the Pearson Correlation Co-efficient Analysis. Significant correlations were found with respect to certain job satisfiers and job dissatisfiers with the demographic variable of credit hours taught. Job satisfaction increases relative to eight of the ten factors, namely: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, institutional policy and administration, supervision-technical and interpersonal relations, as credit hours taught decreases. There were no significant correlations found with the demographic variables of years of work experience at all levels, years work experience in higher education or years position held at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Summary and Conclusions

Now, perhaps more than ever before, a strong need exists to retain and attract quality faculty in higher education. With the current pressures on the economy, the faculty and the administration in higher education to produce more for less, certain key questions must be answered.

One of the key questions that must be answered deals with faculty morale and motivation. This study has attempted to deal with this question through the identification and prioritization of those job satisfiers and dissatisfiers that are of high importance to the faculty.

Based upon the findings of this study, the following conclusions were formulated:

1. University faculty do have differences in their perceptions of how satisfied they are with regard to factors of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction.
2. The top five job satisfaction factors in order of rank, as perceived by college faculty, were: (1) responsibility, (2) the work itself, (3) recognition, (4) advancement and (5) achievement.
3. Approximately 50 percent, or more, of the faculty identified achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, supervision-technical, and working conditions as their greatest sources of job satisfaction.
4. Those factors of greatest job dissatisfaction were: (1) salary and (2) policy and administration. Salary was identified as the single greatest job dissatisfier.
5. Statistically significant correlations did exist between eight of the ten identified job satisfiers and job dissatisfiers when compared to credit hours taught. Specifically, job satisfaction increases relative to these eight factors as credit hours taught decreases.

6. Overall, with the exception of salary, faculty are highly satisfied with the factors categorized as job satisfiers and dissatisfiers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. National, state and local leaders would be well advised to consider the value placed upon salaries, by university faculty, when charting the future of higher education.
2. Recognizing that this study was limited to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agriculture, findings should not be interpreted to be fitting to other colleges within the University of Nebraska-Lincoln or to other university populations.
3. With the current national interest in personality types, further research would be warranted in investigating the relationships between academic job satisfaction and personality types.
4. Individual faculty members in the College of Agriculture, as well as in other colleges, should consider using this instrument, or a similar instrument, to analyze themselves with respect to the factors that they find satisfying or dissatisfying on the job. Findings could be useful for self improvement and professional development.
5. A national study of job satisfaction in Colleges of Agriculture could be useful in making comparisons between institutions.
6. More research is warranted to determine the causes of faculty job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, particularly with respect to those faculty members responding at the extreme ends of the response scale.
7. University Administrators need to make a more concerted effort to emphasize all factors of job satisfaction when dealing with faculty.

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