

Echoes of Contentment: Understanding Job Satisfaction and Work Productivity among College Faculty

Jomar B. Mendoza

College of Arts and Sciences, World Citi Colleges, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, 1109

Abstract—Acknowledging the ever-changing landscape of education, pedagogical approaches, technological resources, policies and demands, and student demographics, continue to change, so too do the factors influencing job satisfaction and productivity among faculty members. This study delved into exploring the lived experiences regarding job satisfaction and work productivity among college faculty members. Employing a descriptive-phenomenological research design, this study involved eight college faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences who teach General Education Courses, possess at least three years of teaching service in the institution, and are full-time teachers. They were selected through purposive sampling technique. The data collection method involved conducting in-depth interview guided by an interview protocol, while data analysis was performed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed three themes related to the lived experiences and perceptions of job satisfaction within the academic environment: professional fulfillment and institutional support, collaborative engagement and supportive environments, and recognition in academic work. Regarding the connection between the two, interdependence, with job satisfaction as a driver and work productivity as an outcome, emerged as key themes. Thus, recognizing the interconnectedness of job satisfaction and work productivity, institutions can leverage strategies to enhance faculty members' satisfaction and amplify their effectiveness and engagement in fulfilling their professional roles. It is recommended to continuously solicit feedback from faculty members and adapt policies based on their input to ensure responsiveness to their needs and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Keywords— Job Satisfaction, Work Productivity, Lived-Experiences, College Faculty.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, job satisfaction and work productivity have emerged as critical factors influencing the overall effectiveness and sustainability of educational institutions. Given that faculty members play key roles in the academic and developmental progress of these institutions, continuous understanding of the nuances of their job satisfaction and productivity becomes imperative. Job satisfaction, defined as a sensory reaction to the worker's response to the workplace according to their expectations and character, plays a crucial aspect in this context (Khalifa et al., 2018). It is a subjective feeling through which workers perceive their job, significantly related to motivation, performance, and the quality of services (Grimaldi-Puyana et al., 2018). Also, satisfaction is influenced by various factors such as psychological reward, challenge, achievement, appreciation, and positive recognition (Anand, 2018). On the other hand,

work productivity results from the interaction between work ability and motivation, influenced by physical condition, social conditions, and basic needs of employees (Kusnadi, 2020). It is measured by the quantity, quality, and timeliness of work results in planning, implementing, conducting evaluations, and professional development activities (Gistituati, 2020). Therefore, understanding the interplay between job satisfaction and work productivity among college faculty is essential for fostering an environment conducive to educational excellence.

However, several factors and challenges can significantly impact the job satisfaction and work productivity of teachers. Inadequate institutional support, lack of professional development opportunities, and imbalanced work-life dynamics often hinder faculty members from reaching their full potential. Research indicates that faculty working with supportive leaders, favorable work conditions, and a strong sense of job security demonstrate significantly higher levels of overall academic job satisfaction (Bakr et al., 2019). Similarly, support from superiors and positive working conditions are crucial to increase teachers' job satisfaction (Kakada and Deshpande, 2019). Furthermore, a positive social and psychological climate, along with strong relationships with colleagues, plays a vital role in the work environment (Almurzayeva et al., 2019). Additionally, in a study among Saudi universities, factors such as salary, administrative policies, and interpersonal relationships are significant predictors of overall job satisfaction among faculty members (Kuwaiti et al., 2019). Ultimately, achieving a balance of rewarding and enriching demands leads to the most positive outcomes for faculty job satisfaction and productivity (French et al., 2020).

In view of the foregoing, high level of job satisfaction among faculty members leads to increased motivation, commitment, and overall performance, directly enhancing their productivity. In actuality, job satisfaction has a positive direct effect on teacher work productivity, meaning that when job satisfaction is fulfilled, work productivity increases (Utami & Vioreza, 2021; Utami et al., 2020). Moreover, satisfied teachers are more likely to engage in innovative teaching practices and contribute positively to the academic environment, thereby improving educational outcomes for students. Additionally, teachers' job satisfaction can also improve their performance in the classroom and contribute to the productivity of an organization (Lay, 2020). Furthermore, job satisfaction significantly influences faculty retention and turnover, as

evidenced by a study on a private university in Monrovia, Liberia (Gbalah, 2021). In the Philippine context, job-specific training, career development opportunities, and an organization's commitment to professional development are key to job satisfaction among Central Luzon State University job contract employees (Fernando & Vargas, 2021). To boot, cultural values positively influence faculty productivity in state universities and colleges in Region XII, with personal and professional values being significant predictors (Untong, 2018). Indeed, fostering job satisfaction among faculty is essential for enhancing productivity and ensuring the long-term success of educational institutions.

While research on job satisfaction and work productivity may seem commonplace, it is imperative to acknowledge the ever-changing landscape of education. As educational practices, policies, and demands continue to change, so too do the factors influencing job satisfaction and productivity among faculty members. The educational sector operates within a dynamic environment characterized by shifting pedagogical approaches, technological advancements, and changing student demographics. Understanding the key drivers of job satisfaction and work productivity is paramount. It equips educational institutions with the tools to craft targeted interventions that boost faculty morale, improve retention rates, and ultimately enhance institutional success. Moreover, in an era of heightened competition for academic talent, institutions that prioritize faculty satisfaction gain a strategic advantage in attracting and retaining top-tier educators. In view this, the study endeavors to delve into the dynamic realm of faculty job satisfaction and work productivity, elucidating the contemporary factors that shape educator well-being and effectiveness.

Consequently, this phenomenological study delved into exploring or understanding the job satisfaction and work productivity among college faculty members in World Citi Colleges - Quezon City Campus for the school year 2023-2024 with end view of providing actionable insights for enhancing faculty well-being and organizational effectiveness within the contemporary educational landscape.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This phenomenological study was anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1968). According to this theory, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by distinct factors: hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, and motivators, such as recognition and the nature of the work itself. While hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, are essential for preventing dissatisfaction, they alone may not lead to sustained job satisfaction. Instead, motivators like recognition, opportunities for professional growth, and meaningful work assignments are crucial for fostering a sense of fulfillment and engagement among faculty members (Herzberg, 1968). By considering these factors, the study could delve into the specific aspects of faculty experiences at World Citi Colleges - Quezon City that contribute to their overall job satisfaction and productivity. In support, Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1986) posits that individuals engage in a reciprocal relationship with their

environment, weighing the costs and benefits of their interactions within an organization. Faculty members engage in various exchanges with their colleagues, administrators, and the broader organizational environment, seeking support, recognition, and opportunities for advancement in return for their contributions to teaching, research, and service. Understanding these exchanges is essential for comprehending the social context in which faculty work and the factors that influence their satisfaction and productivity. By applying these theories, the study could explore how faculty members evaluate their experiences, relationships, and contributions within the college, shedding light on the relational dynamics that impact job satisfaction and work productivity.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This phenomenological study delved into understanding the lived-experiences regarding job satisfaction and work productivity among college faculty members at World Citi Colleges, Quezon City for the school year 2023-224.

Specifically, it aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Explore the lived experiences and perceptions of college faculty regarding job satisfaction within the academic environment;
2. Determine the perception of the college faculty regarding the connection between job satisfaction and their productivity in fulfilling their professional roles within the institution; and
3. Draw implications based on the results and findings of the study.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive phenomenological research design, which seeks to explore, describe, and understand the meaning of experiences as they are lived, as outlined by Moustakas (1994). In this approach, researcher aims to describe the essence of the experience as perceived by the participants without imposing any preconceived theories or assumptions. The participants of the study composed of 8 college faculty members. The inclusion criteria for participant selection included: (1) being faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, (2) teaching General Education Courses, (3) having at least 3 years of service in the institution, and (4) being full-time teachers. Purposive sampling was utilized to select participants, where researcher established specific characteristics that participants needed to meet to be included in the study. In this study, the data collection method employed was in-depth interview. An interview guide was developed, beginning with a clear introduction outlining the purpose of the study, ensuring confidentiality of participant identities, and emphasizing the importance of their insights. Warm-up questions were then utilized to establish rapport and comprehend participants' backgrounds and perspectives. Subsequent main questions were directed towards exploring job satisfaction and work productivity domains, structuring the discussion accordingly. Open-ended follow-up questions were employed to enable a deeper exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions, as well as their impact on teacher effectiveness and professional growth. Data obtained were gathered and interpreted through thematic analysis. Responses

were meticulously recorded, labeled, and analyzed the researcher observed the five-step process: (1) Immersion in the data, (2) Identification of significant statements, (3) Extraction of themes, (4) Development and checking the themes, (5) Defining and naming themes. This approach provided a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives, generating meaningful themes relevant to addressing the research question.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Lived Experiences and Perceptions of College Faculty regarding Job Satisfaction within the Academic Environment

Theme 1: Professional Fulfillment and Institutional Support

Job satisfaction among college faculty members is deeply influenced by a combination of professional fulfillment and the support provided by the institution. This theme emerges strongly from the reflections of various faculty members. Many faculty members express a deep sense of fulfillment derived from their teaching roles and the impact they have on their students. For instance, Faculty A states, "I am already fulfilled as a college faculty member as I am part of molding the minds and strengthening positive values to my students even way back more than 8 years in my current job in a private college." Similarly, Faculty C articulates, "Job satisfaction is when I achieve my teaching goals for my students and they have learned in return." This sentiment is echoed by Faculty G, who says, "I cannot survive the 52 years of teaching experience if I am not committed to the profession I have chosen, to the task of leading the youth the right path."

Opportunities for professional growth and development also play a significant role in job satisfaction. Faculty B shares, "I can say that I have a lot of experience starting from being a simple professor until I was given an admin task that boosted my management skills... I have learned a lot." This highlights how new responsibilities and trust from the institution can enhance job satisfaction. Faculty H also finds satisfaction in the incentives provided for additional roles, saying, "Aside from the per hour rate, I have received other incentives like Research Advisory and Internship Lecturer via Online. I can say that I am satisfied with the incentives and salary rate that I received."

Moreover, supportive colleagues and a positive institutional environment significantly contribute to faculty members' job satisfaction. Faculty B notes, "I was also happy with my colleagues because they are very supportive and you have a lot of insight to gain that will really help not only in your teaching but also in admin work." This is reinforced by Faculty D, who says, "As a college faculty member, I can say that my teaching journey in college opened my mind in many ways and aspects as I mingled with my colleagues. I learn a lot from them and from their experiences."

Despite the positive aspects, compensation and recognition remain critical factors affecting job satisfaction. Faculty A mentions, "Dissatisfaction creeps in when the pay is not commensurate to my qualifications and experience and some mismanagement though I am included in the training programs the management continues to undertake." This indicates that financial and administrative issues can undermine overall satisfaction. However, Faculty H expresses

contentment with the financial aspects, stating, "WCC still provides us with the Salary as we continue to deliver Lecture via online... I am satisfied with the incentives and salary rate that I received."

Overall, the theme reveals that job satisfaction among college faculty members is multifaceted, involving intrinsic rewards from teaching, professional development opportunities, supportive relationships, and adequate compensation. While financial and administrative issues can detract from satisfaction, the overall sense of fulfillment derived from teaching and institutional support plays a crucial role in maintaining job satisfaction.

Research supports this multifaceted view of job satisfaction. Higher quality mentoring relationships are associated with significantly greater job satisfaction among college faculty members, highlighting the importance of supportive relationships within the institution (Lunsford et al., 2018). Additionally, faculty members' job satisfaction is influenced by various factors including salary and welfare, work itself, leader behavior, personal growth, interpersonal relationships, and job competence (Alfaki & Alkarni, 2021). Moreover, satisfaction tends to be higher with work itself, supervision, and coworkers (Stokowski et al., 2018). These factors collectively highlight the diverse elements that institutions must consider to foster a supportive and fulfilling work environment for their faculty.

Theme 2: Collaborative Engagement and Supportive Environment

This theme underscores the significance of positive relationships, teamwork, and a sense of community in fostering a conducive and fulfilling work environment. Through their shared experiences and perceptions, faculty members provide valuable insights into the importance of collaborative engagement as a cornerstone of job satisfaction within academia.

One faculty highlights the collaborative environment among colleagues, suggesting a supportive network that fosters a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Another one finds satisfaction in being treated professionally and working as a team to address challenges, indicating the importance of supportive work relationships in creating a conducive environment. While others, associates job satisfaction with positive relationships and a happy working environment, underscoring the role of supportive interactions in fostering a sense of fulfillment.

The evidence provided by faculty members corroborates existing research findings, emphasizing the significance of collaborative engagement and supportive environments in fostering job satisfaction within academia. Majid et al. (2020) suggest that engagement, a supportive culture, motivation, and work environment positively impact job satisfaction, aligning with the experiences shared by faculty members. Moreover, Johnston and Tsai (2018) argue that collaborative engagement and supportive environments are crucial for fostering job satisfaction and career pathways in teachers, reflecting the sentiments expressed by faculty members regarding the importance of positive relationships and teamwork. Additionally, García-Martínez et al. (2021) highlight the

critical role of collaborative support between teachers in school success, emphasizing the creation of a climate of trust and its positive impact on student academic performance. Together, these insights underscore the importance of cultivating a culture of collaboration and support in academic institutions to create a conducive and fulfilling work environment for faculty members.

Theme 3: Recognition in Academic Work

This theme manifests itself in various forms, from accolades bestowed by management to the appreciation expressed by students. Yet, alongside moments of recognition, faculty members encounter instances of discontent, stemming from institutional practices, resource limitations, or unmet expectations. Through an exploration of faculty narratives and experiences, this analysis delves into the significance of recognition in shaping job satisfaction within the academic sphere, elucidating the interplay between acknowledgment and fulfillment amidst the challenges and rewards of academic work.

Faculty members experience a range of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in their academic work. Faculty A finds fulfillment in recognition and appreciation but faces dissatisfaction when unqualified staff are hired, increasing their workload. Similarly, Faculty B derives satisfaction from long-term service recognition despite modest material rewards. In contrast, Faculty C feels dissatisfied when students fail to meet educational goals, highlighting their commitment to student success. Faculty D encounters frustration due to inadequate teaching facilities, hindering effective lesson delivery. Conversely, Faculty E feels validated when their institution recognizes their teaching efforts, reinforcing their professional accomplishments. Faculty F prioritizes student learning over material incentives, finding satisfaction in their students' growth. However, Faculty G expresses dissatisfaction with the failure to transition to permanent status despite meeting qualifications, while Faculty H finds contentment in their salary, exceeding previous positions, contributing to overall job satisfaction.

Recognition, whether from management, students, or institutions, plays a significant role in the satisfaction of faculty members. Conversely, dissatisfaction arises when recognition is lacking or when institutional practices fail to meet expectations or reflect fairness. The significance of recognition in fostering job satisfaction among faculty members is further supported by existing research findings. Hollinger-Smith et al. (2021) assert that meaningful recognition contributes to a caring workplace, motivates faculty work performance, and positively impacts faculty roles, aligning with the experiences shared by faculty members regarding the importance of recognition in validating their efforts. Additionally, Benito and Scott-Milligan (2018) highlight the belief among faculty members in the importance of professional recognition and its connection to job satisfaction and overall success in higher education institutions, reinforcing the sentiments expressed by faculty members. Consequently, these insights underscore the critical role of acknowledgment and fair treatment in nurturing a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction among academic

professionals, emphasizing the need for institutional practices that value and recognize faculty contributions.

B. On the Connection between Job Satisfaction and their Productivity in Fulfilling their Professional Roles within the Institution

Theme 1: Interdependence

This theme emphasizes the mutual reliance and influence between these two factors, suggesting that they are not isolated rather interconnected elements that shape one another within the professional context.

Faculty A acknowledges that while job satisfaction is a key determinant, other factors may influence productivity, hinting at the nuanced relationship between the two. Faculty C directly correlates job satisfaction with productivity, suggesting that satisfaction drives individuals to give their best effort in fulfilling their roles. Similarly, Faculty D emphasizes the institution's role in meeting aspects of job satisfaction, thereby increasing productivity, highlighting the mutual influence between organizational support and individual performance. Faculty E's acknowledgment of the need to balance job satisfaction with overcoming challenges underscores the intertwined nature of these factors in sustaining productivity. Lastly, Faculty H directly links job satisfaction to productivity, implying a reciprocal relationship where satisfaction fuels performance.

The perspectives of faculty members underscore the complex interplay between job satisfaction and productivity, a relationship supported by empirical research. Utami et al. (2020) affirm that job satisfaction has a direct positive effect on teacher work productivity, indicating that fulfillment in one's role enhances productivity. Similarly, Hussain and Diaz (2020) and Montuori et al. (2022) emphasize the role of job satisfaction in increasing productivity, corroborating the experiences shared by faculty members. Additionally, Stringari et al. (2019) highlight the correlation between job satisfaction and factors such as working productivity, reinforcing the interconnectedness of these elements. Therefore, recognizing this interdependence holds significant implications for individuals and institutions, as fostering a supportive environment that prioritizes job satisfaction can lead to enhanced productivity and engagement among faculty members. Conversely, individuals who actively seek fulfillment in their roles contribute positively to the overall productivity and success of the institution. By understanding and leveraging this interdependence, institutions can promote a thriving and harmonious professional ecosystem, leading to greater job performance, satisfaction, and professional fulfillment for faculty members.

Theme 2: Satisfaction as a Driver and Productivity as an Outcome

The theme reflects the reciprocal relationship between individual contentment within their roles and the consequent amplification of their performance. This theme navigates the terrain where the subjective experience of satisfaction acts as both a catalyst for heightened productivity and a byproduct of it.

Faculty A elucidates how job satisfaction leads to enhanced productivity by fostering improved task completion, quality, meeting deadlines, and overall morale. Faculty B further supports this notion, highlighting that happiness at work, coupled with adequate compensation, boosts productivity by nurturing traits such as optimism, motivation, faster learning, and fewer mistakes. Faculty C adds depth by suggesting that satisfaction motivates individuals to exceed minimum expectations and strive for higher standards, thereby driving productivity. Faculty D emphasizes the role of organizational support, suggesting that proper compensation and care from institutions contribute to faculty satisfaction, Faculty E underscores the importance of continuous learning and collaboration in fostering job satisfaction, which subsequently enhances productivity as an outcome. Faculty F reinforces the idea that satisfaction breeds productivity and vice versa, indicating a self-reinforcing cycle between the two. Finally, Faculty G's perspective on long-term satisfaction and fulfillment suggests that dedicating productive years to meaningful work leads to overall satisfaction with one's career, further solidifying the connection between satisfaction and productivity.

Through the insights gleaned from these individual responses, a compelling narrative emerges, illuminating the symbiotic relationship between job satisfaction and productivity. As emphasized by Utami et al. (2020), job satisfaction directly and positively impacts teacher work productivity, underscoring the pivotal role of contentment in driving enhanced performance. Thus, it becomes evident that satisfaction acts as a catalyst for productivity, while productivity, in turn, reinforces satisfaction, elucidating the intertwined nature of these two constructs within the workplace ecosystem.

C. Implications of the Study

This study unveiled the complexities contributing to faculty members' sense of satisfaction and productivity, ranging from intrinsic rewards derived from teaching to the crucial support provided by their institutions. Through reflections shared by faculty members, it becomes clear that professional fulfillment, rooted in the impact they have on students and the opportunities for personal and career growth, plays an important role in shaping their satisfaction levels. Furthermore, the study underscored the importance of a supportive institutional environment, where colleagues and administrative structures boost each faculty member's sense of belonging and purpose. However, it also uncovered areas of discontent, particularly concerning fair compensation and recognition, highlighting the need for institutions to address these issues comprehensively. By recognizing the symbiotic relationship between job satisfaction and productivity, institutions could craft strategies that not only prioritize faculty well-being but also amplify their effectiveness and engagement in fulfilling their professional roles. Ultimately, fostering a culture of collaboration, support, and recognition within academic institutions holds the key to cultivating a workforce that thrives, propelling both individual success and institutional excellence forward.

V. CONCLUSION

Through an exploration of the lived experiences and perceptions, the study has revealed that job satisfaction among college faculty is influenced by a myriad of factors, including professional fulfillment, institutional support, collaborative engagement, and recognition. It underscores the importance of creating environments that nurture faculty well-being, acknowledge their contributions, and foster a sense of community and purpose. By recognizing the interconnectedness of job satisfaction and productivity, institutions can leverage these insights to implement strategies that not only enhance faculty members' satisfaction but also amplify their effectiveness and engagement in fulfilling their professional roles. As academic institutions strive to navigate the complexities of the modern educational landscape, prioritizing the holistic well-being of faculty emerges as a cornerstone for fostering a culture of excellence and innovation, ultimately benefiting both individuals and the broader academic community.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that the institution should prioritize several key strategies. Firstly, investing in professional development opportunities is crucial to empower faculty members to continually enhance their skills and stay updated in their fields. Secondly, fostering a supportive institutional culture is essential, which involves promoting open communication, providing resources, and nurturing collaborative relationships among colleagues. Additionally, fair compensation and recognition practices should be implemented to validate faculty members' contributions and motivate them to excel. Furthermore, promoting work-life balance through flexible arrangements and wellness support is vital to prevent burnout and maintain satisfaction. Lastly, continuously soliciting feedback from faculty members and adapting policies based on their input ensures responsiveness to their needs and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Prioritizing these strategies, the institution can create environments that prioritize faculty satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and overall success within academia.

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