Academic staff satisfaction in the core elements of their job in higher education

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ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions with a goal to provide in-depth knowledge, seek academic development, educate students and coordinate national development demands, need to have academic staff who is satisfied with the core elements of his/her job and in the job in general. This study examines the satisfaction of academic staff in the job in general and in the teaching, research and community service which are the core elements of the job in higher education. The sample of the study comprised 300 faculty members who responded to a (41 items) instrument designed to measure satisfaction in the job in general, teaching, research and community services. The results showed that academic staff had a moderate level of satisfaction in their job in general and in teaching while they were dissatisfied in research and community services. Furthermore, the results showed that the respondents were satisfied with their belongingness and their own skills and knowledge in teaching and research but not satisfied with the recognition given to their work, the quality of the students, the research and publications, the financial and administrative support for research and community service and government interference in teaching. The study implies that higher education institutions need uphold the factors that generated satisfaction and develop scheme to address factors that the staff were not satisfied with through institutional and administrative reforms and policies.

Key words: Job satisfaction, higher education, teaching, research, community services.

INTRODUCTION

Academic institutions are considered to be the brain of the country’s future development and pace makers in the national development. Even though the role of other support staff in higher institutions is undeniable, the key players in these institutions are the academic staff whose job and role are creating, shaping and cultivating knowledge so as to create sustainable world (Basak and Govender, 2015). Hence, the knowledge about academics job satisfaction is relevant in order to address issues of institutional performance related with absenteeism, turnover and weak job performance. Truell et al. (1998) argued that innovation and conducive learning environments are mostly results of motivation in academic contexts. When a country is in need of innovation and change, the academic staff in higher education plays a vital role in producing competent graduates that can serve the future (Mustapha, 2013).

In Ethiopia, higher education institutions have been under massive changes and reforms so as to respond to the contextual demand exerted on by the national and international development. Among the driving forces for reform and change, the cultural shift in the way in which higher education is viewed, the demand and financial pressures, the structural and managerial diversity, and the Higher education missions or emphases are to be mentioned. These resulted in the increase in enrolment, the expansion of higher institutions, the emphasis given to science and technology and the likelihood that institutions
could engage in income generating practices. Successful survival of the institutions and the achievement of aspired goals demand staff involvement and engagement. Staff involvement and engagement do require positive attitude from the academic staff towards their job.

**Statement of the problem**

Job satisfaction which has repercussions on institutional success and one's attachment in a form of commitment and retention is an attitude that originates from workers' perceptions of their jobs or work settings (Jenaibi, 2010). The future expectations and the actual current contexts in addition to the employees experience affect and indicate the level of one’s engagement which in turn implies the satisfaction level. Retention, commitment and job satisfaction are basic minimum components for efficient higher education institutions, therefore learning about the academic staff job satisfaction and providing all the possible means to address it will significantly assist in achieving the aspired success in the institutions (Noordin and Jusoff, 2009). Due to the unique nature of higher education institutions in their role of being at the forefront of innovation and development and the issue of control on what they do, the satisfaction of staff highly depends on the context that institutions are operating in (Oshagbemi, 2003). Researches on job satisfaction in different contexts do not provide evidences that can help to understand factors influencing the job satisfaction of academic staff in higher education institutions.

Though several researches argue that academic staff satisfaction is related to pay, promotion, supervision and co-worker interaction using Herzberg and his co-workers (1957) motivation and hygiene theory, some researches have shown that factors which are motivators or intrinsic or hygiene factors or extrinsic factors may have role exchange. Job satisfaction in an academic context mostly has to revolve around the work itself which comprises three traditional roles of higher education institutions: teaching, research and community services. These three roles are defined as the core elements of the aspects of academic job for which the staff are supposed to perform as their regular duties, though they might be engaged in academic administration and managements occasionally.

On the same line, teaching, research and community services are also the three most seriously affected roles due to the changes in the education system. Even though higher educations in general are identified as areas where high level of job satisfaction exit (Pearson and Seiler, 1983), the level of academic staff job satisfaction in the core aspects of the job which are influenced by the systems change probably inform some intervention. Similarly, the systems change has called for the participation of varieties of academic staff in the academic work environment. Thus this study tries to examine the academic staff satisfaction in their job in general and in the core elements of their job.

The study attempts to answer the following research question:

A) What is the academic staff job satisfaction in their job in general?
B) What is the academic staff job satisfaction in teaching, research and community service like? and
C) What are the factors influencing the satisfaction of the academic staff in their job in general and in the three core elements of their job?

**The objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to assess academic staff satisfaction in the job in general, and in teaching, research and community service in particular. The specific objectives of the study are:

a) To assess the academic staff satisfaction in their job in general;
b) To examine academic staff job satisfaction in teaching, research and community service; and
c) To identify factors that affect the academic staff satisfaction in their job in general, teaching, research and community services.

**Scope of the study**

This study aims at investigating academic staff job satisfaction in the three main duties of an academics and the overall satisfaction one has on the job he/she is doing. Other organizational issues such as benefits and what one has to get as a result of his /her job are not addressed. In addition, this study is conducted in Addis Ababa University (AAU) and other higher education institutions might not be properly represented by AAU. Due to its geographic location and historical position in the country, AAU is chosen and considered to be representative of many of the higher education institutions in the country.

**Significance of the study**

The study, in its attempt to understand the job satisfaction of the academic staff in the oldest higher education institution in the country particularly in their three core elements of the academics job will assist in planning the future of the higher education system. In addition, this study contributes to address factors which affect the staff job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the institutional reform and development programs so as to ensure the provision of quality education.

**Higher education staff job satisfaction**

Several studies indicated that Autonomy, freedom and
flexibility as well as the teaching-research conflict, the employment system which provides job (in) security (Kelly, 1989) as the significant features of higher education institutions. As a result, these institutions have employees with a unique working condition that is only exhibited in them. The academics mostly enjoy the autonomy and the intellectual challenge which are internal rather than the financial gain which is external (Bellamy et al., 2003). Their sense of pride in the relevance of the autonomy and freedom outweighs the social and economic pressure (Meyer and Evans, 2003). Furthermore, these features of the academic profession are reasons to be and to stay academics (Bellamy et al., 2003). In developing countries, knowledge is often held in higher esteem and academics benefit from relatively more social status quo, but this is often stabilized by low salaries, poor research facilities, poor physical educational amenities, and lack of intellectual freedom (Altbach, 2003).

As a result, the issue of looking at job satisfaction as internal aspect within the individual seem to be more relevant in academic work contents. However, this does not overrule the place of external actors in the contents of the work they do. The content of the work itself (teaching, research and community service), coupled with the natural conditions of the system such as autonomy and the feeling of “belonging” to a high social and educated community have been pointed out as the main factors of job satisfaction of academics in higher education. For the academic staff, the university’s reputation and standing in community is an important factor for academic job satisfaction. Beyond the economic satisfaction, social status quo is another key reason for motivation. Research and education environment, laboratories, and organizational setting play an important role. Also, collaboration with international researchers is very desirable. Hard working and brilliant students are dreams of every academic staff. Working with such students is encouraging but also challenging. The challenge is considered as highly rewarding. On the other hand, currently these working contexts are being challenged with several internal issues such as institutional arrangements and leadership and external such as finance and government interference factors which also influence the staff satisfaction negatively (Ambrose, Huston and Norman, 2005; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005). On the other hand, due to the labour intensive nature of jobs in higher education institutions and with the highest budgets spending of such institutions for their personnel, higher education institutions’ effectiveness is largely dependent on their staff satisfaction. Consequently, aspirations for quality education in higher education seem to be unthinkable without job satisfaction of its staff in their main duties (teaching, research and community services) (Kusku, 2003).

Though researchers agreed that work related factors play significant role in the academic staff job satisfaction, there is no clear agreement on the nature, the description and the level of the effect that each factor has. This according to Oshagbemi (2003) is the result of lack of ample studies on the issue in order to reach at consensus.

Though there have been a number of studies to be mentioned in the job satisfaction of staff in Higher Education Institutions, most of them focus on selective factors that contribute to academic staff job satisfaction such as promotion, academic status and motivation (Pearson and Seiler, 1983). In addition, a majority of these studies were addressing job satisfaction of academic staff in the western and developed nations higher education institutions (Bellamy et al., 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, Rhodes et al., 2007). Thus there is a need to address job satisfaction of academic staff in a developing country where the organizational situation is boldly different from the developed countries due to various reasons.

Higher education institutions in developing countries, though most are formed within the models of the developed countries, are operating in unique contexts that differ from their counter parts in the developed countries. One of the main characteristics of these institutions is that they are operating in an underfunded situation with huge demand which calls for the participation of unqualified, less motivated, and poorly rewarded professionals in the system. Secondly, most of these institutions are dependent on government budgets; they lack the authority to make key academic, financial, and managerial decisions. Their members are also confronted with social inequalities that are deeply rooted in the history, culture and economic structures that influence the individual’s ability to compete within and outside the country. These differences in one way or the other have their own effect on the way the academic staff perceives their level of job satisfactions in the three core elements of their job.

Above all, higher education institutions in Ethiopia do have internal and external pressures that are the result of the globalization of knowledge in which the institutions are participants. Academic staff in Ethiopia, though they have their own local issues also need to be part of the world academic community. As Garrett (1999) stated, the social context of teachers, their attitudes, and their working conditions, are intimately related in a very complex manner to affect their job satisfaction. In the circumstances, it would seem to be common sense to suggest that the magnitude and ramifications of the impact of these situations on academics job satisfactions are as diverse as they are numerous. Nevertheless, it is imperative to understand how job satisfaction was operationalized in previous studies in developed countries so that it can be used as a base for this study which is conducted in one of the developing countries, Ethiopia. Thus this study can highlight on factors affecting academic staffs’ job satisfaction in general and in their main areas of engagement-teaching, research and community services in particular.

Therefore, job satisfactions are either the affective
orientation towards one’s job or the observation of conditions in the work that provide what one wants from it. Accordingly, it can be seen as the level of what one feels good about in terms of his or her work. Thus, the facets of the job and individuals emotional reaction to one’s job are important in the discussion about job satisfaction. The level of job satisfaction is definitely affected by the fit among an employee (Personal) factors which have implications on the individuals emotional reactions, and the nature of the work that refers to the facets of the job (Taris and Feij, 2001).

Even though most reviews indicate that content theories of motivation are very commonly used in explaining job satisfaction than process theories, the former theories such as Herzberg’s theory of two factor focuses on the direct link between motivation and performance while the latter such as Vroom’s expectancy theory addresses the indirect link among variables of motivation, satisfaction and performance. However, Barkhuizen et al. (2012) argues that it is essential to have knowledge of various theoretical perspectives regarding the job satisfaction of employees in the work environment. It is suggested that no one theory should be seen as most or least correct but rather an exploration of all theories and a practical application will be beneficial.

In fact, what is important to note is that there is no single theory of motivation that can be applied to all situations. Rather it is important to interpret job satisfaction as employees feeling about their job in relation to other organizational conditions that contribute to organizational success. Stacey (2003: 66) concluded that:

An organization succeeds when its people, as individuals, are emotionally engaged in some way, when they believe in what their group and their organization are doing, and when the contribution they make to this organizational activity brings psychological satisfaction of some kind, something more than simple basic rewards (Stacey, 2003: 66).

This argument indicates that job satisfaction of employees is a key component for an organization’s success. Especially at a time when higher education is in a structural reform and skills of academics are being isolated and fragmented due to the situational demand, understanding the effect of work on the staff satisfaction is crucial. People are motivated by different things. For example, Li-Ping et al. (2000) found that individuals motivated by money tend to ignore job dissatisfaction because their immediate needs are being met. Whereas Garrett (1999) indicated that in an institution where lower order needs are not in place, extrinsic rewards tend to shape the level of employees job satisfaction. Thus, this study focuses on assessing the academic staff job satisfaction in the three main job aspects which are teaching, research and community service of a Higher education teacher.

Dimensions of job satisfaction

Several studies have addressed the factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Fraser and Hodge, 2000). Some researchers believe specific factors such as promotion and compensations influence job satisfaction, while others believe that intrinsic and extrinsic factors such as job security, work conditions, leadership, achievement and recognition influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Smerek and Peterson, 2007).

Then, in this study, the work itself (teaching, research and community service) that is typically considered by the employee before accepting the job as situational characteristics of the job is considered. Job satisfaction is considered as a product of both situational characteristics and situational occurrences. However, according to Herzberg’s two factor theory, these situational characteristics and occurrences should be either motivator that contributes to job satisfaction or hygiene that have role in decreasing dissatisfaction. This indicates that there is an assumption that factors contributing to the academic staff job satisfaction can be both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Several studies contrary to Herzberg’s dichotomy support that any factor either intrinsic or extrinsic evokes academic staff satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Ssesanga and Garratt (2005) indicated that intrinsic facet of teaching are satisfying while research and community services which are largely extrinsic are dissatisfying to teachers in two universities in Uganda.

Spector (2003) offered a different perspective on why people like or dislike their job. He maintained that environmental aspect, personality variables, or a combination of these; serve as antecedents to job satisfaction. Environmental antecedents include the variety of job-related features that impact on job satisfaction, for example job characteristics and job tasks, as well as various aspects of the organization. He distinguished a number of significant personal and environmental factors such as job characteristics, role variables, age, gender, race, cognitive ability, job experience, use of skills, job congruence, and occupational level.

A number of work related factors in an individual’s job and in the situation in which he or she works influence job satisfaction. For this study, therefore, job satisfaction is defined using the job structure (work that includes teaching, research, and community service).

Similarly, demographic variables- gender, age and academic rank are considered in this study. Considering better adjustment at work, better conditions and greater rewards at work as main reasons, researchers tend to support that older employees were more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction than younger employees who have less experience and more demand for basic needs satisfaction (Mustapha, 2013).

With regard to genders role in job satisfaction, the literature reported somehow inconsistent evidences. Some
studies report that women had higher job satisfaction, whereas other studies found that men were more satisfied, yet other studies found no significant difference between the genders (Eleswed and Mohammed, 2013).

Academic rank is viewed in education as level of educational achievement that an individual has passed through. Thus, the relationship between job satisfaction and educational level in various organizations is found to be explicit. Gazioglu and Tansel (2006) observed that those with degrees and above had lower levels of job satisfaction as compared with individuals with lower levels of education. Conversely, Lambert et al. (2001) found education to have no significant effect on job satisfaction. Recent studies suggest, however, that educational level is positively related to job satisfaction, subject to a successful match being made between the individual’s work and qualifications (Johnson and Johnson, 2000). This implies, therefore, that better educated employees are only likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction when the duties performed by them are in line with their level of education and their expectation. This means they are supposed to work higher level jobs, as well (Oshagbemi, 2003). Studies indicate that full professor are better satisfied than lecturers and assistant lecturers and rank is a significant predictor of job satisfaction in academics (Sesanga and Garrett, 2005). On the contrary, others argued that the level of job satisfaction of the academics did not increase with academic rank (Eyupoglu and Saner, 2009).

METHODS

Research tools

The Academic Staff Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was intended to assess the academic staff’s level of satisfaction in job in general and their satisfaction in the three basic job elements of academics. The three basic job elements of the academic staff are: teaching; research and community service. Academic Staff Job Satisfaction Questionnaire comprising three job elements and satisfaction in job in general was adapted from previous measurement of academic staff job satisfaction by Fernández and Mateo (1993), Olsen et al. (1995) and Oshagbemi (2000). The questionnaire has 10 statements referring to job in general satisfaction, 12 statements referring to teaching satisfaction, 13 statements referring to research satisfaction, and 6 statements referring to community service satisfaction.

The respondents were asked to indicate their responses in a scale ranged from 1 to 5 representing 1=Very dissatisfied, 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral, 4= Satisfied and 5= Very satisfied to a total of 31 statements. This means that each statement has a range of answers graded on scores from 5 to 1.

Demographic characteristics of respondents that included age, gender, academic rank, college/institute where the respondents are from were collected through a questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questions were designed to obtain a single response to the demographic variables. Answers to these questions provide a good picture of the background of respondents.

The Academic Staff Job Satisfaction Questionnaire has been used by researches that were addressing the situation of higher education academic staff job satisfaction in several contexts and modified to meet the Ethiopian context. As a result, the reliability of this questionnaire is as follows: Job in general = 0.87 teaching = 0.71; research = 0.82; community service = 0.80.

Research participants

Of the total 2027 academic staffs at Addis Ababa University, a sample of 300 hundred was selected using stratified random sampling method. The colleges were taken as strata and proportional samples were taken from each college. However, only 286 questionnaires were identified as useful and the rest were more than 70% incomplete and the return rate was 95.3%.

RESULTS

Demographics of participants

The survey included three demographic variables that were used to describe the participants. Those variables were age, gender, and academic rank.

The largest number of participants was between the ages of 31 and 40 years (30.9%), whereas the smallest percentage of those who self-reported was 61 years and above (2.8%). Interestingly, almost equal almost equal per cent of the respondents (23%) were between the ages of 20 and 30 years and 41 and 50 years. About 16% of the participants were 51 years and above. Only seven participants (2.5%) preferred not to respond. The respondents’ age ranges from 20 to 69 with an average age of 39.95 years.

The rank representation of the respondents was:

- 36(12.8%) assistant lecturers,
- 153(54.3%) lecturers,
- 68 (24.1%) assistant professors,
- 18 (6.4%) associate professors,
- 4 (1.4%) professors.

As regards gender, 251 (76.2%) were male and 64 (22.7%) were female.

These indicate that the sample demographic distribution resembles the actual demographic distributions of the academic staff population in the University which is 8.9% Assistant Lecturers, 43.87% Lecturers, 30.07% Assistant Professors, 9.36% Associate Professors and 3.32% Professors (AAU, 2014/5).

Academic staff satisfaction in job in general

Considering the context of higher education in Ethiopia, staffs indicated that they have moderate satisfaction in
their job in general. Though many of them showed that they are satisfied with their job in general, it was found that they are less satisfied with the recognition they gain for their job within the institution and the opportunity they have to bring significant impact on others (24.4 and 34.4% respectively) and also shown that they have higher dissatisfaction on these aspect of their job in general (34.4 and 27%, respectively). What is very important from Table 1 is that only about 50% of the staff have shown satisfaction with their belongingness. Otherwise, on the rest of the items, less than 50% of the staffs have shown satisfaction. This finding indicates that the level of academic staff satisfaction is at a crossroad and might be under question. The overall result indicated that most of the academic staff were satisfied since the test value (30) is less than the observed mean (31.66) t (281) = 4.19, p< 0.01. This might be so since academic staffs in higher education think that they are the better educated groups in the society (Johnson and Johnson, 2000). However, the pattern and the factors that the staffs are satisfied and dissatisfied with indicate that there is sense of being mediocre.

The job in general satisfaction for male and female academic staff was 31.77 (SD=6.87) and 31.11(SD= 5.94), respectively and there was no significant difference for male and female in their job in general satisfaction t (277) = 0.69, P =0.49. With regards to academic rank, the staff with Professor academic rank had highest job in general satisfaction mean (M=39.25, SD=0.05) followed by Associate Professor (M= 35.17, SD= 5.44) and Assistant Professors (M=33.51, SD=5.83). Lecturers had the lowest job in general satisfaction mean (M=30.10, SD=6.61). This indicates that the highest number of the workforce is somehow less satisfied. Similarly, the age group staff whose age was in the range of 61 year and above had the highest mean (M=36. SD=5.07) whereas staff whose age ranged from 20 to 30 years old and from 31 to 40 years had the lowest mean (M= 30.86, SD=7.09) and (M=30.06,SD= 6.31) respectively. These findings support that senior academics are more established and do give much time for the academic practice while the younger and junior staff are less concerned in their job. This is critical in a country such as Ethiopia where most of the academics are young and junior.

### Academic staff views on the core elements of their job

In any higher education environment, the main function of the academic is to teach, conduct research and provide community service. The higher education proclamation of Ethiopia indicated that the academic staff is responsible to "teach, including assisting students in need of special support, and render academic guidance or counseling and community services; and undertake problem-solving studies and researches and transfer knowledge and skills, in the specific area of self-competence and professional position, that are beneficial to the country; or at least ensure that own teaching is research and study-based and continuously updated" (Proclamation No. 650/2009, article25a & b).

The most significant in Table 2 is that 239(84.8%), 249(88.3%) and 225(79.8%) of the academics were satisfied with their own skills in teaching methods, their knowledge of the content of what they teach and the courses that they teach. Relatively speaking, they were somehow satisfied with their teaching load, the authority they have to choose course content as they deem fit and the authority they have to choose teaching methods as they deem fit (68.8, 58.9 and 67.9%, respectively). Factors that dissatisfied them included the general quality of the students' work (dissatisfaction indicated by 63.5% and satisfaction by 16%), government interference in teaching and the support available for writing teaching material (50.5 and 53.5%). The issue of government interference in higher education in Ethiopia is clear that though the proclamation talks about autonomy none of the higher education institutions have been granted the autonomy. Oshagbemi (2003) argues that dissatisfaction with government interference in teaching and with the quality of the students' work are common problems in the UK. In general, the overall result indicates that academic staff shows moderate satisfaction in teaching t (281) =9.95, p<
Similarly, in their satisfaction in Research, no difference was observed, whereas found to be less satisfied than the other groups. The professors who are very few in number were better satisfied in Teaching, while the assistant lecturers and the assistant professors were dissatisfied with research and teaching. Similarly, the academic staff whose age ranged from 31 to 40 years old were found to be less satisfied than the other groups. These indicate that caution has to be taken to make the majority feel satisfied. There is significant difference in the academic staff's satisfaction in Teaching F(4, 277)=2.18, p=0.03 and females were less satisfied than males.

Table 2 shows that more than half of the respondents were satisfied with research and publications at their institute, the financial support to carry out research and availability of research assistants(63.7, 68 and 65.1%, respectively) while almost similar number of respondents were satisfied in their own skill as a researcher (61.4%). However, less than half of the respondents were satisfied with the directions of their research (45.4%) and the quality of their publications (38.5%). In addition, more than a quarter were dissatisfied with the time they had available for research (39.4%) and close to half were dissatisfied with the amount of research they carried out (46.8%). This is true in the case of academic staff in developing countries where they mostly spend time on teaching and other income generating activities (Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005).

From the overall result the staff had shown dissatisfaction in Research t (280) = -9.814, p<.001, but Professors and Associate Professors were found to be satisfied in Research F(4, 273)= 7.78, p<.000. Similarly there was no difference observed in their satisfaction in research due to age and gender.

According to Table 4, academics did not hold particularly strong positive or negative views on community service. Approximately one third of the respondents were satisfied with the importance of their work to the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Government interference with teaching</td>
<td>53(18.9%)</td>
<td>85(30.1%)</td>
<td>143(50.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Emphasis on research rather than teaching</td>
<td>70(24.8%)</td>
<td>72(25.5%)</td>
<td>140(49.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>The courses that you teach</td>
<td>225(79.8%)</td>
<td>32(11.3%)</td>
<td>24(8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Your teaching load</td>
<td>194(68.8%)</td>
<td>51(18%)</td>
<td>37(13.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>The authority you have to choose course content as you see fit</td>
<td>166(58.9%)</td>
<td>75(26.5%)</td>
<td>41(14.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>The authority you have to choose teaching methods as you see fit</td>
<td>191(67.9%)</td>
<td>50(17.8%)</td>
<td>40(14.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T7</td>
<td>Your own skills in teaching methods</td>
<td>239(84.8%)</td>
<td>30(10.6%)</td>
<td>13(4.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T8</td>
<td>Your knowledge of the content of what you teach</td>
<td>249(88.3%)</td>
<td>22(7.8%)</td>
<td>11(3.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T9</td>
<td>The support available for writing teaching material</td>
<td>59(20.9%)</td>
<td>72(25.5%)</td>
<td>151(53.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>The general quality of the students'</td>
<td>45(16%)</td>
<td>58(20.6%)</td>
<td>179(63.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T11</td>
<td>The amount of contact you have with students</td>
<td>143(50.8%)</td>
<td>85(30%)</td>
<td>54(19.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12</td>
<td>Students' enquiries when they have problems</td>
<td>90(31.9%)</td>
<td>81(28.7%)</td>
<td>111(39.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

.001. However, it is observed that there is significant difference in the academic staff's satisfaction in Teaching F(4,274)= 3.92, p= 0.004, due to their academic rank and F(4,276)= 3.01, p=0.02, due to their age groups. Lecturers who were the largest number of the respondents were found to be less satisfied than the other groups, followed by the assistant lecturers and the assistant professors while the professors who are very few in number were found to be better satisfied in Teaching. Similarly, the academic staff whose age ranged from 31 to 40 years old were found to be less satisfied in Teaching. These indicate that caution has to be taken to make the majority feel satisfied. There is significant difference between male and female respondent in their satisfaction level in Teaching t(277)=2.18, p=0.03 and females were less satisfied than male.

Table 2 shows that more than half of the respondents were dissatisfied with research and publications at their institute, the financial support to carry out research and availability of research assistants(63.7, 68 and 65.1%, respectively) while almost similar number of respondents were satisfied in their own skill as a researcher (61.4%). However, less than half of the respondents were satisfied with the directions of their research (45.4%) and the quality of their publications (38.5%). In addition, more than a quarter were dissatisfied with the time they had available for research (39.4%) and close to half were dissatisfied with the amount of research they carried out (46.8%). This is true in the case of academic staff in developing countries where they mostly spend time on teaching and other income generating activities (Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005).
(36.3%) and the importance of community service they do (31.9%) but more than half of them were dissatisfied with the funding and the support available to it (55.5 and 60.5%, respectively). In general, academic staffs had shown dissatisfaction in Community Service t (280) = -7.29, p < 0.001 and there was no significant difference due to gender. However, there was significant difference observed due to rank F(4, 273) = 4.37, p = 0.002 and lecturers were the most dissatisfied. Similarly, there was a significant difference in the staff satisfaction due to age. Academic staff whose age ranged from 31 to 40 years old were found to be highly dissatisfied in Community Service F(4, 276) = 2.75, p = 0.03.

**CONCLUSION**

The study indicates that even though there are differences among the academic staffs in their satisfaction with the aspects of their job, they seem to be satisfied with their job in general and teaching but dissatisfied in research and community services. With regards to academic satisfaction in their job in general, staffs seem to be dissatisfied with the recognition they have and the opportunity they get in their institution while they have rated their belongings as positive. This indicates that the institution needs to look into ways to recognize and provide opportunity to its staffs in the process of the academic exercise. These inform that the management of the institution need to take time to engage the staffs. In addition, there is a difference observed among academic staffs in their job in general satisfaction due to age and academic rank. These also show that younger staff and staff with lower academic rank which are the majority seem to be less satisfied in their job. Thus unless interventions are in place these highest group of staffs who seem to have low satisfaction in their job in general may not stay in the institution.

Teaching is one of the key roles of higher institutions that are engaged in the production of knowledge. Thus the staff satisfaction in this aspect of the job is fundamental. In this study, the academic showed that they are satisfied in teaching particularly with their own skill, content and methods knowledge though they have shown dissatisfaction in the quality of the students they have. Similarly, the staff indicated that they have dissatisfaction in the support they receive for material production and in the government interference. These findings have implication to the quality of education. Unless students have the required level of quality when they join the higher institution, necessary supports are provided for material production and government’s interference is minimal, the academic staff skill and content and methodological knowledge alone will not bring significant improvement in the institutional attempt for quality. On the same line, whatever skill and knowledge that the staffs have if there are no students who challenge the staffs, the staff satisfaction in the job will decrease.

According to this study, the majority, the lecturers in their academic rank and those who are in the middle age (31-40) and the female were found less satisfied with teaching. These indicate that those who are supposed to do much of the teaching and very limited female staff seem to be unhappy with teaching. Thus, unless the institution addresses the concerns and challenges of these groups, the future of the institution and the institutional development effort to address gender gap might be in vain.

Staff satisfaction in research and community services is found to be very low, thought there is a difference among the staff due to their academic rank differences. Research and publication, both institutional and financial support for research and community service and relevance attached to research and community service were mentioned as some of the factors that the academic staff were dissatisfied with. These indicate that the institution has to pay attention to these factors. Otherwise, the success of higher education institution without having satisfied staff in research and community service is unthinkable.

Last but not least, the place of research and community service in the institutional and professional role of higher education has to be addressed explicitly in institutional and national higher education policies.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Addis Ababa University in particular and higher education institutions in general need to sustain the features that currently produce satisfaction. According to this study’s finding involving academics in courses that they are interested in, preserving their academic autonomy in

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**Table 4: Academic views on Community services.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>The amount of community service you do</td>
<td>90 (31.9%)</td>
<td>91 (32.4%)</td>
<td>100 (35.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>The importance of the community of the service you do</td>
<td>102 (36.3%)</td>
<td>116 (41.3%)</td>
<td>63 (22.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>The recognition of community service within the institution</td>
<td>66 (23.5%)</td>
<td>122 (43.6%)</td>
<td>92 (32.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>The funding available for community service</td>
<td>22 (7.8%)</td>
<td>103 (36.7%)</td>
<td>156 (55.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>The support available for community service</td>
<td>22 (7.8%)</td>
<td>89 (31.7%)</td>
<td>170 (60.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>The importance attached to community service for promotion</td>
<td>60 (21.3%)</td>
<td>106 (37.7%)</td>
<td>115 (40.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
choosing their methods and the right to choose the direction of their own research and providing the opportunity for community services are factors that need to be sustained. On the other hand, what has been identified as factors that caused dissatisfaction in teaching, research and community services such as the government interference, the general quality of students, the lack of encouragement and financial support to do research, the lack of research assistants and the lack of administrative support to provide community service have to be addressed systematically. Of the possible suggestion that can improve the job satisfaction of academics, putting in place institutional autonomy and accountability scheme, developing fair and equitable merit and interest based student admission system, and providing better financial and institutional development plans to render the required financial and administrative support within institutions to have to be taken into account at a policy level and in institutional reform plans. Such effort will probably improve academic staff job satisfaction in teaching, research and community service and inspire them to create environments conducive to learning. This in turn will be the minimum a higher education has to contribute in the effort to provide quality education to the nation.

The research is limited by the fact that it was conducted at AAU while the university is in a change process after several reform initiatives. Hence, conclusions drawn are confined to AAU and might be influenced by the context in which the university has been in. In addition, the main concern of the study was only to look into the academic staff views on their main task that they have chosen when they took up the job. Teaching, research and community services are what the academic is required to do and that is why the group is even called academic. Thus their satisfaction in these tasks has significant implications to the institutional goal achievement.

REFERENCES


