



Research Article

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Tasks that Influence Overall Job Satisfaction Among Academics in Albania

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Abstract

Measuring and understanding job satisfaction is increasingly crucial over time, both for organizations and academics. Identifying factors influencing job satisfaction is pivotal for taking proactive measures to enhance it. The task itself has been found to be one of the elements influencing academics' job satisfaction. This study focuses on investigating the specific tasks influencing the overall job satisfaction of university professors. Through hierarchical regression analysis involving 301 professors from Albanian universities, it was found that tasks related to teaching and knowledge transfer, and supervising PhD students positively impacted job satisfaction. Additionally, gender emerged as a demographic factor affecting this relationship, with women reporting higher satisfaction levels than men. Other demographic variables were not found to be significant. The study highlights key tasks contributing to academics' job satisfaction, providing valuable insights for policymakers and administrators in higher education. These findings underscore the necessity for tailored strategies aimed at addressing task-related issues and enhancing satisfaction levels.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Tasks, Professor Satisfaction

1. Introduction

In the realm of organizational studies, job satisfaction stands out as one of the most extensively researched work attitudes (Byrne et al., 2012). Originating in the 1920s (Filiz, 2013), this concept has been explored across various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, management, and economics, spanning different types of companies (Yoon, 2020). The significance of job satisfaction lies in its positive implications for companies, including enhanced worker dedication and productivity (Byrne et al., 2012; Saif et al., 2012). Similarly, job satisfaction has garnered attention in the field of education, given its crucial role in supporting societal economy and prosperity through the fundamentals of

learning and education. Academic staff are widely regarded as pivotal for the success of educational institutions, influencing learning outcomes significantly (Amazon & Idris, 2011). The study of job satisfaction among academic staff holds immense importance as these individuals serve as the backbone of universities and contribute significantly to their development (Yoon, 2020). Moreover, academic staff satisfaction is intertwined with institutional reputation on both national and global scales, as well as with student learning outcomes (de Lourdes Machado-Taylor et al., 2014). Notably, turnover among professors is often attributed to dissatisfaction with their jobs (Webber & Rogers, 2018; McJames et al., 2023), underscoring the necessity of understanding and enhancing job satisfaction for their retention in academia, institutional growth, and effective knowledge transfer. To develop strategies for improving job satisfaction among professors, it is essential to assess their current levels of satisfaction (Nebojsa et al., 2020) and delve into factors contributing to their contentment and motivation.

Today, education is constantly changing. Different demands and increasing pressures make it necessary to pay more attention to the changes in the factors that affect the job satisfaction of professors. The emphasis on university research quality has grown in the worldwide rivalry of higher education (Yang et al., 2021), which has increased the demand for academics to conduct scientific research (Wilkesmann & Schmid, 2014; Ismayilova & Klassen, 2019; Yoon, 2020). Professors are increasingly expected to conduct scientific research, particularly in countries like Albania where academic degrees are awarded based on legal requirements for conducting scientific research. Although standards for research and teaching self-efficacy hold significance globally, their importance is particularly pronounced in developing nations. In these contexts, higher education institutions are required to adhere to international standards despite facing constraints in resources (Ismayilova & Klassen, 2019). To address these institutional demands and pressures effectively, it is imperative for institutions to prioritize the support of academics' job satisfaction. This assumption posits that such support will ensure a positive impact on the job experiences of staff members, benefiting every university (Janib et al., 2022). Authors have often explored various variables impacting academics' job satisfaction, focusing more on individual variables rather than considering the job as a whole. However, academic work comprises multiple discrete tasks, each varying in relevance, complexity, and satisfaction levels (Chen, 2023). Academic staff members undertake a myriad of tasks within universities, which can be broadly categorized as administrative, service, research, and teaching activities (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2011; Kuntz, 2012). Academics frequently perform these tasks simultaneously. Hence, it is believed that achieving success and fulfillment in one's career requires maintaining a balance between research, teaching, service, and administrative responsibilities (Kuntz, 2012; Yang et al., 2021). While it's recognized that job satisfaction is affected by factors beyond mere work tasks (Amazt & Idris, 2011), it's essential that overall job satisfaction encompasses satisfaction with individual task-related aspects. However, there has been limited research investigating professors' job satisfaction specifically concerning their work tasks (Chen, 2023).

In Albania, there is research on teachers' job satisfaction (Kume, 2020; Tirana et al, 2023), however there is little data in higher education. The Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASCAL), which accredits higher education institutions and programs, assesses academic job satisfaction. These findings are submitted to the institutions where the measurements were performed and are not published as scientific research. According to our knowledge, no study in Albania has measured the satisfaction of academic staff with the tasks they perform. With this perspective in mind, the study seeks to explore the influence of academics' various tasks on their overall job satisfaction. The insights gained from this research will be valuable for decision-makers in academia, aiding them in understanding which tasks contribute to increased job satisfaction and motivation among academics.

This academic paper is organized into several sections. In the second section, an extensive literature review will be conducted to explore existing studies and definitions related to "Job Satisfaction, professor job satisfaction, factors affecting job satisfaction, including the motivator-

hygiene theory. The methodology and dataset utilized in the present study are outlined in the third section. Next, the fourth section presents the findings of the current research. Subsequently, the fifth section discusses the implications of these findings. The conclusions drawn from this research are discussed in the sixth section. Finally, the last two sections offer recommendations for future research and address the limitations of this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Job Satisfaction

The literature abounds with various definitions and conceptualizations on job satisfaction. One frequently cited definition comes from Locke (1976), who described the construct as a 'pleasurable or positive emotional state coming from the appraisal of one's job' (p. 1304). Job satisfaction is defined as the overall attitude of employees towards their work (Saif et al., 2012; Feliz, 2013) encompassing both positive and negative behaviors exhibited within the work environment. Additionally, it is viewed as the result of an employee's perception of how well their job fulfills the important dimensions of their welfare experience (Umaru & Ombugus, 2017), or as a general sentiment towards various aspects of their job (Chamundeswari, 2013). According to Joon (2020), job satisfaction exhibits several characteristics: it varies in level and impact from individual to individual; it has a ripple effect and is closely linked to career changes, absences, and productivity. These characteristics render job satisfaction challenging to measure but significant due to its far-reaching implications.

For companies, the process of determining, evaluating, and enhancing employee job satisfaction is not only crucial but often indispensable, as it affects various aspects of both the employee's life and the organization simultaneously. Enhanced work performance, reduced intent to leave, increased organizational commitment, and mitigation of job burnout are all linked to employees' job satisfaction (Mgaiwa, 2021). Increased job satisfaction can increase the likelihood of higher work engagement and productivity (Hagedorn, 2000; Umaru & Ombugus, 2017), which results in improved performance in critical moments and lead to increased profitability for businesses (Brittler & Reda, 2015). Whereas from an individual standpoint, job satisfaction holds significant importance as it is positively correlated with overall happiness and it's a pivotal component of well-being (Brittler & Reda, 2015).

Organizations must prioritize the identification and enhancement of overall employee satisfaction to harness the benefits associated with job satisfaction. Given that an individual's behavior at work significantly influences their job satisfaction (Locke, 1976; Feliz, 2013; Chen, 2023), it becomes crucial to pinpoint the specific types of work that contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction among employees. It is imperative to include individual task job satisfaction as part of the broader spectrum of overall job satisfaction.

2.2 Job Satisfaction of Professors

Academic staff in higher education institutions play a pivotal role and their responsibilities extend beyond the confines of the workplace. They are essential contributors to a nation's educational advancement and serve as the cornerstone of higher education standards. As a result, an integral aspect of enhancing the quality of higher education involves assessing the job satisfaction levels of university professors (Chen, 2023). Examining the job satisfaction of academic staff can offer insights into the factors that affect lecturers' attitudes towards their institutions, thereby shedding light on their overall job satisfaction levels across various universities. Armed with this knowledge, human resource management can develop guidelines aimed at creating a secure and comfortable workplace environment for employees (Kim et al., 2023). The literature further suggests a broad variety of other advantages that increase job satisfaction can have in higher education: job satisfaction can increase motivation (Al-Smadi & Qblan, 2015; Bui, 2019; Nissilä et al, 2022), can increase career commitment

(Janib et al., 2022; Wang & Rashid, 2022), can reduce turnover intention (Gokalp, 2022; Vem et al., 2024), as well as increase talent retention (Wang & Rashid, 2022). In general, heightened job satisfaction correlates positively with enhancing the quality of education (Bui, 2019).

Professors typically operate in dynamic and demanding environments characterized by considerable stress and ambiguous boundaries (Hagedorn, 2000). They fulfill a diverse array of roles within academia, many of which entail complexities, novel challenges, or time constraints. To provide students with comprehensive education, professors must not only deliver lectures but also provide professional guidance, engage in academic research, disseminate their findings, and stay abreast of advancements in science, technology, and teaching methodologies (Viet, 2013). Another approach through which professors may gauge their job satisfaction is by assessing their experiences in teaching, research, and service (Chen, 2023). Despite the considerable attention devoted by literature to job satisfaction in academia (Saif et al., 2012), relatively scant research has explored this aspect across the diverse role's academics undertake (Chen, 2023). Given the significance of job satisfaction at professional, personal, and organizational levels, its exploration should encompass a broad scope, yet limited research has delved into academic job satisfaction outside of European contexts (Mgaiwa, 2021).

This study seeks to examine the overarching job satisfaction levels among professors in Albania, while also identifying the academic responsibilities that contribute positively to heightened job satisfaction. Additionally, it aims to explore demographic factors that might influence this relationship.

2.3 Factors Influencing Professors' Job Satisfaction

As discussed in the above paragraphs, the literature suggests that there is an array of factors that can affect academic staff job satisfaction. These factors can be categorized into three typologies: general, external, and internal (Chen, 2023). Brittler & Reda (2015), state that intrinsic characteristics centered on opportunities and chances, work independence, collegial relationships, meaningful use of time at work, and work values are the best predictors of faculty members' job satisfaction. Some authors highlight that the best indicators of job satisfaction are aspects of the workplace environment that academics work in, such as the atmosphere of the university, student morale, sense of community, and relationships with coworkers (Lacy & Sheehan, 1997). These are referred to as external. Other authors have determined that salary and benefits (Umaru & Ombugus, 2017; Kuwaiti et al, 2019), opportunities for promotion (Umaru & Ombugus, 2017), work environment (Shin & Jung, 2013; Omar et al, 2020), achieving work objectives (Hesli & Lee, 2013), and opportunities for growth and development (Ramirez, 2011; Omar et al, 2020) are the most important factors influencing academics' job satisfaction. Mgaiwa (2021) found that resources, teamwork, supervision, academic freedom, and participative decision-making are all factors that influence academics' job satisfaction. According to research by Hee et al. (2020), there is a noteworthy correlation between job satisfaction and top management leadership. The authors have identified a number of variables that have a positive effect and increase academics' job satisfaction, just as they have also identified variables that worsen job satisfaction. Stressors that lower job satisfaction include work-life conflict and continued commitment (Dorenkamp & Ruhle, 2018) as well as challenging work and unclear roles within organizations (Mathur & Mehta, 2015).

The academic components of work, such as engaging in research activities, disseminating findings through publication, providing mentorship, delivering lectures, interacting with students, and overseeing their progress, play a crucial role in shaping the job satisfaction of academics (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011). A pivotal factor influencing faculty job satisfaction is the perceived alignment of their work with the core objectives of the university. Traditionally, universities have placed greater emphasis on research and teaching activities compared to administrative or service-related duties (Houston et al., 2006). However, due to evolving academic landscapes and increasing demands, even institutions previously focused on teaching have elevated expectations for faculty

research and publication to remain competitive with higher-ranked counterparts (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011). Nonetheless, Shin and Jung (2013) found that academics in balanced systems express lower job satisfaction compared to those in teaching or research-focused systems. However, the literature presents conflicting views regarding the satisfaction derived from scientific research among academics. While some scholars (Ringelhan et al., 2013; Albert et al., 2016) highlight the positive impact of scientific research on job satisfaction and motivation across career stages, others (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2011) assert that it yields no discernible effect.

Some researchers have explored the relationship between academics' job satisfaction and demographic and professional characteristics, including age, race, gender, status, academic areas, and institution type (Lacy & Sheehan, 1997; Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009; Feliz, 2013; Hesli & Lee, 2013; Webber & Rogers, 2018; Ismayilova & Klassen, 2019; Castellacci & Viñas-Bardolet, 2020; Chen, 2023). Gender represents the most extensively studied demographic factor concerning professors' job satisfaction, yet findings are inconclusive (Hagedorn, 2000). Research in this area indicates a significant impact of gender on professorial satisfaction, with some studies suggesting that women tend to report lower satisfaction compared to men (Castillo & Cano, 2004; Bender & Heywood, 2009; Webber & Rogers, 2018), while others indicate the opposite, with women expressing higher satisfaction levels than men (Albert et al., 2016). According to other research, work satisfaction in academia does not differ between men and women (Byrne et al., 2012; Hesley & Lee, 2013). Various research studies have highlighted the significance of academic staff experience in influencing job satisfaction. For instance, Castellacci and Viñas-Bardolet (2020) discovered a correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Moreover, some research indicates that job satisfaction among academics tends to decrease early in their careers, reaches a nadir around middle age (with an average age of 43), and then gradually rises in later career stages. However, contradictory findings exist, with some researchers suggesting that age is not a pertinent determinant (Amarasena et al., 2015). Additionally, other variables such as academic rank (Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009; Byrne et al., 2012), institutional type (private or public) (Hesli & Lee, 2013; Webber & Rogers, 2018), marital status (Feliz, 2013), and the number of dependents (Amarasena et al., 2015) have been identified, albeit yielding conflicting results, like other variables in this domain.

Following the establishment of a list of variables from the literature, it is important to note the absence of a universally applicable set of factors that consistently foster a positive perception of work (Hagedorn, 2000). Considering this, a construct of ten elements was devised to conduct this research to assess academic staff job satisfaction. Our study recorded each participating professor's gender, rank, experience, and age, and examined their correlation with job satisfaction levels. The aim was to investigate whether professors' demographic characteristics and job-related factors influence their job satisfaction.

2.4 Motivation-Hygiene Theory--Frederick Herzberg, 1959

Researchers often apply the fundamental principle of the motivator-hygiene theory, introduced by Frederick Herzberg in 1959, to analyze the job satisfaction of academics (Chen, 2023). This theory is selected as a framework for understanding academic job satisfaction, often prioritizing it over other theories. According to the motivator-hygiene theory, individuals possess two sets of needs: one related to psychological growth (motivation) and another aimed at avoiding discomfort (non-dissatisfaction) (Amazt & Idris, 2011). Hill (1986) suggests that, when applied to academics, Herzberg's theory predicts that satisfaction stems from the 'professional' model—namely, serving clients (students) and enjoying a significant degree of autonomy in their respective fields. Herzberg posits that job context influences both job dissatisfiers (hygiene factors) and job satisfiers (motivators), which are linked to job content (Mefi & Asoba, 2021). *Hygiene factors*, as identified by Herzberg, include aspects like salary, benefits, status, job security, administrative and company policies, fringe benefits, and physical working conditions (Castillo & Cano, 2004; Chen, 2023). In contrast, Herzberg defines intrinsic job characteristics as those associated with the actual content of work, such as

recognition, achievement, responsibility, growth, and advancement (Lacy & Sheehan, 1997). These are termed 'motivational' factors and are crucial for job satisfaction. According to Yoon (2020), improvements in hygiene factors may decrease job dissatisfaction, but they do not necessarily lead to increased job satisfaction.

Our study, aimed at evaluating overall job satisfaction, adopts the motivator-hygiene theory framework, which encompasses both hygienic and motivational elements.

3. Methodology

The study utilizes a quantitative approach, collecting data through a survey to explore how university professors' job satisfaction is influenced by their individual tasks, as well as to identify demographic factors that may affect this relationship.

3.1 Participants

Data was collected through an online survey administered to university professors. Approximately 6,500 professors across both public and private higher education institutions were contacted via their official email addresses. However, only 1,038 respondents were able to access the online survey. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some academics may prefer to use their private email accounts and may not frequently check their institutional email addresses, leading us to classify these cases as unattainable. Ultimately, only 712 respondents completed the survey, with a subset of 301 individuals completing the entire questionnaire.

3.2 Instruments

A questionnaire was devised to facilitate this quantitative investigation, comprising three sections. The first section captured demographic data, including age, experience, rank, and gender, which were considered as demographic factors in the study. The second section assessed the level of satisfaction among academics regarding their working conditions. This section consisted of ten items created by the researchers to measure professionals' satisfaction with various aspects of their work environment. Participants rated their satisfaction using a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neutral; 4 = satisfied; and 5 = very satisfied. The Cronbach's alpha score for the current study was .921 (n=10), indicating good reliability. The third section of the questionnaire focused on identifying the tasks undertaken by academics that could potentially influence their job satisfaction. Researchers identified ten different academic job roles within this category.

3.3 Operationalization of variables

Professors' job satisfaction was measured using a construct consisting of ten questions, including career growth opportunities, intellectual challenge, scientific environment, job security/stability, contribution to society, the prestige of the organization or job, and other cultural, ethical, or organizational questions. All questions are rated on a Likert scale (1-Very unhappy to 5-Very satisfied). Tasks like research supervision PhD, curriculum development, teaching activities and knowledge transmission, entrepreneurship and start-up activities, and other tasks performed by academics are included under the "tasks developed by academics" variable. All questions are measured using a Likert scale for the frequency of carrying out the task (1- Never to 5- Always).

3.4 Data Analysis

The findings of this study were analyzed using hierarchical linear regression. The objective was to examine the influence of multiple tasks performed by professors on the dependent variable, which is

the overall job satisfaction of academics. In the first stage of analysis, the control variables representing the demographic attributes of the respondents were entered, followed by the inclusion of other variables representing different academic job roles in the second stage. Initially, descriptive analyses were conducted, and subsequently, participants' job satisfaction was evaluated using the mean ratings of the retained items. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then employed to investigate the impact of various job roles on job satisfaction.

4. Findings/Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study. On average, respondents had 14.1 years of experience and were 42.8 years old. Only 15% of participants held the scientific degree of Professor of Science, with women comprising 64% of the sample. Additionally, the table displays the frequency of various tasks performed by academics. Using a five-point Likert scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always), respondents indicated how frequently they engaged in each task. The results indicate that teaching and knowledge transfer, scientific research, course development, and managing research teams are among the most commonly performed tasks by academics in Albania. Conversely, conducting peer reviews and supervising PhD candidates are among the least frequently performed activities.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	N
Age	24	68	42.837	301
Experience	.00	42	14.083	301
Gender (Male_1)	0	1	0.36	301
Rank (Prof vs Others)	0	1	.75	301
Tasks				
Research performing activities	1	5	3.977	301
Research supervision PhD	1	5	1.797	301
Research supervision projects	1	5	2.591	301
Teaching activities and knowledge transfer	1	5	4.701	301
Managing own research team	1	5	3.349	301
Technology transfer to industry	1	5	2.591	301
Performing peer reviews	1	5	2.080	301
Curricula development	1	5	2.362	301
Course development (Module plan)	1	5	3.684	301
Entrepreneurship, start-up activities	1	5	2.292	301

A construct consisting of ten elements was developed to assess the overall satisfaction level of academics. Participants were asked to rate each question within the construct using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with 1 indicating "never" and 5 indicating "always." To assess the measurement quality and reliability of the construct, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. The obtained Cronbach's alpha value of 0.921 indicates a high level of reliability. Typically, a reliability coefficient greater than 0.7 is considered satisfactory for constructs measuring internal consistency. Therefore, the construct measuring professor satisfaction was deemed reliable.

Table 2. Questionnaire items and measurement instruments for professors' job satisfaction

Category/construct	Scale	Cronbach's alpha	Number of Items	Some of included questions
Job Satisfaction	5-point Likert-type scale	0.921	10	Professors Job Satisfaction: - Career growth opportunities - Intellectual challenge - Scientific environment - Job security/stability - Contribution to society

Table 3 presents the ANOVA and model summary. Based on the data, it is observed that the tasks carried out by professors explain approximately 15.6% of the variance in professors' satisfaction, as indicated by the R-square value of 0.156. The predicted factors were found to be statistically significant ($F = 3.754$, $p = 0.000$) at the 0.05 level, as shown in Table 3. Therefore, it can be inferred from the data analysis that the various tasks performed by professors may serve as indicators of their level of job satisfaction in academia.

Table 3(a): Model Summary of regression

R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. error of the estimate
.395	.156	.114	.730

Table 3(b). ANOVA of regression

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28.027	14	2.002	3.754	.000b
Residual	151.978	285	.533		
Total	180.005	299			

Table 4 displays the findings of the hierarchical linear regression coefficients. The results suggest that tasks such as teaching and knowledge transfer, as well as supervision of PhD research, have the most substantial impact on academics' job satisfaction. For the task of teaching and knowledge transfer the coefficient, 0.171 and $p\text{-value} = 0.025 < 0.05$ indicates that for a unit increase in the task perform, we expect an increase in professor job satisfaction given that all of the other variables in the model are held constant. For the task of supervision of PhD research the coefficient, 0.106 and $p\text{-value} = 0.023 < 0.05$ indicates that for a unit increase in the task perform, we expect an increase in professor job satisfaction. Among the demographic variables examined in the study, only gender was found to be significant for this relationship (Coeff. = -0.222, $p\text{-value} 0.019 < 0.05$), according to our analysis. Age, rank, and experience were among the demographic factors that did not show statistical significance.

Table 4: Coefficient Results of the Multiple Regression

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.659	1.012		.651	.516
Age	.611	.647	.072	.944	.346
Experience	-.118	.169	-.052	-.695	.487
Gender (male_1)	-.222	.094	-.137	-2.354	.019
Rank (Prof Vs Others)	-.183	.121	-.102	-1.518	.130
Research performing activities	.094	.056	.110	1.671	.096
Research supervision PhD	.106	.047	.170	2.278	.023
Research supervision projects	-.045	.052	-.072	-.875	.382
Teaching activities, knowledge transfer	.171	.076	.143	2.256	.025
Managing own research team	.040	.042	.063	.964	.336
Technology transfer to industry	.020	.049	.035	.411	.681
Performing peer reviews	-.001	.046	-.002	-.029	.977
Curricula development	.021	.042	.035	.503	.615
Course development (Module plan)	.046	.048	.067	.954	.341
Entrepreneurship, start-up activities	.072	.042	.118	1.713	.088

5. Discussion

The impact of job characteristics and the nature of work itself on professors' motivation and satisfaction has been extensively discussed in prior research (Bui, 2019; Castillo & Cano, 2004).

However, the relationship between the time allocated to specific tasks and job satisfaction is less studied and remains ambiguous (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011). This study aims to elucidate the connection between various types of tasks performed by academics and their job satisfaction.

For this study, we analyzed the tasks carried out by academics, considering the frequency of occurrence of each task. Subsequently, a construct comprising ten items was developed to evaluate professors' job satisfaction. Our findings indicate that teaching and supervising PhD students significantly impact professors' overall satisfaction in academia. Interestingly, this aligns with the findings of Ismayilova & Klassen (2019), which examined contexts in Eastern regions. However, contrary to several previous studies (Cashwell, 2009; Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Hesli & Lee, 2013; Bender & Heywood, 2009) suggesting that teaching does not enhance professors' job satisfaction, our study reveals a positive correlation.

Moreover, scientific research did not emerge as a significant variable in our study, consistent with previous research (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Bentley et al., 2013; De Lourdes Machado-Taylor et al., 2014), although it contrasts with other findings (Hesli & Lee, 2013; Al-Smadi & Qblan, 2015). Surprisingly, while supervising doctoral students significantly contributes to academics' satisfaction in Albania, it does not yield the same result in other research (Albert et al., 2016).

Furthermore, gender emerged as the only demographic characteristic significantly impacting academics' overall job satisfaction in our study. Age, experience, and rank were not significant factors in this relationship. Our analysis suggests that men are less satisfied with their work compared to their female counterparts, consistent with some studies (Lacy & Sheehan, 1997; Albert et al., 2016) but conflicting with others (Seifert & Umbach, 2008; Bender & Heywood, 2009; Feliz, 2013; Webber & Rogers, 2018). Some studies have found no gender differences in job satisfaction (Kuwaiti et al., 2019; Smagina, 2020). Similarly, age, rank, and experience were not found to be significant variables in relation to job satisfaction, consistent with previous research (Amarasena et al., 2015; Mathur & Mehta, 2015). Although some studies suggest that demographic variables such as age (Castellacci & Viñas-Bardolet, 2020), rank (Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009; Chen, 2023), and experience (Al-Smadi & Qblan, 2015; Britiller & Reda, 2015) influence academic job satisfaction, the literature on this matter is inconsistent, as emphasized by Hagedorn (2000): "there is no 'one size fits all at all times,' and it is not possible to create a list of criteria that consistently promote optimistic outlooks on the job." However, in a context like the one analyzed in the study, where the tasks performed are defined in the performance evaluation and the higher education law (No. 80/2015), it is critical to develop task-based satisfaction measurements in order to allocate tasks based on the satisfaction that academics receive from them.

6. Conclusion

This research makes two significant contributions, one to the existing literature and the other to managerial decision-making. Firstly, it expands the understanding of job satisfaction within the higher education context by investigating how various tasks undertaken by academics influence their overall job satisfaction. While previous studies have identified numerous factors impacting job satisfaction in various sectors, including higher education, the specific influence of academics' roles and tasks on their overall job satisfaction remained unclear. Thus, this study's theoretical model offers valuable insights into how academics' tasks affect job satisfaction among university lecturers.

Secondly, this research highlights the importance of considering the impact of academic tasks on satisfaction. The findings from academia in Albania underscore the critical role of scientific research, which directly affects the ranking of Albanian Universities. In the Albanian context, obstacles to engaging in scientific research include funding limitations, restricted access to databases, and skill limitations (Çali et al., 2023). To enhance satisfaction with scientific research, it is imperative to address these barriers through management interventions. This can involve providing research support in the form of financial resources (Byrne et al., 2012) and implementing training programs to enhance lecturers' knowledge and skills in scientific research (Bui, 2019). Institutional

leaders bear responsibility for creating a conducive work environment and promoting job satisfaction as it extends beyond the workplace to impact the well-being of individuals, families, and communities (Hantula, 2015). Managers and policymakers should identify strategies to enhance overall job satisfaction among academics, as dissatisfaction can lead to reduced commitment to providing quality education, thereby negatively affecting institutional success (Viêt, 2013).

7. Recommendations

The pursuit of understanding job satisfaction within academia remains ongoing, with continuous opportunities for further exploration, particularly given the rapid pace of change in today's environment. The current study has unearthed several pertinent issues, unveiling intriguing avenues for future investigation. Firstly, there is a need for additional research on job satisfaction in non-European countries, considering their unique contexts and circumstances. This would provide valuable insights into how job satisfaction manifests in diverse cultural and institutional settings. Moreover, building upon the findings of this study, future research could delve deeper into understanding why professors in Albania may not experience increased satisfaction from certain aspects of their work. Exploring the underlying reasons behind these findings could uncover important nuances that contribute to overall job satisfaction among academics. Additionally, further studies could expand upon the factors influencing job satisfaction and the specific tasks undertaken by academics. By incorporating a broader range of variables, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between different factors and their impact on job satisfaction. Variables such as the impact of organizational culture, leadership styles, job security, payments and rewards, academic infrastructure, and many others might provide additional insights on job satisfaction. Overall, these future research endeavors would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of job satisfaction among academics, offering valuable insights into the strategies institutions can employ to enhance the satisfaction of their professors with their work.

8. Limitations

This study is subject to certain limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, reliance on self-reported work satisfaction questionnaires introduces potential biases, as responses are based on employees' subjective perceptions and judgments. Secondly, focusing solely on academic staff overlooks the perspectives of management and non-management staff. Future research could explore job satisfaction among different employee groups within academic institutions to offer a more comprehensive understanding. Thirdly, the study did not account for potential variations across different academic disciplines, which could influence job satisfaction levels. Exploring these disciplinary differences could provide valuable insights into the factors affecting job satisfaction among academics. Addressing these limitations presents opportunities for future research to enhance the depth and breadth of understanding regarding job satisfaction within academic settings, ultimately offering a more nuanced and comprehensive perspective.

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