

# Influence Factors on Job Satisfaction among Malaysia Educator: A Study of UUM Academic Staffs

Rusnifaezah bt Musa\*, Nik Kamariah Nik Mat, Chia Po Li, Yusrinadini Zahirah bt Md. Isa Yusuff, Rosni bt suib

Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, 06010, Malaysia

**Abstract** Over the past several years, considerable attention has been given to role conflict, role clarity, job tension, and job satisfaction as four very important determinants of the performance of individuals and their impact on the operational effectiveness of the organization. Without neglecting the concept of communication in the organization, this study emphasized the empathy variable as a new dimension in examining its effect within the traditional framework of role conflict, role clarity, job tension, and job satisfaction. There is limited research found on the educational fields, thus this research attempt to see the contribution of empathy among academic staff in educational sector. This paper aims to investigate the antecedents of job satisfaction among academic staff in Malaysia. Using primary data collection method, a total of 100 academic staffs at Universiti Utara Malaysia were surveyed with a questionnaire. From the literature, four antecedents of job satisfaction are identified. Each variable is measured using 5-point interval scale: job tension (9 items), role conflict (8 items), role clarity (5 items), and empathy (6 items) and job satisfaction (9 items). The data were analyzed using Structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 16. Confirmatory factor analysis of measurement models indicate adequate goodness of fit at GFI=0.906, P-Value=0.075, RMSEA=0.054 and ratio (cmin/df) = 1.287. the finding supports one significant direct effect in the revised model, thus supporting the hypothesis of empathy is negatively related to job satisfaction ( $\beta = -5.475$ ,  $cr = -2.442$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Keywords** Job Satisfaction, Role Clarity, Role Conflict, Job Tension, Empathy and Education

## 1. Introduction

In the 60s and 70s, the management of any organization has given more concern and attention on how efficient the resource within the organization is being fully utilized. In this situation, the keywords are 'optimization', 'cost control as well as reduction', 'quality control' and 'efficiency of productivity'. In this context, the employee is treated as a number of people. The shifting of the world economy whereby the broad border no longer exist, the competition become more severe and direct in any industries. Hence, in the recent times, more attentions have been given by academic institution to examine the conditions which will foster greater satisfaction with job among the academics staffs. The basic reason of this effort is to bind their employees to their job so that whatever changes occur internally such as shifts in the internal structures, employment practices, it will not effects the level of job satisfaction. Education is the most important industry (university) as it plays an important role in the development of any country. This is because university is considered as the highest source of knowledge, skill

development and train human resources who are experts in different fields of life. Hence, to enable the university contributes it roles and be productive, a knowledgeable, skillful as well as high quality academic staffs are essential[1]. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to job satisfaction of the academic staffs. Ducker[2] quoted "Today knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity and advancement" because it allows a country to stand on its feet. Therefore, employers today find it difficult to ignore the issue of job satisfaction at a time when demand for meaningful work is increasing. There are many reasons why the employers focus on the job satisfaction. Firstly, they have a moral responsibility towards their employees with better and satisfying working atmosphere. Secondly, when the employees are satisfied with the organization, it affects their attitude and behavior thus tends to make a positive contribution to their organization[3]. Thirdly, employees have a significant impact on the organization profitability; the employer needs to implement strategies that help to shape employees perception towards their jobs[4]. As such, it is vital for any organization to understand and response to this condition to enable them to sustain the job satisfaction level among their employees.

\* Corresponding author:  
rusnifaezah@gmail.com(Rusnifaezah bt Musa)  
Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/economics>  
Copyright © 2012 Scientific & Academic Publishing. All Rights Reserved

## 2. Literature Review

Locke & Latham[5] cited that job satisfaction topic has been a major issue for every organization. It has been a topic of interest of many researchers whom have conducted on different dimensions of job satisfaction because it has been closely linked with organizational phenomena such as leadership, morale, motivation, performance, behaviors and etc. The researchers have pinpointed a set of predictors for job satisfaction, which include role clarity, role conflict, job tension and empathy[4]. Previous literature survey reveals that as role conflict increases, roles clarify and job tension increase and job satisfaction decreases[6]. On the other hand, Newman & Cullen[7], reveal role clarity is the degree to which an individual has enough information to know his or her role in the organization hence he or she is able to perform their job proficiently as well as increase or decrease job satisfaction.

Meanwhile, role conflict occurs when the employee received contradictory demands from their management which differ from their job scope. Hence, the employee tends to suffer and decrease the job satisfaction as they are unsure or to which extent they are given the authority to solve the problems. When both of role clarity and role conflict occur, automatically increase the job tension among the employees thus reduces job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Hoffmann[8] viewed empathy as “*biologically based disposition for altruistic behavior*” which means in simple term, empathy is an ability to put oneself in another person position. Also Nielsen[9] findings showed that the level of empathy is significantly associated with certain behaviour. For example, highly empathetic employee gets more attention from the management than less empathetic employee because empathy stimulates interaction. Thus, the work-satisfaction level of highly empathetic employee becomes more visible to the management. Hence, empathy is an ability to understand and identify the human emotions as well as feeling of others[10].

### 2.1. Role Conflict And Job Satisfaction

Role conflict occurs when different groups or persons with whom an individual must interact (for example, family, members of that person’s group) hold conflicting expectations about that individual’s behaviour. A considerable amount of research has documented role conflict as sources of job dissatisfaction. Anafarta[11] reviewed his findings on role conflict is negatively related with job satisfaction. Similarly, Theodorakis and Goulmaris[12] indicated that role conflict is related negatively to job satisfaction. However, a finding from Bamber and Iyer[13] indicates that role conflict did not have relationship with job satisfaction, but has an indirect effect on job satisfaction.

### 2.2. Role Clarity and Job Satisfaction

Role Clarity refers to how employees are expected to perform their job as the required information is given. Rogers, Clow and Kash[4] stated role clarity had an inverse impact on job satisfaction which it will be increased by en-

hancing the role clarity. As Sarathy[14] studied on sales people’s performance, role clarity seems to be moderated variable to sales performance and the level of reward achieved then will be related to job satisfaction. Role Clarity also is a key role in improving service quality to increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment of the customer contact employee[15]. However, study conducted by Halepota and Shah[16] on employee job clarity towards employee job satisfaction in health public sector in Pakistan resulted a negative impact.

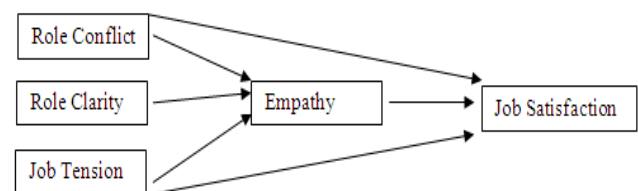
### 2.3. Job Tension and Job Satisfaction

Job tension and job satisfaction are two factors that can cause problem to employees and mostly led to a positive results for employees’ work and organization. Satisfaction is a regulating factor for stress. In the era of 1920-1950 believed the relationship between satisfaction and productivity could increase productivity. According to McCusker and Wolfman[17] reveal that employees feel satisfied on job tend to be more loyal to the company. In addition, job satisfaction can lead to the elimination of stress-related work and it would seem intuitive to attract that may have a negative relationship between tension or stress at work and overall job satisfaction. Some researchers like Grey and Gelfond[18], Bruce and Blackburn[19], Cully et. al.,[20], Hackman and Oldham[21] make some arguments that satisfaction level would be a herald to high performance. Both sources as such role conflict and role ambiguity will influence to job tension and it has relationship to job satisfaction[22].

### 2.4. Empathy and Job Satisfaction

Empathy can affect individual’s job satisfaction in an organization due to its ability to spontaneously and naturally tune into the other person’s thoughts and feelings[23],[24]. Thus, the presence of empathy has a significant influence on the employee behavior thus affected the job satisfaction. According to Rogers *et al.*,[4], the presence of high empathy level, it also reduced job tension among the employees thus increase the job satisfaction.

## 3. Methodology



**Figure 1.** The hypothesized structural relationship between role conflict, role clarity, job tension, empathy and job satisfaction

Based on the review of the literature, it is hypothesized that role conflict, role clarity, job tension influence job satisfaction of the academic staffs. And the relationships armiedate by empathy. Figure 1 depicts the hypothesize link

between all of the variables of interest in this study. A sample of 100 respondents was included in this survey. The respondents were selected from academic staffs in UUM. Total of 150 questionnaires were distributed and only 100 of them were returned and usable. The questionnaires consist of four main parts: (i) respondents' background information on age, sex, education level, tenure, pay received and marital status (ii) respondents' overall job satisfaction (8 items), (iii) role conflict (8 items), (iv) role clarity (5 items), (v) job tension (9 items) and (vi) empathy (6 items).

### 3.1. Data Analysis - SEM, CFA, EFA

Structural Equation Modeling was utilized and the 100 dataset were tested using AMOS version 4.0. The structural model was specified by running the individual items of every construct involved in the study using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) which has its own measurement and must be validated and accepted before modeling the structural model. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to test the convergent reliability which can't be more than 1.

## 4. Finding

Based on the revised model on table 1, the result demonstrates that empathy is a significant negative antecedent of job satisfaction. Hence, empathy has an inversely significant impact on customer loyalty ( $\beta = -5.475$ ,  $cr = -2.442$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) or H4 is asserted. Alternatively, hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H5, H6 and H7 are not asserted (insignificant Beta). Thus these hypotheses are rejected.

To arrive to the structural model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on every construct and measurement models (Table 6). The goodness of fit is the decision to see the model fits into the variance-covariance

matrix of the dataset. The CFA, measurement and structural model has a good fit with the data based on assessment criteria such as GFI, CFI, TLI, RMSEA[25]. All CFAs of constructs produced a relatively good fit as indicated by the goodness of fit indices such as CMIN/df ratio ( $<2$ ); p-value ( $>0.05$ ); Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of  $>0.95$ ; and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of values less than 0.08 ( $<0.08$ )[26]. Confirmatory factor analysis of measurement models in this study indicate adequate goodness of fit at GFI=0.906, P-Value=0.075, RMSEA=0.054 and ratio ( $cmin/df$ ) = 1.287.

## 5. Conclusions

This study attempts to examine the causal relationships between four antecedents of job satisfaction in the education sector. As expected, the hypothesized model do not achieve model fit ( $p$  value=0.000,  $p < 0.001$ ). This implies that hypothesized model could not be generalized to the population. This is expected because the sample was only concentrated in one region only. The revised model accomplished model fit and supports one direct effect. From the results, it's found that only empathy have direct effect on job satisfaction but with negative relationship. This finding differs from previous research by Rogers, et al.[4] where they found empathy do not have any significant relationship with job satisfaction. The results of finding also represents when educators has low empathy, it will effect job satisfaction to increase. The findings could not be generalized for the whole of Malaysia because it was only conducted in the Northern region of Malaysia. This model has shown some interesting findings which could be applied for utilization in research on a bigger scale to include the whole of Malaysia and Asian region.

**Table 1.** Direct Impact of Revised Model: Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Status
Empathy	<---	Role_Clarity	-.329	.241	-1.375	.169	x significant
Empathy	<---	Role_Conflict	.323	.088	1.388	.165	x significant
Empathy	<---	Job_Tension	.374	.394	1.385	.166	x significant
<b>Job_Satisfaction</b>	<---	<b>Empathy</b>	<b>-.547</b>	<b>.181</b>	<b>-2.442</b>	<b>.015</b>	<b>significant</b>
Job_Satisfaction	<---	Role_Clarity	-.137	.172	-.649	.516	x significant
Job_Satisfaction	<---	Role_Conflict	-.100	.059	-.524	.600	x significant
Job_Satisfaction	<---	Job_Tension	-.162	.279	-.687	.492	x significant

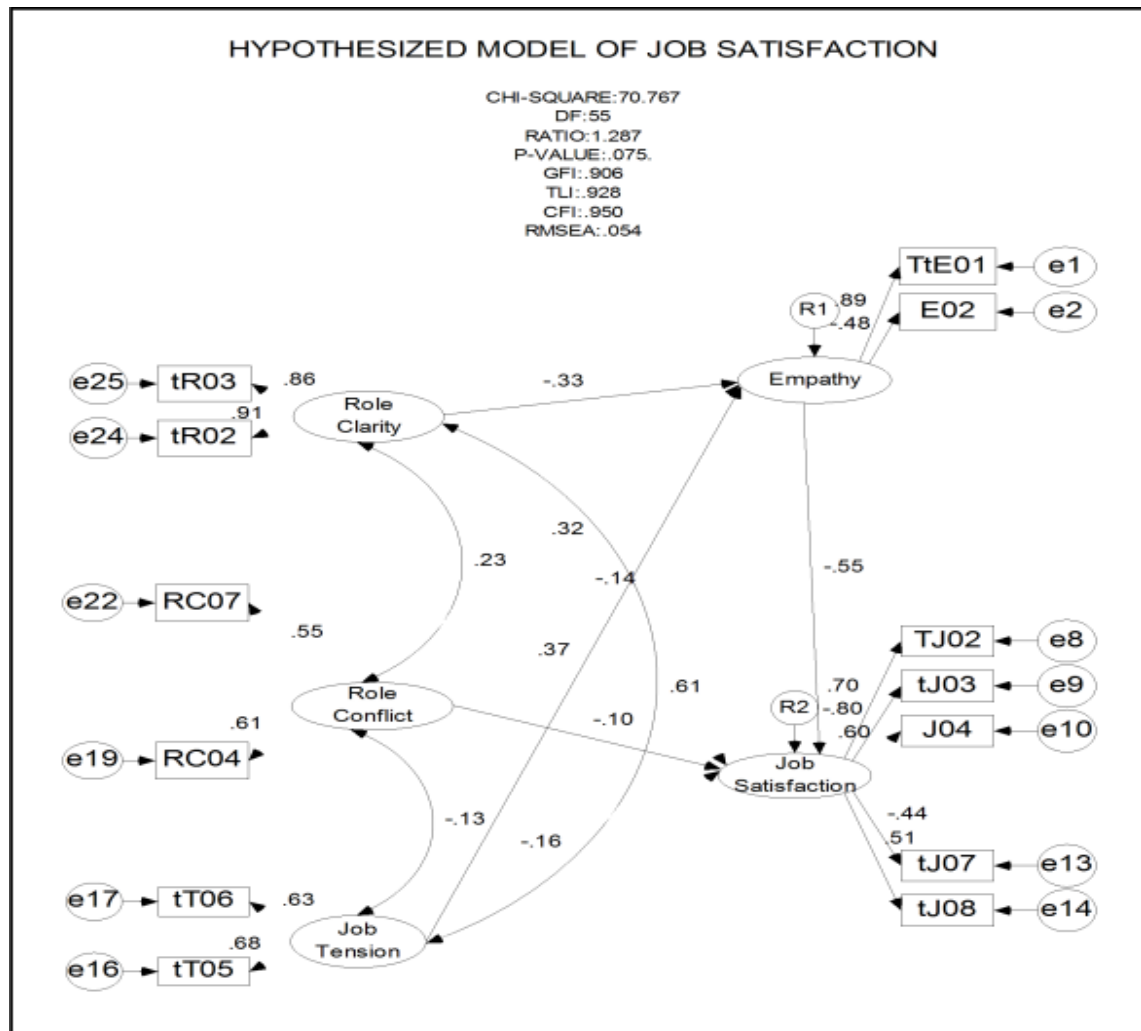


Figure 2. Revised Model

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Prof Dr. Nik Kamariah Nik Mat and Sukma Pea for their helpful comments and assistance on an earlier version of this paper.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Khalid, S., Isrhad M.Z., & Mahmood, B. (2012). Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff: A Comparative Analysis between Public and Private Sector Universities of Punjab, Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7(1), 126-136.
- [2] Ducker (1997). *Drucker on Asia: A Dialogue between Peter Drucker and Isao Nakauchi*. Tokyo: Diamond Inc
- [3] Ramayah, T., Jantan, M., & Tadisina, S.K. (2001). Job satisfaction: Empirical evidence for alternatives to JDI. *National Decision Sciences Conference*, San Francisco.
- [4] Rogers, J.D., Clow, K.E. & Kash, T.J. (1994). Increasing job satisfaction of service personnel, *Journal of Services Marketing*, 8(1), 14-26.
- [5] Locke, E.A., & Latham, G.P. (2000). *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- [6] Churchill, G.A., Jr, Ford, N.M., & Walker, O.C. (1985). The determinants of salesperson performance: A Meta-analysis. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22, 103-118.
- [7] Newman, A.J., & Cullen, P. (2002). *Retailing: Environment & Operations*. Canada: Nelson Education Ltd.
- [8] Hoffmann, M. (2000). *Empathy and Moral Development*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- [9] Nielsen, V.L. (2010). *Survey of Danish public employees*. Department of Political Science, Aarhus University.
- [10] Yuki, G., O'Donnell, M. & Taber, T. (2009). Leader behaviors and leader member exchange, *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 24(4), 289-29
- [11] Anafarta, N. (2011). The Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Job Satisfaction: A Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Approach. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(4), 168-177.
- [12] Theodorakis, N & Goulamaris, D. (2004). Role ambiguity, role conflict and job satisfaction among physical education teachers in Greece. *The International Journal of Educational*

Management, 18(2), 87–92.

- [13] Bamber, E.M. & Iyer, V. (2009). The effect of auditing firms' tone at the top on auditors' job autonomy, organizational-professional conflict, and job satisfaction. *International Journal of Accounting and Information Management*, 17(2), 136-150
- [14] Sarathy, P. S. (2012). Sales people's performance and change in career in their maintenance stage, *International Journal of Organizational Innovation*, 4(3), 216-234.
- [15] Mukherjee, A. & Malhotra, N. (2006). Does role clarity explain employee-perceived service quality? A study of antecedents and consequences in call centres, *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 17(5), 444-473.
- [16] Halepota, J. A. & Shah, N. (2011). An empirical investigation of organizational antecedents on employee job satisfaction in a developing country. *Transforming Government People, Process and Policy*, 5(3), 280-294.
- [17] McCusker, D. and Wolfman, I. (1998), *Loyalty in the Eyes of Employers and Employees*, Supplement to the November 1998 Workforce, available at: [www.workforceonline.com](http://www.workforceonline.com)
- [18] Grey, R. and Gelfond, P. (1990), "The people side of productivity", *National Productivity Review*, Vol. 9 No. 3, pp. 301-12.
- [19] Bruce, W.M. and Blackburn, J.W. (1992), *Balancing Job Satisfaction & Performance: A Guide for Human Resource Professional*, Quorum Books, Westport, CT.
- [20] Cully, M., Woodland, S., O'Reilly, A., Dix, G., Millward, N., Forth, J. and Bryson, A. (1998), *The 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey: First Findings*, DTI, ESRC, ACAS, and PSI, London.
- [21] Hackman, J.R. and Oldham, G. (1975), "Development of the job-diagnostic survey", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 60 No. 2, pp. 159-70.
- [22] Kahn, R., Wolfe, D., Quinn, R. and Snoek, J. (1964), *Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity*, Wiley, New York, NY.
- [23] Baron-Cohen, S. (2003), *The Essential Difference: The Truth about the Male and Female Brain*, New York: Perseus Books Group
- [24] Hale, Mary (1999). "He says, she says: Gender and worklife", *Public Administration Review*, 59 (5): 410-424.
- [25] Bagozzi, R.P., & Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 16, 74–97.
- [26] Hair, J. F. Jr. Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. Anderson, R. E. and Tatham, R. L. 2006. *Multivariate data analysis*. 6th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.