

## **Personality Traits and Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff in Higher Education**

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**Abstract:** Academic staff plays a vital role in determining the success of the vision and the mission of a university. A positive and healthy university structure results in an increased job satisfaction of the academic staff. The main aim of this research was to determine the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among the academic staff. Methods: The research included a sample of 300 university teachers and their assistants (150 female and 150 male) employed at the University of Tetova and the University of Skopje. The age domain of the faculty members was 26 to 65 years, with a mean age of 40.21 (6.36). The Job Satisfaction Inventory (JSS) and the Big Five Inventory (BFI) were used as measuring instruments. The results indicated that the academic staff was more satisfied with their job. There was a positive relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=3.920$ ,  $\text{sig}=.000$ ,  $p<.01$ ), agreeableness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=5.617$ ,  $\text{sig}=.000$ ,  $p<.01$ ), conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=3.920$   $\text{sig}=.024$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and openness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=0.820$ ,  $\text{sig}=.001$ ,  $p<.01$ ), but a negative relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=1.418$ ,  $\text{sig}=.134$ ,  $p>.05$ ). We can conclude that the job satisfaction of the academic staff is closely related to the personality traits. Based on the research results, practical suggestions are offered to the educational institutions and human resource managers on how to pay, promote, retain and maintain equality in the universities.

**Keywords:** job satisfaction, aspects of job satisfaction, big five, personality traits, academic staff.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is the most important factor in education and teacher is a person working educational institutes who enables students to reach cognitive, sensory and behavioral aim and gains within the range determined by the educational system. Teaching, conducting exams and giving grades by teacher is not only the main dates in the modern day. In this context, teachers have to do organizing, managing, counseling, observing and evaluating the classroom and their students. Academic staff plays a vital role in determining the success of the vision and mission of a university. This is supported by Bentley et al. (2013) who agree that a high quality academic staff is the source of successful education system. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to job satisfaction of the teaching staff. A positive and healthy university structure results in increased academic staff's job set. A healthy university environment will not only increase the job satisfaction of academic staff, but it will at the same time improve the learning environment and increase the productivity of the university.

Machado-Taylor et al. (2010) found that job satisfaction and motivation among academic staff play an important role in contributing to positive outcomes in the quality of the institutions and the students' learning. This is true, because the success of a university relies on the academic workforce. Khalid et al. (2012) believe that universities are known as the highest source of knowledge where the future workforce is trained to become experts in various fields.

The performance of academic staff as teachers and researchers determines much of the quality of the students' satisfaction and has an impact on students' learning and thus contributes to the higher education institutions of society. Thus, the satisfaction and motivation of the academic staff assume importance.

### **II. DEFINITION OF JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon, because it is related to various causal factors such as personal, social, cultural, environmental and financial factors. The nature of job satisfaction is an important

factor in deciding the level of job satisfaction of employees. Job satisfaction is crucial, due to its association with work, performance, and physical and mental health, and career decisions.

Job satisfaction is an individual's emotional response to his or her current job condition. It is a pleasurable emotional state, resulting from the appraisal of one's job; an effective reaction from one's jobs as an attitude towards one's job. Job satisfaction has been defined as a perceived relationship between what one wants from his/her job and what one perceives it as offering (Манчева, 2016). Job satisfaction is the collection of feelings and beliefs that employees have about their jobs. In fact employee's general attitude towards his or her job could equally be regarded as job satisfaction.

The researchers have written a set of predictors for job satisfaction, which include pay, work, promotion, supervision, environment and co-workers (Sequoya, 2000). A majority of researchers' measure job satisfaction on the basis of employees or workers are: attitude to the job, relation with co-workers, supervision, company policy and support, promotion and pay (Signage & Short, 2006).

Universities are considered the highest source of knowledge and awareness production institutions which train the subject in different fields of life. Academic staff is comprised of staff members with the primary assignment to instruct research or participate in public server. They are key resources to the success of any educational programmers. So satisfaction among academics is essential for the success of high educational institutions. It shall be a priority for every employer to keep employees satisfied in their careers. Bentley et al. (2013) indicate that a healthy climate at university increases not only the job satisfaction among academicians, but it also increases the academicians' performance. Nordic (2009) added that a healthy atmosphere in a faculty can be affected by many factors such as healthy working conditions, relationships with colleagues, support in research and teaching, appropriate salary, promotion, opportunities, etc.

Azeri (2011) explained that job satisfaction is a condition of positive and negative feelings of academic staff toward their job and show different reactions at work environment. Also, job satisfaction has been defined as a main factor among university employees that causes various organizational behaviors and changes the staff mood at work (Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012). In fact, the job satisfaction can be a combination of facets where each of them can cause satisfaction of low or high levels. These factors included organization vision, management system, motivation, pay, benefits and co-workers' behavior. The study of Lufthansa (2005) suggests that pay, promotion, work, supervision and fellow workers are the main determinants of the job satisfaction.

### **III. PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Among the factors affecting the effective teaching of the university staff, personality traits play a significant role in any context. As McCrae & Costa (2003), personality of teachers creates and maintains a satisfactory classroom environment or learning environment. Teacher satisfaction is another side of success of the teaching effort.

In recent years, a five-factor model has emerged to be a useful and meaningful taxonomy for organizing personality traits. Personality can be defined as the set of unseen characteristics and processes which reflects a stable pattern of behavior in response to ideas, objects, or people in the environment. Personality was approached according to the framework of the Big Five which consist of conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience (John, Donahue & Kentle, 1991).

### **IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS AND JOB SATISFACTION**

Tan & Wahid (2011) maintain that personality traits have near relationship job satisfaction, which is to make framework available to understand factors that affect job satisfaction, as well as the manner in which those aspects affect individuals' quality of work life. The implied role of job satisfaction has been represented by many job motivation theories that have additionally, attempted to clarify both job satisfaction and its influence.

The correlation between the personality traits and job satisfaction were found by Dormann & Buchholz (2001). They pointed out the importance of big five personality traits and its impact on job satisfaction. They found that extraversion and neuroticism have not positive correlation with job satisfaction, but the other three personality traits correlated positive with job satisfaction.

Also the level of individual's job satisfaction is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors, the quality of supervision, social relationships within the working group, and the degree to which the individual succeeds or fails in their work (Daft, 2005). In the case with academic staff both intrinsic and extrinsic factors affect their satisfaction. Further studies suggest that teachers put more emphasis on intrinsic satisfaction (Place, 1997), but other studies suggest a mix findings of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfiers are the best predictors of teachers' job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1987; Bentley, 2013). Their intrinsic satisfaction comes from teaching activities and responsibility, while, extrinsic factors have been associated with academic staff's satisfaction, including salary, perceived support from supervisors and co-workers, and availability of university resource,

among others. Researchers concluded that motivated and satisfied academicians are more likely to show up for work, have higher levels of performance and will stay with their education organization (Daft, 2005). At the same time they show better level of motivation and better work ability.

According to these findings, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction among academic staff in the Republic of Macedonia.

## V. RESEARCH METHODS

Our study is based on a descriptive and non experimental causal method of empirical psychological and pedagogical research.

### 5.1. Research sample

The sample for this study comprised 300 full-time academic staff including assistants, assistant professors, associate professors and full professors. So the research included a sample of 300 university teachers and their assistants (150 female and 150 male) employed at the University of Tetova and the University of Skopje. The age domain of the faculty members was 26 to 65 years, with a mean age of 40.21 (6.36). Among the participants, 50% (N=50) were female and 50% (N=50) were male. The mean number of years teaching experience of participants was 8.6 years.

### 5.2. Survey Instruments

Job satisfaction for measuring is applied scale for job satisfaction assessment (Job Satisfaction Survey-JSS) by Paul Specter (Specter, 1985). The Job Satisfaction Survey is a 36 item, nine facet scales to assess employees' attitudes about the job and aspects of the job. The nine facets are: Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Nature of Work, Co-workers and Communication. It is a six-point linker type scale (disagree very much, disagree moderately, disagree slightly, agree slightly, agree moderately, agree very much). Items are written in both directions, so about half must be reverse scored. The total score ranges from 36 to 216, with high scores indicating greater level of job satisfaction. In this study Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistence was 0.86.

Personality traits were measured using the Big Five Inventory (John et al., 1991). This inventory measures five major domains of personality: Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (O), Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C). The Big Five Inventory is a 44 items which were scored on a 5-point Linker scale. In this study Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistence was from 0.74 to 0.78.

### 5.3. Data procedure and data analysis

Data collection tool was administered by the researchers during the summer semester of the academic year 2018-2019. The questionnaire sets were distributed to the participants and collected in their offices on a self-reported basis. All participants were asked to indicate their age, gender and length of work experience. They were also requested to read the directives stated on the questionnaire carefully before endorsing their response. All the responses were completely anonymous.

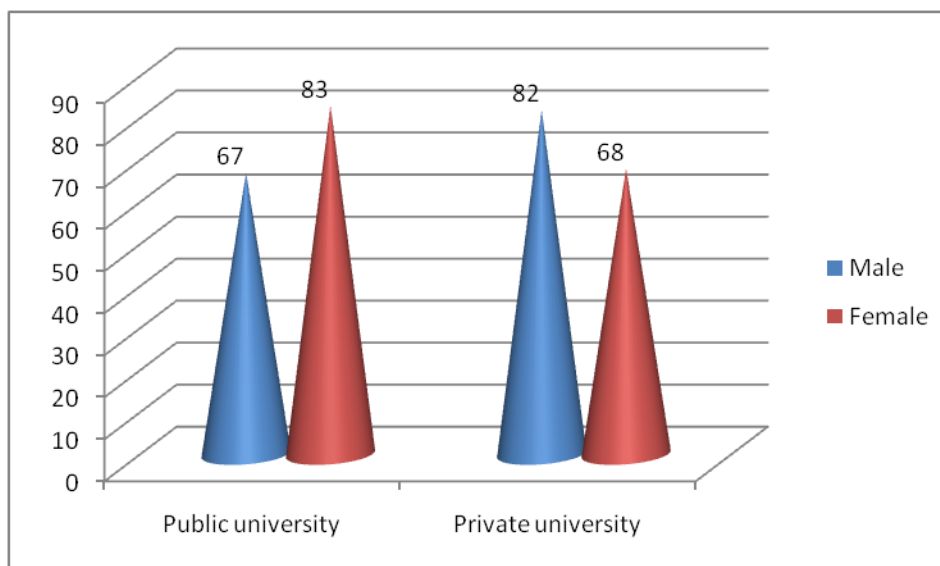
For hypothesis testing statistical package SPSS 20.0 for Windows package program was applied. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Pearson correlation and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were done to find the p value and statistical differences among groups. In this study, the significance levels were accepted as .01 or .05.

## VI. RESULTS

From Table 1 and Figure 1 we could see that 150 were female and 150 were male subjects from the both public and private university.

**Table1.** The distribution of the sample by gender

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Public university</b>	<b>Private university</b>
<b>Male</b>	67 (44.67%)	82 (54.67%)
<b>Female</b>	83 (55.33%)	68 (45.33%)
<b>Total</b>	150 (100%)	150 (100.00%)



**Figure1.** The distribution of the sample by gender

The results indicated that there were significant differences between the scores of personality traits and job satisfaction among academic staff (Table 2). The mean score for extraversion is 24.60(SD=3.438), agreeableness is 29.980(SD=3.798), conscientious is 29.053(SD=5.1888), neuroticism is 23.207(SD=4.128, openness to experience is 32.027(SD=4.820) and job satisfaction is 134.600(SD=16.240).

**Table2.** . Descriptive statistics between personality traits and job satisfaction among sample

	Extraversio n	Agreeablenes s	Conscientiou s	Neuroticis m	Openness to Experienc e	Job satisfactio n
<b>Mean</b>	24.600	29.980	29.053	23.207	32.027	134.600
<b>Standard Error</b>	0.198	0.335	0.300	0.238	0.278	0.938
<b>Median</b>	24.000	29.000	28.000	23.000	32.000	129.000
<b>Mode</b>	24.000	26.000	29.000	21.000	33.000	130.000
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	3.438	5.798	5.188	4.128	4.820	16.240
<b>Variance</b>	11.819	33.612	26.920	17.041	23.237	263.739
<b>Kurtosis</b>	0.366	-0.389	-0.394	-0.174	0.006	1.530
<b>Asymetrix</b>	0.356	0.601	0.462	0.191	0.391	1.542
<b>Range</b>	20.000	27.000	26.000	23.000	27.000	75.000
<b>Minimum</b>	16.000	18.000	17.000	13.000	21.000	112.000
<b>Maximum</b>	36.000	45.000	43.000	36.000	48.000	187.000
<b>Count</b>	7380.000	8994.000	8716.000	6962.000	9608.000	40380.000
<b>Total</b>	300.000	300.000	300.000	300.000	300.000	300.000

With one way ANOVA we found that there was a positive relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=3.920$ ,  $sig=.000$ ,  $p<.01$ ), agreeableness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=5.617$ ,  $sig=.000$ ,  $p<.01$ ), conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=3.920$   $sig=.024$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and openness and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=0.820$ ,  $sig=.001$ ,  $p<.01$ ), but a negative relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction ( $F_{299,1}=1.418$ ,  $sig=.134$ ,  $p>.05$ ) (Table 3)

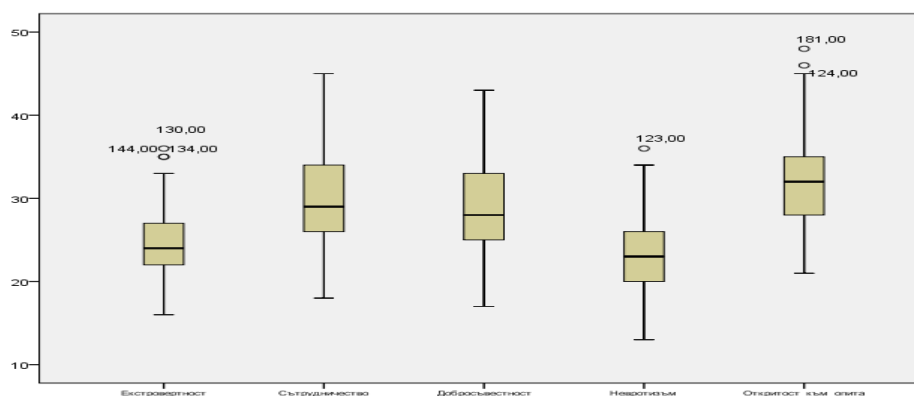
From Figure 2 we should see the frequent distribution between personality traits and job satisfaction among academic staff.

**Table3.** One way ANOVA correlation between personality traits and job satisfaction among sample

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Extraversion</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	4075.118	62	65.728	3.920	.000**
	<b>Within Groups</b>	3974.028	237	16.768		
	<b>Total</b>	8049.147	299			
<b>Agreeableness</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	5980.270	62	96.456	5.617	.000**
	<b>Within Groups</b>	4069.610	237	17.171		
	<b>Total</b>	10049.880	299			
<b>Conscientious</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	4075.118	62	65.728	3.920	.000**
	<b>Within Groups</b>	3974.028	237	16.768		
	<b>Total</b>	8049.147	299			
<b>Neuroticism</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	1378.645	62	22.236	1.418	.034*
	<b>Within Groups</b>	3716.541	237	15.682		
	<b>Total</b>	5095.187	299			
<b>Openness to Experience</b>	<b>Between Groups</b>	2240.981	62	36.145	.820	.001*
	<b>Within Groups</b>	4706.806	237	19.860		
	<b>Total</b>	6947.787	299			

\*\* Correlation is significant at the <0.01 level

\* Correlation is significant at the <0.05 level



**Figure2.** Frequent distribution between personality traits and job satisfaction

## VII. DISCUSSION

The study investigated the relationship between personality traits job satisfaction among academic staff in an academic setting. We found that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientious and openness to experience positive correlated with job satisfaction, but there was negative correlation between neuroticism and job satisfaction. Our finding is very similar with earlier findings (Akfopure et al, 2006.,

The results of this study indicated that some of personality traits have direct effect to the job satisfaction. The personality traits can affect job satisfaction of academic staff either directly or indirectly. The study found that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientious and openness to experience have positive direct effect on job satisfaction of academic staff. It's similar with the other research studies. For example, at the study by Saga, Talon & Tekogul (2011) amongst postdoctoral researchers it is found that agreeableness, conscientious associate with job satisfaction. A number of authors are in opinion that having friendly and supportive colleagues can contribute to increased job satisfaction (Embay & Bagger, 2013; Vlosky & Aguilar, 2009).

Bassett (1994) maintains that supervisions bringing the humanistic part to the job contribute towards increasing the employee's level of job satisfaction.

There are different factors that influence the job satisfaction at universities and it is very noticeable that the university managers tend to control those factors. Job satisfaction is one of the main factors that relates to staff's performance and increases the level of their activities and attendance in the workplace. The existence of satisfaction among the academic staff leads to long term careers at the same university and to increased productivity in the workplace (Digman, 1990).

### VIII. CONCLUSION

Many studies tend to focus on personality traits and job satisfaction of academic staff. This is important because many human resources, both in and outside the university environment, know that when employees are happy with their life and work, they tend to be more motivated and productive (Berta, 2005).

Academic staff satisfaction is highly recognized through the performance of students at university. When an organization manages to increase employees' job satisfaction, it does not only benefit the employees, but also the organization as a whole. Job satisfaction leads to a work productive workforce and more organizational success. Those who enjoy their work are believed to have a high quality of work life, while those who are unhappy are those whose needs are otherwise not fulfilled and who are believed to have low quality of life. It is very important, because the academicians have many various responsibilities. They are expected to educate students, communicate and collaborate with them, develop their own skills and knowledge. Many times they meet problematic students of various ages or difficult. These interactions require communication, problem solving and conflict managing skills. So it is obvious that academic staff differ from typical employees in various ways (Ilies & Judge, 2003).

The principle role of the universities is recognizing the needs and the desires of academic staff based on various working situations and meeting those needs according to the organization's policies. In reality, the universities should have adequate consciousness and knowledge for preparing and developing appropriate atmosphere among academic staff and realizing their tendencies and needs from workplace. All of these education organizations need to provide appropriate facilities for their staff.

The findings reported in this study make a valuable contribution to the awareness of understanding the concept of job satisfaction and the effect of personality traits on job satisfaction. However, additional research is needed for further investigation of the potential relationship and effects that these variables and other variables have on job satisfaction. That means that different cultures with their own values, religion, and socioeconomic status may have an impact on research findings. At the same time the study should be replicated using a much longer sample that would be selected more broadly from both public and private universities in the Republic of Macedonia.

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