

## **Demographic Analysis on Academic Staff's Job Satisfaction in Malaysian Research Universities**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Academic staff's performance plays a vital role in higher education institutions to enjoy high quality research and excellent teaching. It can be stated that academic staff's job satisfaction has influence on their quality of performance. Hence, the factors which may affect their level of job satisfaction is critical to higher education institutions. This research is an attempt to examine the differences in the job satisfaction among academic staff in terms of their demographic characteristics. The total population was 3430 academic staff working at three Malaysian Research Universities, whereby out of this number, 400 were surveyed, making up a response rate of 74.5%. Using Wood Faculty Job Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction Scale, results are revealed in terms of intrinsic, extrinsic, and overall job satisfactions, whereby the academic staffs were found to be at the moderate satisfaction level. Gender, academic rank, and age were identified as the influencing factors for academic staff job satisfaction, while their level of education was not.

*Keywords:* Job satisfaction, Research University, demographic characteristics, Malaysia

### **INTRODUCTION**

Establishing Research Universities (RUs) is the milestone of the Ministry of Higher

Education in Malaysia. In line with the country's vision, the vision of the government for higher education sector is to transform Malaysia into an international centre of higher education excellence by 2020 and beyond (Malaysia Ministry of Education, 2008; Malaysia National Higher Education Action Plan, 2007). In order to arrive at this destination, the Malaysian

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Ministry of Higher Education selected four Malaysian public universities as Research Universities from 2006 onward. This indicates the outstanding position of higher education as a fundamental section that cultivates human resources in the country to meet developmental needs.

In relation to the pivotal role of the institutions of higher education in the development of the country, Mohd Najib (2006) stated that “the government has always considered higher education as one of the strong embodiments to the development of our nation towards a truly learned society”. Therefore, in order to fulfil the expectations of the government and the society, the institutions of higher education must contribute in quality research, help to improve the knowledge industry, and be competent to fulfil human capital for confronting with the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s demands (Musa, 2007).

The academic staff’s performance plays a vital role in higher education institutions to enjoy high quality research and excellent teaching. It can be stated that academic staff’s job satisfaction has influence on their quality of performance. Hence, the factors which may affect the level of job satisfaction is critical to higher education institutions. Accordingly, in their movement towards outstanding situation, Malaysian RUs are expected to consider academic staff’s job satisfaction.

## **WHAT ARE THE GOVERNMENT’S EXPECTATIONS OF THE RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES?**

In order to facilitate the forward movement of higher education sector, four Malaysian public universities, namely, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and Universiti Sains Malaysia, were chosen as Research University by the Ministry of Higher Education. They are responsible for obtaining the characteristics of world-class university and to be rated among 100 universities in the world. RUs must be the pioneer of quality research, enjoy excellent teaching and commercialize their research products so as to increase the institutions’ revenue (Nik Mustapha, 2008).

Research Universities are an important connection between science, scholarship, and new knowledge economies (Altbach, 2009). Preparing professionals with creative capability, as well as enhancing progressive movement in science/technology and transmitting national culture are some of their main duties (Wang, 2001). Similarly, the missions of the Malaysian RUs are being as research intensive universities, improving human capital, empowering future talents, and contributing to socio-economic development through quality research and dissemination of knowledge. In this regard, RU administrators and academic staff are expected to make and increase tremendous strides to achieve the mission. As Nik Mustapha (2008) notes, they would pay more attention to three major areas of their responsibility, which are in

terms of “consultancy, research contracts, and training contracts” (p. 32). In addition, they should also have the ability to attain financial support on an acceptable and reliable level so as to assist their research.

Meanwhile, the qualification of the academic staff and turnover can be considered as two common concerns of higher education institutions around the world (Altbach, 2009; Wong & Heng, 2009; Reamah & Rosli, 2011). Besides the qualification of academic staff, the universities should try to keep their academic staff connected with the universities effectively. Research Universities, as public institutions of higher education, have also been involved with these concerns. In their article, Morris *et al.* (2004) refer to these concerns in the Malaysian institutions as the real fact which has been considered by the Malaysian government as the issues of concern. Reamah and Rosli (2011) refer to academicians' turnover as having an alarming rate in Malaysian institutions when they stated that there is “an acute shortage of qualified academicians and a high turnover of academic staff as well” (p. 16).

### **JOB SATISFACTION OF ACADEMIC STAFF**

What can be stated about the importance of job satisfaction in RUs generally relies on the role of the academic staff's performance in universities. This is because the academic staff's performance has an essential role in facilitating the forward movement of universities. Nevertheless, academic staff are also knowledge workers (Arokiasamy

*et al.*, 2011) who have to work harder in order to satisfy the progressively escalating universities' expectations (Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009; Bilge, 2006). Hence, a motivated and satisfied academic staff would be more effective in promoting futuristic movement of university. Job satisfaction is a prerequisite factor to the quality of academic staff's performance (Wood, 1976). In fact, it is the measure of individuals' attitude about their jobs (Dessler, 2004) that positively affects their performance, commitment, morale, and reduces their absenteeism, turnover, and attrition (Okpara *et al.*, 2005; Lambert *et al.*, 2005; Lambert & Paoline, 2008; Schroder, 2008; Fauziah & Kamaruzaman, 2009). Consequently, these outcomes lead to organizational effectiveness and goal achievement.

A common idea in research literature is that job satisfaction has influence on efficiency, productivity, and employee happiness, and it plays a role in reducing absenteeism, turnover, and psychological distress (Chen *et al.*, 2006; Koustelios, 2001; Oshagbemi, 1999; Wong & Heng, 2009). Therefore, job satisfaction of academic staff cannot be underestimated by universities. Higher education administrators are dependent on the information on job satisfaction of academicians in order to hire, keep, and reward academic staff (Okpara *et al.*, 2005). Notwithstanding, a review of the literature indicates that few research studies have been devoted to academic staff's job satisfaction in Malaysia (Wong & Heng, 2009; Santhapparja & Seyed, 2005).

Looking specifically at Malaysian RUs, it seems no research article has focused on academic staff's job satisfaction in these universities. Therefore, academic staff's job satisfaction needs to be addressed by investigators as a key research area (Kusku, 2003; Koustelios, 2001; Oshagbemi, 1999) in order to help authorities to achieve more success in obtaining organizational goal.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Herzberg's two factor theory was selected as the conceptual framework of this study. Herzberg (1960) developed the two-factor theory. The premise of Herzberg's theory is that satisfaction and dissatisfaction represent two separate dimensions rather than opposite ends of a single dimension. Herzberg believes that the resulting two factors, namely, hygiene (which is also called extrinsic), and motivation (which is also called intrinsic) have different effects on motivation (Francesco & Gold, 2005; Andrew *et al.*, 2002). He also

believes that the causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are distinct (Hagedorn, 2000). Dissatisfaction is derived from hygiene or extrinsic factor such as working conditions, interpersonal relations, supervision, policy and administration, and salary (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2008; Scheroder, 2008). Satisfaction is extracted from motivator or intrinsic factors consist of the work itself, achievement, growth, responsibility, and recognition (Smerek & Peterson, 2006; Sachau, 2007). The two-factor theory has received numerous empirical supports and criticism from different studies (Smerek & Peterson, 2006; Sachau, 2007; Rollinson, 2005; Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005).

In terms of demographic variables and their relations with job satisfaction, contradictory proof was also found (Scheroder, 2008). Although Herzberg believes that demographic variables do not have influence on job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966), different studies have found that these variables are associated with job satisfaction

#### Independent Variables

#### Dependent Variable

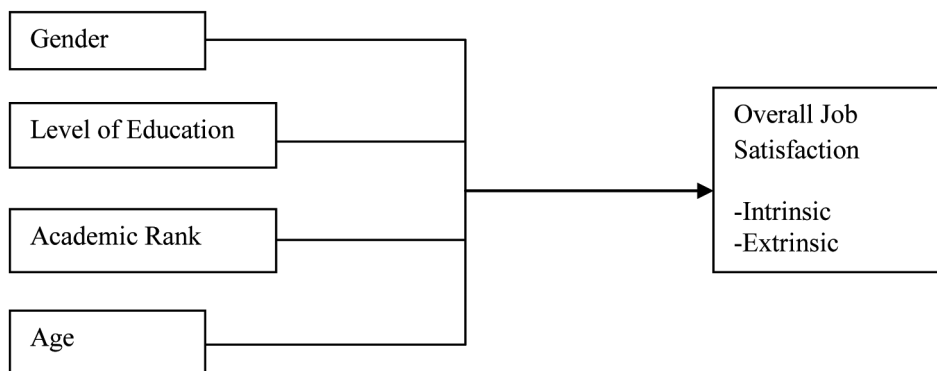


Fig.1 Conceptual Framework

(Hickson & Oshagbemi, 1999; Okpara, 2005; Oshagbemi, 2000, Oshagbemi & Hickson, 2003; Scheroder, 2008; Worrell *et al.*, 2006). In this study, job satisfaction is the dependent variable, while demographic characteristics are the independent variables (Fig.1).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the recent years, there has been a raising tendency towards the study of job satisfaction in higher education (Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009; Kusku, 2003; Okpara *et al.*, 2005; Oshagbemi & Hikson, 2003; Oshagbemi, 2000). The issues pertaining academic staff's job satisfaction and the effects of demographic characteristics on job satisfaction have been the subjects of research studies in Malaysia (see for instance, Santhapparja & Seyd, 2005; Wong & Heng, 2009; Fauziah & Kamaruzaman, 2009; Raemah & Rosli, 2011), as well as at international level (e.g. Oshagbemi, 2003; Brown, 2005; Okpara *et al.*, 2005; Scheroder, 2008; Eyupoglu & Saner, 2009). However, the results are inconsistent both at Malaysia and international context. For instance, while in a study of two public and four private universities in Malaysia, Raemah and Rosli (2011) found that salary and universities' policy and administration were ranked by academic staff as two lowest area of their job satisfaction, Wong and Heng (2009) in their study of two Malaysian universities found salary and policy and administration as the most satisfying variables of Malaysian faculty members. Also, in a study at one of the

Malaysian public university, Fauziah and Kamaruzaman (2009) found a moderate level of general satisfaction among academic staff, in which age had a significant effect. They also indicated that there was no significant difference between the male and female academic staff in term of their level of job satisfaction.

Eyupoglu and Saner (2009) measured the level of job satisfaction at five North Cyprus universities. They revealed that the academics had a moderate level of overall job satisfaction and were more satisfied with the intrinsic facets of satisfaction rather than the extrinsic ones. They found that the academic staffs with doctorate degree and professorship were more satisfied than those with master degree and associates with other academic ranks.

Meanwhile, Okpara *et al.* (2005) investigated the effects of gender on job satisfaction among university teachers in US colleges. The results revealed that the male teachers were more satisfied with their supervision, salary and promotion as well as overall job satisfaction, while the female teachers were less satisfied with their salary. Instead, they were found to be more satisfied with their work and colleagues. In addition, academic rank was also shown to be another significant factor in explaining gender differences and job satisfaction. Oshagbemi (2003) studied job satisfaction among academic staff in United Kingdom and revealed that academic rank had positive and very strong correlation with the overall job satisfaction. The respondents were mainly satisfied with the co-workers' behaviour and

job, but they were dissatisfied with pay and promotional opportunities. Moreover, the researcher found that rank as a significant predictor of job satisfaction, while gender and age were not significant factors with respect to the overall job satisfaction.

Brown (2005) investigated job satisfaction among employees of Caribbean university. The results demonstrated that the employees were most satisfied with their responsibilities, achievements and relations, but were less satisfied with their salary, as well as policy and administration and working condition. Meanwhile, intrinsic, extrinsic, and overall job satisfaction were influenced by demographic variables such as gender, age, and educational level.

Scheroder (2008) studied the job satisfaction of employees at a Christian university in the United States. The results showed that the respondents demonstrated a moderate level of job satisfaction. The lowest levels of job satisfaction were found with salary and organizational policy and administration. Age and level of education significantly affected job satisfaction. Nonetheless, the researcher found no significant statistical differences in the overall, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction between male and female respondents.

What can be stated based on the review of literature is that although issues pertaining to the subject of job satisfaction have been extensively researched on, studies dealing with job satisfaction in higher education institutions and particularly in Research

Universities have not been investigated much and it still needs to be addressed. This study aimed to investigate intrinsic, extrinsic and overall levels of academic staff's job satisfaction at Malaysian RUs, with respect to some academic staff's demographic characteristics. Accordingly, the following research questions were investigated:

1. What are the RUs academic staff's intrinsic, extrinsic and overall job satisfaction levels?
2. Are there any significant differences between the RUs academic staff's overall job satisfaction level based on their gender, level of education, age, and academic rank?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Sample*

The present study was conducted at three Malaysian RUs located in the Klang valley. The population comprised of 3430 academic staff. In order to determine the sample size, using G-Power statistical software (Faul *et al.*, 2007), power analysis was computed (effect size=.25,  $\alpha$ =.05, power (1- $\beta$ )=.95). Of 400 distributed questionnaires, 320 were returned and a total of 298 usable responses were achieved, with the response rate of 74.5%. The samples drawn from each faculty of three RUs were calculated based on the stratified proportional random sampling. This selection was based on the number of academic staff in each faculty and the proportion allocated to the faculties.

### *Instrument*

In order to carry out the study, Wood Faculty Job Satisfaction/ Dissatisfaction Scale (Wood, 1973, 1976) was utilized. This instrument was designed based on Herzberg's two-factor theory to measure the academic staff's job satisfaction. It consists of ten constructs, namely, achievement, growth, responsibility, recognition and the work itself so as to measure intrinsic satisfaction. Interpersonal relations, policy and administration, supervision, salary and working condition are constructs that were used to measure extrinsic satisfaction. The questionnaire includes 73 items covering both intrinsic and extrinsic constructs. The questionnaire scale is based on the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The average of the intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction level was calculated to determine

the overall job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the demographic section comprised of gender, level of education, academic rank, and age. This questionnaire has been utilized in a large variety of academic research with high Cronbach's coefficient values. It has acceptable content and construct validity (Wood, 1976; Bowen & Radhakrishna, 1991; Castillo & Cano, 2004; Malik, 2011).

In order to examine the validity of the research instrument, a panel of experts was appointed. They were asked to check the contents of the questionnaire and item relevancy to construct, and whether the items in terms of its linguistic understandability are explicable for academic staff. Having had the comments from the experts, some modifications were made to the questionnaire. The modifications were made based on the academic staff's duties in Research Universities. The questionnaire

TABLE 1  
Reliability coefficient and Frequency Distribution of Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intrinsic Satisfaction	.93	3.65	.43	Moderate
Achievement	.80	3.60	.48	Moderate
Growth	.86	3.73	.55	High
Recognition	.88	3.52	.65	Moderate
Responsibility	.83	3.49	.57	Moderate
The Work Itself	.82	3.91	.50	High
Extrinsic Satisfaction	.96	3.47	.52	Moderate
Interpersonal Relations	.85	3.82	.54	High
Policy and Administration	.90	3.32	.62	Moderate
Salary	.93	3.12	.83	Moderate
Supervision	.94	3.52	.68	Moderate
Working Conditions	.87	3.58	.63	Moderate
Overall Satisfaction	.97	3.56	.45	Moderate

Note: (1-2.33) = Low, (2.34-3.67) = Moderate, (3.68-5) = High

was modified by adding five new items. For example, 'opportunity for research' was added to the items of 'growth' as one of the constructs of intrinsic satisfaction. With the help of the experts, the researcher prepared the final questionnaire for pilot study based on the suggested modifications. Prior to embarking on the collection of data, the modified questionnaire was piloted. Later, the questionnaire which was revised by the experts, distributed among selected academic staff that had all the characteristics of the actual respondents in the pilot phase. In order to test the internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was calculated which ranged from .80 to .97 (see Table 1). The findings of the pilot study demonstrated that the questionnaire was reliable.

#### *Statistical analysis*

Descriptive statistics was used to categorize the data and to calculate the level of job satisfaction. Based on the minimum and maximum scores of intrinsic, extrinsic and overall job satisfaction, a possible score for each construct was calculated and categorized as low, moderate, and high level of satisfaction. In order to examine the differences among the academic staff's overall job satisfaction based on their gender, level of education, academic rank, and age, the independent sample *t*-test and one-way AVOVA were computed. Meanwhile, Tukey and Dunnett C, as Post-hoc tests, were executed to check for the pair-wise differences amongst the mean scores in the overall job satisfaction.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### *Demographic characteristics*

The majority of the respondents were male (57%), and 43% others were female. In terms of their level of education, 70.8% of them hold a doctorate degree, while 29.2% hold a master degree. As for the participants' academic rank, 20.5% were lecturers, 44.6% senior lecturers, 22.8% associate professors and 12.1% professors. On the subject of age category, the results revealed that the age of the lecturers ranged from 28 to 63 years with a mean of 43.85 year and a standard deviation of 8.73. The findings depicted that the majority of lecturers (42.3%) are in the age category between 36-45 years old, 24.5% in the age category of 46 and 55 years old, followed by 18.5 % who are in the age category below 35 years, and 14.1% that are in the age category of more than 56 years old. The results of this study are in line with those of Boyer et al. (1994) and Ssesanga and Garrett (2005), who found that the majority of lecturers in their studies were middle-aged and male.

### *Levels of intrinsic, extrinsic, and overall job satisfaction*

The overall findings indicated that respondents' levels of intrinsic ( $M=3.65$ ), extrinsic ( $M=3.47$ ), and overall job satisfaction ( $M=3.56$ ) received moderate mean scores (Table 1). Further, the results revealed that despite having some constructs with high mean scores, such as 'the work itself' and 'growth' for intrinsic satisfaction and 'interpersonal relations' for extrinsic satisfaction, in general the Malaysian RUs'



job satisfaction received moderate mean scores. Salary ( $M=3.12$ ) was the construct that received the lowest mean scores at a moderate level (see Table 1). The possible explanation for this phenomenon is the RUs academic staff are under more pressure as compared to lecturers in other public universities to meet expected criteria of Research Universities such as high standard teaching, quality research and commercialize research products. They are expected to conduct high quality research (Altbach, 2009), participate in research contracts with business sector actively, and publish their research findings (Wang, 2001). However, the salary of the RUs' academic staff is similar to that of the lecturers at other public universities, so they perceive it as segregation and an inequality and are not highly satisfied with their salary. As stated by Chen *et al.* (2006), salary is an important issue for higher education employees. The findings of this study supported the existing literature (Curry, 2007; Raemah & Rosli, 2011; Scheroder, 2008; Ssesanga & Garrett, 2005; Worrell *et al.*, 2006) regarding constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

In terms of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Boeve (2007), Brown and Sargeant, (2007), Grosso (2008), and Schroder (2008) who reported that academic staff were more intrinsically satisfied than extrinsically. As for the overall job satisfaction, the findings of this study support those of Fauziah and Kamaruzaman's (2009), Eyupoglu and Saner's (2009), Platsidou and Diamantopoulou's (2009), and Schroder's (2008) who have revealed that academic staff enjoyed moderate level of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the finding of the study is not consistent with that of Egbule (2003), who has found that the lecturers of Nigerian universities have generally high level of job satisfaction.

#### *Job satisfaction based on gender*

The results of the independent sample *t*-test for the mean comparison are presented in Table 2. It revealed that male academic staff in terms of the overall job satisfaction are significantly more satisfied than their female counterparts ( $p<0.05$ ).

TABLE 2  
Gender and Level of Education Differences with Overall Job Satisfaction

Group	n=298	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig- <i>t</i> (2-tailed)
Gender					
Male	170	3.63	.47	3.48	.001
Female	128	3.46	.40		
Level of Education					
Doctorate	211	3.59	.47	1.76	.079
Master	86	3.49	.38		

\*the mean difference is significant at 0.05 level

The results demonstrated that male academic staff are more satisfied than their female counterparts. It may imply that in the Malaysian RUs male academic staff have better opportunities to be recognized by the administrators, achieve personal goals, promote their academic rank, get managerial post and participate in the process of decision making. In addition, the female academic staff are confronting with two different demands, which are family and institutions demands (Okpara *et al.*, 2005). This imposes bilateral pressure on female academic staff; therefore, they showed a low profile of satisfaction as compared to their male counterparts. Consequently, gender is an important factor in the job satisfaction among academic staff.

The findings support Seifert and Umbach (2008), who have found that female academic are less satisfied compared their male peers. These findings are also in line with the findings by Okpara *et al.* (2005) as well as Halpin and Johnston (2004). Among other, Okpara *et al.* (2005) indicated that in American colleges and universities, male teachers are more satisfied in terms of overall job satisfaction compared with the female teachers. Halpin and Johnston (2004) found that in Britain's universities, female academics are less satisfied with their salary as compared to the male academics.

This finding contradicts with Brown and Sargeant (2007), Santhapparaja and Syed's (2005), Platsidou and Diamantopoulou's (2009), Fauziah and Kamaruzaman's (2009), Oshagbemi's (2000), and Scheroder's (2008) results. For instance, Santhapparaja

and Syed (2005) showed that female lecturers are more satisfied compared with their male counterparts. Platsidou and Diamantopoulou (2009) also found that gender does not have any effect on the job satisfaction of Greek academic staff. In addition, Fauziah and Kamaruzaman (2009) reported no significant differences between the male and female academic staff in terms of their general satisfaction. Similarly, Oshagbemi (2000) realized that gender does not directly affect the job satisfaction of the United Kingdom university academic staff. Also, Brown and Sargeant (2007) and Sheroder (2008) observed that there is no any significant difference between male and female faculty members in terms of their job satisfaction.

#### *Job satisfaction based on level of education*

The findings of the independent sample *t*-test depicted that in terms of overall job satisfaction there is no significant difference between academic staff (see Table 2). It may imply that an equal working content as well as context exists for academic staff with master and doctorate degrees in the RUs.

This finding revealed academic staff with doctorate and master degrees in terms of achieving educational goals, having professional authority, enjoying appropriate opportunities to promote their academic rank, being recognized by their head of department as well as their co-workers, and boasting about their work, enjoy a similar satisfaction level. In addition, it might also mean that RUs academic staff generally

enjoys fair working situation, interpersonal relations, and benefits, so that the level of job satisfaction among the academic staff with doctorate or master degree is more or less similar. This finding is contrary with Brown and Sargeant (2007), who found employees with a doctorate degree are more satisfied in their overall job satisfaction than employees with a master degree. The findings of study on the subject of the overall satisfaction is in contrast with Eyupoglu and Saner's findings (2009), who found that academic staff with a doctorate degree are more satisfied as compared to academic staff with a master degree.

#### *Job satisfaction based on academic rank*

In the analysis of significant mean score differences among academic staff's overall satisfaction based on their academic rank, the results of ANOVA (see Table 3) revealed that there were significant differences among the academic staff in all different academic ranks ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of post-hoc test revealed that the significant mean score differences existed between professors and all other academic ranks (Table 4). This demonstrates that the professors were more satisfied in terms of overall satisfaction

compared to their counterparts in the other academic ranks. This satisfaction may derive from their excellent positions in higher education institutions. Moreover, the results also depicted that associate professors were less satisfied compared to their colleagues, but significant differences only existed between associate professors and professors.

The findings of the current study are similar to those findings of Oshagbemi (2003) and Eyupoglu and Saner (2009). Oshagbemi (2003) reported that academic rank is a significant predictor of academic staff's overall job satisfaction. The researcher exhibited that professors were more satisfied as compared to other academic ranks. Eyupoglu and Saner (2009) realized that the academic staff with professorial rank was more satisfied compared to other academic ranks. In addition, the findings of this study are consistent with results of Eyupoglu and Saner (2009) in relation to the academic staff with Associate Professor academic rank. In more specific, they discovered that associate professors were less satisfied as compared to professors, assistant professors and lecturers with doctorate degrees. The possible explanation for this finding can be as

TABLE 3  
One-Way Analysis of Variance among Academic Staff's Rank and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	Academic Rank	n=298	Mean	SD	F	Sig-F
Overall Satisfaction	Professor	36	3.85	.41	6.01	.000
	Associate Professor	68	3.50	.51		
	Senior Lecturer	133	3.52	.43		
	Lecturer	61	3.54	.35		

\*the mean difference is significant at 0.05 level

TABLE 4  
Post-hoc Dunnett C of Academic Staff's Rank and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	Academic Rank		Mean difference	95% Confidence interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Overall Satisfaction	Professor	Associate Professor	.34922*	.1015	.5969
		Senior Lecturer	.32854*	.1172	.5399
		Lecturer	.30498*	.0823	.5276
	Associate Professor	Professor	-.34922*	-.5969	-.1015
		Senior Lecturer	-.02068	-.2114	.1700
		Lecturer	-.04717	-.2473	.1588
	Senior Lecturer	Professor	-.32854*	-.5399	-.1172
		Associate Professor	.02068	-.1700	.2114
		Lecturer	-.02356	-.1803	.1332
		Professor	-.30489*	-.5276	-.0823
	Lecturer	Associate Professor	.04424	-.1588	.2473
		Senior Lecturer	.02356	-.1332	.1803

follows: associate professors have to have quality research, adequate journal articles and publications, and high standard teaching in order to promote their academic rank. Similarly, there are augmenting expectations from the university for them to improve the number of research and publication and commercialized academic products; therefore, they are under increasing pressure and stress, which in turn affect their level of job satisfaction.

#### *Job satisfaction based on age*

In the analysis of significant mean differences among academic staff's overall satisfaction based on their age, the results of ANOVA (Table 5) revealed that there were significant differences among the academic

staff in all different age category ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of post-hoc test depicted that academic staff with age equal to or more than 56 were more satisfied than those in the other age categories. The significant mean score differences existed between the academic staff with age equal to or more than 56 and age category of equal to or less than 35, and between academic staff with age equal to or more than 56 and age category of 36-35 years (Table 6).

This finding implies that age is an influencing factor for academic job satisfaction, i.e., an increase in academic staff's age results in improving in job satisfaction. It may denote that aged lecturers enjoy high levels of overall job satisfaction more than the younger lecturers

TABLE 5  
One Way Analysis of Variance among Academic Staff's Age and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	Age Category	n=296	Mean	SD	F	Sig -F
Overall Satisfaction	≤ 35	55	3.54	.38	4.32	.005
	36-45	126	3.49	.43		
	46-55	73	3.57	.52		
	≥ 56	42	3.77	.38		

\*the mean difference is significant at 0.05 level

TABLE 6  
Post-hoc Tukey test of Academic Staff's Age Category and Overall Job Satisfaction

Variables	Age Category	Mean difference	sig at p<.05	
Overall Satisfaction	≤ 35	36-45	.04381	.93
		46-55	-.03493	.97
		≥ 56	-.23616*	.04
	36-45	≥ 35	-.04381	.93
		46-55	-.07874	.62
		≤ 56	-.27997*	.002
	46-55	≥ 35	.03439	.97
		36-45	.07874	.62
		≤ 56	-.20123	.08
	≥ 56	≥ 35	.23616*	.04
		36-45	.27997*	.002
		46-55	.20123	.08

because of their position and experience. It may also mean that the threshold level of overall job satisfaction for older lecturers is less than that of the younger ones. The other explanation is that the older academic staff tends to adjust their work values to the conditions of the work place after staying in their jobs for a long time, which results in greater job satisfaction (Oshagbemei, 2003; Mottaz, 1987).

The findings of this study supported Scheroder's (2008) findings, who reported that employees aged above 50 years old were more satisfied compared to others.

Thus, the result of this study is in line with those of Hagedorn (2000), Tu *et al.* (2005) and Fauziah and Kamaruzaman (2009) who reported that older academic staff were more satisfied than their younger counterparts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Recommendations Related to Intrinsic and Extrinsic Satisfaction*

Based on the findings, the following recommendations related to academic staff's intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction are suggested.

1. It is recommended that RUs' administrators pay attention to academic staff's suggestions and comments. This will make them more interested to participate in departmental activities by enhancing their satisfaction to fulfil the 'achievement' requirements.
2. Since in-service education is an important facility which institutions provide to increase their academic staff's quality of performance, it is highly suggested that RUs' administrators check and evaluate faculty in service education. In addition, providing more opportunity to attend local and international conferences, allocating research grants, and having opportunity to participate in faculty exchange programmes are the strategies recommended for RU policy makers to pay particular attention to. This is to ensure that academic staff's 'growth' is fulfilled.
3. Recognition is a significant factor that affects on the success of academic staff to materialize their personal and organizational goals, and therefore, RUs administrators should consider their valuable ideas and seek ways to publicize their activities to meet the requirements of 'recognition'. In order to achieve this, the reward system should be evaluated by the RU policy makers in order to publicize the lecturers' quality performance.
4. Autonomy and sufficient responsibility to do professional tasks is crucial for academic staff in institutions of higher education. It seems necessary that responsibility satisfaction be considered by RUs administrators from a new point of view. Providing appropriate authority for academics in order to perform their duties, accompanied with autonomy and delegating professional responsibilities to departments and committees, can be considered as two strategies for enhancing academic staff's encouragement and increasing level of intrinsic satisfaction.
5. Based on the findings of this study, 'salary' was the least satisfying variable of the academic staff's extrinsic satisfaction. For employees of higher education, salary is one of the important issues of concentration because it may affect academic staff's quality of performance. Hence, Malaysian higher education policy makers should consider increasing the amount of salary as well as revise the method of determining academicians' salary at Malaysian RUs.
6. Policy and administration is another extrinsic construct that has received a moderately low mean score. In order to increase level of academic staff's satisfaction with policy and administration, it is recommended that heads of departments inform academic staff about the issues which affect them as well as the organizational rules and regulations effectively. One issue emerging from the study's results can be that the procedure of selecting heads of departments is relatively unsatisfying

for academic staff. Therefore, RUs top administrators are highly recommended to revise the criteria of this selection and formulate new obvious criteria for the issue.

7. Supervision, as another construct of extrinsic satisfaction, was at a moderate level. Supervision could affect work, co-workers' relations and opportunities for growth (Boeve, 2007). Therefore, it is crucial for the RU administrators to consider this construct of extrinsic satisfaction because of its great effects on other constructs of job satisfaction. Concentrating on some aspects of supervision such as being innovative and paying more attention to innovation abilities of academic staff by heads of departments, delegate appropriate authority and balance between duties and authority, and increase quality of guidance given by heads of departments can be considered as important strategies which can increase academic staff's extrinsic and overall job satisfaction.
8. As high technology office and educational facilities influence academic staff general and educational performance, it is therefore recommended that RU administrators supply appropriate equipment for academic staff offices and educational settings to improve working condition.
9. Organizational climate has positive effects on employees' behaviours. Relying on interpersonal relations, RU administrators could promote

friendly organizational climate inside and outside of departments, which will in turn have positive influence on the academic staff's job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

#### *Recommendations Based on Academic Staff's Demographic Characteristics*

1. This study indicated that female academicians were less satisfied as compared to male. The results of the item analysis showed that for some different constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction female received lowest mean scores. Females are a noticeable percentage of academic staff at universities and play fundamental roles in teaching, research, managing universities and obtaining universities' goals. Hence, considering their needs and requests, paying attention on their ideas and recommendations, recognizing their quality performance, providing appropriate opportunities for them to promote their academic rank, and delegating sufficient amount of authority would be considered as strategies to increase their job satisfaction level.
2. Based on the results, professors were more satisfied, while associate professors were less satisfied as compared to the respondents of other academic ranks. The results of the item analysis indicated that for some constructs of job satisfaction, lecturers, senior lecturers, and particularly associate professors received lowest mean scores. Thus,

paying close attention to academic rank promotion would be beneficial for the RUs. In addition, improving facilities and situations which help lecturers to promote their academic rank is helpful. This may include enhancing financial support, offering sabbaticals, providing opportunity to attend in international conferences, financial support for publishing articles and books, presenting incentives, and so on. With reference to associate professors' job satisfaction, it is suggested that RU administrators seek to find its reasons and do their best to increase associate professors' job satisfaction because they are in the middle of the journey to complete their forward movement to improve their academic rank. In addition to facilities mentioned above for academic staff's promotion, reducing associate professors' number of courses, recognizing their innovation as well as activities at department level, and delegating them appropriate authority by heads of departments can be strategies for increasing their job satisfaction.

3. The findings showed that academic staff aged 56 years and above were more satisfied than their counterparts. Based on the results of the item analysis, it is recommended that the heads of departments pay more attention to academic staffs' comments, offer in-service education based on their needs, recognize their activities, delegate them appropriate level of authority,

and finally improve the quality of their office facilities. Since academic staff aged above 56 year old are retirees, most of administrators' considerations should therefore focus on middle-age academic staff as well as younger ones to increase their job satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION

This study has shown that RUs' academic staff in Malaysia have moderate levels of intrinsic, extrinsic and overall job satisfaction. Malaysian RUs were designed to obtain the characteristics of world-class universities. Satisfied academic staff have pivotal role to achieve these characteristics. Since establishment of RUs in Malaysia is still a new phenomenon and these institutions are relatively at the start of their journey, having a basis to periodically evaluate academic staff's job satisfaction is therefore a critical need. This study has also provided a basis for comparison. Future studies can evaluate academic staff's job satisfaction and compare their results with the findings of this study. Academicians' job satisfaction is in fact an important factor influencing the productivity and effectiveness of universities. Although a moderate level of academic staff's job satisfaction may seem acceptable, this is still not enough. Since the RUs have been selected to be forefront of Malaysian higher education institutions in obtaining the characteristics of world-class universities, their administrators and particularly the heads of departments should pay more consideration on the issue of academic



staff's job satisfaction so as to enhance the level of this vital organizational variable.

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