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Job satisfaction among university faculty: overview, assessment, challenges, and recommendations

This article reports the results of a study examining university teachers' professional activities to assess faculty job satisfaction at three Kazakhstani universities. The research identifies key institutional and individual factors influencing satisfaction, such as working conditions, salary, career opportunities, professional engagement, job security, and perceived workload. It also determines the priority needs to inform university management in enhancing motivation policies. The study's scientific contribution is the development of an integrative framework for assessing faculty job satisfaction that combines institutional determinants and individual professional characteristics within a unified empirical model specific to Kazakhstan's higher education system. Comparative analysis across the three universities, considering gender, position, age, academic degree, and work experience, reveals differentiated patterns of satisfaction and structural imbalances between high professional engagement and significant perceived workload. These findings offer an empirical foundation for targeted managerial decisions, enhanced institutional communication, improved financial incentives, support for early-career faculty, and systematic monitoring of job satisfaction and engagement as strategic tools for sustainable university development.

Keywords: job satisfaction, satisfaction factor, university faculty, higher education, professional activity.

Introduction

Reforms currently taking place in Kazakhstan's higher education sector are, to a certain extent, aimed at transforming the working conditions of academic staff. These shifts may create uncertainty and challenges in their professional activities. Such conditions can increase emotional and psychological strain, ultimately decreasing overall satisfaction with their work environment. The work of teachers, with its positive effects, has several disadvantages, such as low salaries, an increase in the amount of documentation, paper and electronic work, competitions for teaching positions, increased requirements for the development of competencies (such as working with software, trilingualism, etc.), and a lack of time and resources. These aspects of academic life do not encourage young people to make the right professional choice in higher education, and involved specialists with extensive work experience leave universities and do not consider it their career path [1]. Consequently, the professional environment we are considering requires research into the factors and characteristics that are significant to teachers and enable them to obtain satisfaction from their professional choice.

In this study, we assessed teachers' job satisfaction at the university and identified and compared the factors influencing it. We reviewed scientific research on teachers' job satisfaction in higher education to identify these factors.

Recent academic literature examines job satisfaction among university faculty within several theoretical frameworks, conventionally categorized as structural-organizational, psychological, and value-expectation approaches.

1. The structural-organizational approach emphasizes the impact of institutional conditions on faculty professional activity. According to Kanter's theory of power, structural empowerment, such as access to opportunities, information, support, and resources, increases employees' psychological empowerment in companies. This empowerment is associated with important indicators of quality of work life, such as job satisfaction. Research within this framework indicates that managerial support, equitable remuneration systems,

and transparent career advancement opportunities are significant predictors of university teachers' job satisfaction [2; 3]. Concurrently, academic discourse questions the extent to which organizational factors operate independently. Some scholars regard these factors as primary determinants of job satisfaction, while others highlight their indirect influence, mediated by personal characteristics, motivational orientations, and faculty members' individual expectations.

2. Psychological and stress-based approach. The second group of studies focuses on analyzing the teacher's internal state. The central issues include professional stress, emotional burnout, and workload. A study by Olsen D. examined the relationship between stress and satisfaction, finding that high professional stress is associated with low job satisfaction [4]. Job satisfaction is regarded as an indicator of psychological well-being within the professional environment and as a consequence of accumulated organizational and personal resources. However, it remains an open question whether these mechanisms function independently or in a complementary manner.

3. Value-expectation approach. The third perspective associates job satisfaction with the degree of alignment between professional expectations and actual experiences. Discrepancies between perceptions of the profession and real working conditions are identified as key contributors to dissatisfaction.

According to Borrego, Orgambidez, and Mora-Jauregualde (2023), a key element of teaching quality in higher education is access to opportunities, resources, information, and support. These resources empower university teachers and promote their intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction [5].

As for Pan Bochen and several other scholars, university faculty satisfaction is a key indicator for assessing the effectiveness of human resource management in higher education institutions [6]. A review of studies in this area suggests that staff turnover, occupational stress, and chronic health conditions arising from professional activity may adversely affect the job satisfaction of university faculty. At the same time, well-organized instructional processes, psychological comfort, and a high, stable salary can positively impact faculty members' satisfaction with their work and significantly improve its quality.

Some researchers argue that dissatisfaction with one's job may result from a mismatch between actual working conditions and the faculty member's prior professional experience [7]. This highlights the need for academic staff to understand the real state of the subject they teach and to be prepared for its evolution.

It is worth noting that faculty satisfaction is a crucial factor in professional success, as it positively impacts the quality of academic work. The study conducted by Badi Bart and others [8] reinforces our position that both internal and external factors shape job satisfaction. However, many of these influences are indirect, mediated by an individual's perception of the importance of their own needs.

This approach underscores the importance of analyzing teachers' value orientations and career expectations. Existing studies often interpret satisfaction primarily through economic determinants, while alternative frameworks emphasize the alignment between professional expectations and organizational realities. These perspectives reveal the multilevel nature of job satisfaction, which encompasses both material and value-based components.

Although numerous studies address university teachers' job satisfaction, the theoretical approaches remain fragmented. Some researchers focus on structural and organizational conditions, while others emphasize personal resources and value discrepancies. Few studies integrate these perspectives into a unified analytical model, particularly within national higher education systems. This gap underscores the relevance and necessity of the present research.

Professional job satisfaction is conceptualized as an integrative indicator reflecting a teacher's overall evaluation of the conditions and outcomes of professional activity. This indicator comprises assessments of working conditions, perception of professional workload, career prospects, managerial support, level of engagement, and interpersonal climate.

This approach enables the integration of structural and psychological determinants of satisfaction within a unified empirical analysis. The research model operationalizes the following groups of factors:

1. Conditions of the educational institution, specifically the university's organizational environment;
2. Individual professional characteristics of the teacher;
3. Salary factor;
4. Career development factor;
5. Professional engagement factor;
6. Job security factor;
7. Professional and social respect factor.

This structure facilitates a comprehensive analysis of higher education teachers' job satisfaction by incorporating both institutional conditions and subjective evaluations of professional activity.

Each identified group of factors has independent analytical significance.

Conditions of the educational institution (university). The conditions of the educational institution include requirements for teachers and the resources that the university provides them with for their professional activities. High demands and limited resources for professional activities reduce job satisfaction. Like any organization, universities provide their teachers with tangible and intangible resources, such as relationships with colleagues and the administration [9-12]. Another resource is time, where large expenditures affect the performance of a particular task and cause teacher stress and professional burnout [13]. Another point is the blurring of the boundary between work and personal life [14].

Individual professional qualities of a teacher. The next factor influencing job satisfaction is the individual professional qualities of a teacher, such as professional work experience, position, contract type, and salary [4]. These qualities reflect aspects of professional competence, yet they are secondary and vary depending on personal experience and qualifications; that is, they constitute a set of individual professional characteristics. Other factors include the teacher's socio-demographic parameters: satisfaction with professional activity depends on gender and age, education, social and marital status, and other characteristics [9; 11].

Factor "Salary". Financial stability is a key motivator of effective professional performance in any field. A well-structured system of economic incentives promotes higher quality work, supports professional growth, and enhances overall job satisfaction. Faculty members who receive compensation commensurate with their efforts, within a fair and transparent incentive system, are protected from workplace uncertainty, experience fewer stressors, work under psychologically comfortable conditions, and tend to develop strong institutional loyalty. Here, recognition of teachers directly benefits the university, as recognized employees are more loyal.

Factor "Career". It is essential to recognize that faculty seek continuous career advancement, which is directly linked to their professional development. Universities must establish conditions that foster this growth, acknowledge individual professional aspirations, encourage and support such efforts, and offer genuine opportunities for career progression.

Factor "Engagement". The position and professional and personal qualities of a teacher are a personal attitude to certain aspects of professional activity, manifested, first of all, in the attitude to this activity [14; 15]. In our case, this is work engagement. Faculty engagement is directly related to job satisfaction. Lack of engagement in professional tasks reduces satisfaction, so this component is essential for a better work experience. Involving teachers in university activities makes them feel valued and important. The dynamics of engagement spread throughout the university, creating a pleasant working atmosphere, fostering a sense of belonging, and improving the university's work environment and productivity.

Factor "Job Security". Having good job security or a strong sense of dedication to one's university gives people satisfaction, the opportunity to work toward professional goals, and a sense of community and purpose. Therefore, the next factor in job satisfaction for teaching staff is recognition of their merits, as reflected in job security. They will feel calm and less inclined to leave if their efforts are taken into account.

Factor "Respect". Another factor that influences satisfaction is respect for faculty and recognition of their professional responsibilities, which leads to respect for their work overall. Faculty members believe that respect from their supervisors is one of the most important elements of their sense of belonging. A respectful attitude in the professional environment fosters an atmosphere of psychological safety and constructive interaction, facilitating recognition of individual characteristics, limitations, and strengths. Respect among colleagues fosters a valued appreciation of interpersonal differences, fosters mutual understanding, increases tolerance within the team, and improves teamwork.

Thus, in this study, professional job satisfaction is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct shaped by both institutional conditions within the professional environment and teachers' subjective evaluations. This approach enables a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing job satisfaction levels.

However, the list of factors presented here is not exhaustive. A review of the academic literature indicates that the determinants of teachers' job satisfaction are more extensive and require further refinement, particularly when considering the specific characteristics of the national educational context. Given the ongoing transformation of Kazakhstan's higher education system, developing a multidimensional methodological model for measuring satisfaction that incorporates both institutional and individual aspects of professional activity is especially important.

Drawing on established theoretical concepts and research approaches, this study introduces an original integrative methodology for empirical analysis. The methodology is designed to identify the key factors influencing university teachers' job satisfaction and to assess regional differences in satisfaction levels. In contrast to most existing studies, this research empirically verifies the proposed factor structure using data collected from three regions of Kazakhstan.

Methods and materials

The study used a quantitative survey to identify the level of professional job satisfaction among university faculty members.

The empirical base of the research consisted of faculty members from three universities in Kazakhstan: Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical Research University, Karagandy Buketov University, and Almaty Management University. A total of 214 respondents participated in the study, representing different age groups, academic positions, years of professional experience, and academic degree status. The selection of these universities was based on their regional representation, diverse disciplinary profiles, and organizational characteristics, enabling a more representative picture of faculty satisfaction across different institutional settings.

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire developed and tested by a group of researchers, which was adapted to our conceptual research model. The questionnaire included blocks of questions reflecting the following groups of factors: conditions of the educational institution; individual professional characteristics; salary level; career prospects; engagement in professional activity; job security; professional and social respect.

Empirical indicators (factors) included in the questionnaire's content are presented in Table 1 [1, 16-19].

A Likert scale (1-5) was employed to quantitatively measure the degree of expression for each indicator. To ensure the comparability of indicators, a normalization procedure was used, calculated according to the formula:

$$KS_{ij} = KS_{ij} / KS_{ijmax}, \text{ where}$$

KS_{ij} — coefficient of job satisfaction by i-factor in j-group,

KS_{ij} — level of satisfaction with the i-factor in the j-group,

KS_{jmax} — maximum level of satisfaction with the i-factor in the j-group [1].

Normalization was applied to convert all indicators to a common 0-1 scale, enabling valid comparisons across different satisfaction factors. This method enhances the accuracy of comparative analysis and facilitates the identification of each factor's relative contribution to overall satisfaction.

Descriptive statistical methods were used, including percentage distributions of responses and comparative analyses based on gender, age, work experience, academic position, and academic degree status. When appropriate, hypothesis-testing methods were employed to assess the statistical significance of differences between groups, such as Pearson's χ^2 test for categorical data and the Student's t-test for comparing means. These procedures determined whether observed differences were systematic or statistically random. Data processing utilized standard statistical procedures.

Table 1 presents satisfaction factors, empirical indicators for assessing job satisfaction at a university, and questionnaire statements. In Table 1, we present teachers' job satisfaction, on the one hand, as satisfaction with professional activities (work process) and, on the other hand, as satisfaction with the work process's results. Then we will compare them.

The first block of the questionnaire, "General Data", collected information about the survey participants, including age, gender, length of service, scientific degree, and position held. The level of job satisfaction was assessed on a 5-point scale using respondents' answers to the second block of the questionnaire, comprising 19 questions (statements) (Table 1). According to the scale, 1 means "no," 2 means "more likely no than yes", 3 means "difficult to answer", 4 means "more likely yes than no", and 5 means "yes". Here, the respondents' agreement with the questionnaire statements indicates the teacher's satisfaction with work at the university, and the more such responses there are, the higher the level of satisfaction.

The sample was formed using voluntary response sampling. The questionnaire was distributed across all structural units of three universities, and employees could choose to complete it at their discretion. A survey link was sent to teachers' available personal email addresses. During the study, we used the Qualtrics platform to collect the data and RStudio to analyze the survey results.

Two hundred fourteen teachers from three universities across three regions of Kazakhstan, including Seifullin University, Karagandy Buketov University, and Almaty Management University, participated in the

study's online survey. The sample of teachers included 80.37 % women and 19.16 % men, and the following age groups: 34-44 years old — 34.1 %, 23-33 years old — 25.2 %, 45-55 years old — 24.29 %, 56-66 years old 12.6 % and 67 and older 3.7 %. Teachers' general scientific and pedagogical experience varied mainly within the following ranges: 1-10 years (34.11 %); 11-20 years (28.03 %); over 21 years (37.85 %). More than half of the respondents hold the position of senior lecturer (47.19 %); the smallest group is represented by the position of professor (7.47 %), followed by 20.56 % and 24.76 % in the positions of assistant. Almost half of the teachers who participated in the survey have academic degrees, including a Doctor of Science (6.07 %) and a Candidate of Science or PhD (39.35 %) (Fig. 1a-b).

Table 1

Empirical indicators/factors for assessing job satisfaction in the educational sector

Factors	Indicators	Questionnaire questions/statements
Satisfaction factor	Satisfaction with professional activities	Q1. Do you feel satisfied with your current professional duties?
Workflow Factors	Satisfaction with the results of work	Q2. Do you feel satisfied with what you have achieved in your work?
	Workload	Q3. I feel overloaded with work
	Work Organization	Q4. My work timetable is manageable. Q5. I receive clear and timely guidance from the department head regarding my tasks.
	Work environment and job stability	Q6. I am content with the workplace technology and the comfort of the working conditions in my unit.
	Advancing the university's academic environment	Q7. The university's initiatives for professional learning align well with my career advancement goals.
Factors-results	Contentment with remuneration	Q8. I receive remuneration that corresponds to my professional contributions. Q9. My earnings at the university are insufficient, so I need to look for extra income. Q10. I can receive additional compensation for work beyond my regular responsibilities.
	Evaluation of career opportunities	Q11. I consider the university to offer pathways for my career development.
	Evaluation of interactions with management	Q12. My input can affect the university leadership's decisions. Q13. I participate in addressing challenging and unconventional tasks at work. Q14. I feel that my professional work is appreciated by my supervisor. Q15. My manager provides objective and helpful feedback.
	Evaluation of interactions with colleagues	Q16. My colleagues appreciate my efforts and professional achievements. Q17. My colleagues and I have developed a relationship of trust and mutual support.
	Assessing the results of your professional development	Q18. My personal professional growth is a movement forward for the entire university. Working with international students helps develop my professional skills.
	Benefit to society	Q19. I feel like I'm doing something important and meaningful for society

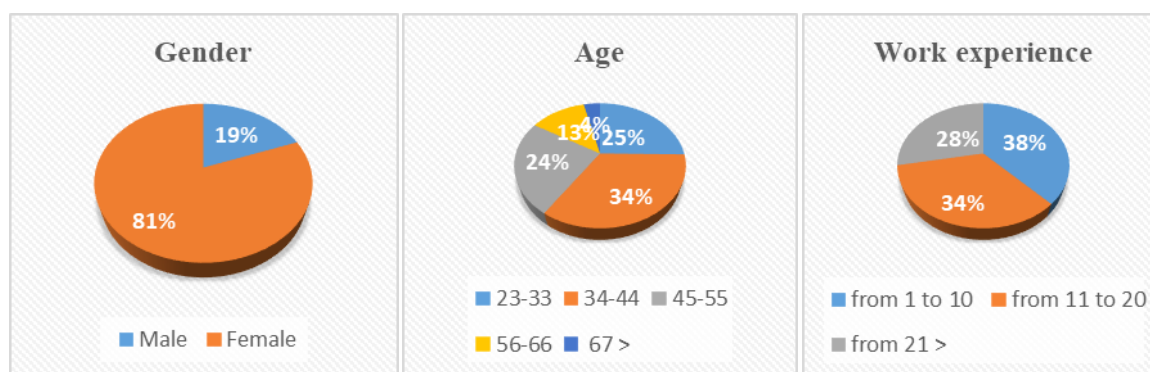


Figure 1a. Teachers sampling

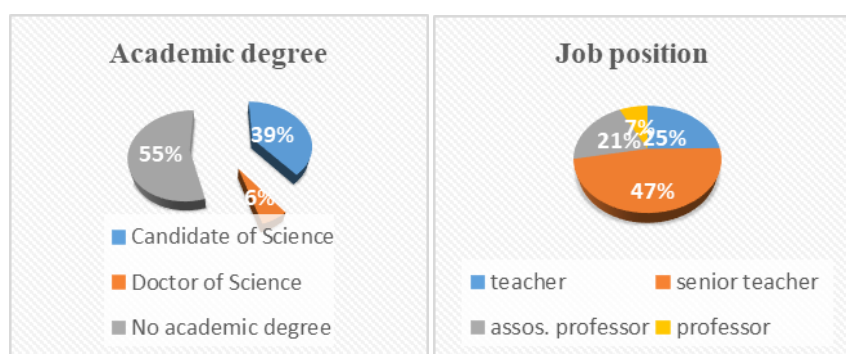


Figure 1b. Teachers sampling

Thus, the characteristics of the sample of teachers matched those of the general population, i.e., they reflected the average statistical indicators of workers in higher educational institutions, confirming the representativeness of our study. Our research findings do not apply to the entire population. Therefore, our conclusions and recommendations should be considered as the opinion of a relatively large group of teachers from three universities. Assessing faculty satisfaction across several categories enabled us to formulate recommendations for university leaders to support informed decision-making and the development of motivation strategies within the academic environment.

Results and Discussion

Overall satisfaction with the professional activities of respondents from 3 universities, obtained based on their answers to the question “Do you feel satisfied with your current professional duties?” (Q1), was 89.71 % (Table 2). This is a very high indicator of job satisfaction among teachers.

Table 2

Overall job satisfaction of university teachers

Questions/ Statements	Disagree	I would rather disagree than agree	I find it difficult to answer	I would rather agree than disagree	Agree
Q1	1.46 %	7.94 %	1.86 %	41.12 %	48.59 %
Q2	0.46 %	8.41 %	3.27 %	40.18 %	47.66 %
Q3	13.08 %	18.22 %	8.87 %	27.57 %	32.24 %
Q4	9.34 %	14.01 %	2.8 %	25.7 %	48.13 %
Q5	5.14 %	14.01 %	7.94 %	23.83 %	49.06 %
Q6	8.87 %	16.35 %	2.33 %	33.64 %	38.78 %

Continuation of Table 2

Questions/ Statements	Disagree	I would rather disagree than agree	I find it difficult to answer	I would rather agree than disagree	Agree
Q7	5.607 %	15.42 %	7.47 %	28.5 %	42.9 %
Q8	17.29 %	23.83 %	7.009 %	22.89 %	28.97 %
Q9	14.9 %	14.9 %	8.41 %	23.83 %	37.85 %
Q10	17.29 %	14.02 %	13.08 %	24.76 %	30.8 %
Q11	7.4 %	17.28 %	13.08 %	26.6 %	35.5 %
Q12	19.6 %	21.5 %	14.9 %	18.7 %	25.23 %
Q13	8.4 %	17.3 %	11.21 %	30.8 %	32.24 %
Q14	6.075 %	17.76 %	11.68 %	29.44 %	35.04 %
Q15	7.47 %	14.01 %	11.21 %	28.97 %	38.31 %
Q16	2.80 %	5.10 %	12.15 %	34.11 %	45.80 %
Q17	0.90 %	2.80 %	-	27.57 %	68.70 %
Q18	1.87 %	4.67 %	7.47 %	31.31 %	54.70 %
Q19	1.4 %	3.3 %	5.6 %	28.03 %	61.7 %

Let's consider whether and how this indicator depends on categories such as gender, age, length of service, position, and scientific degree. The survey results showed that professional activity satisfaction is the same for men and women, but differs across age groups of teachers. Here, the highest job satisfaction (92 %) was observed among representatives aged 45-55, and approximately 4-5 % lower among representatives in the other age groups (Table 3). Respondents with 11-20 years of scientific and pedagogical experience reported greater satisfaction with their work (92 %), while novice teachers with up to 10 years of experience lag by 4.3 %. Doctors of science are 100 % satisfied with their work at the university, while others are 11-12 % less satisfied. Professors also showed higher satisfaction scores (94 %) than assistants (88.7 %).

The second survey question (Q2) assesses overall satisfaction with the results of the work process. A comparison of the answers to the first and second questionnaire questions (statements) shows that satisfaction with the process results is also high (87.84 %), slightly lower than satisfaction with professional activities (Table 3).

Let's compare teachers' satisfaction with the process results, which depend on categories such as gender, age, position, and scientific degree. They have the same data as the process results; only here, novice teachers with 1-10 years of experience were more satisfied. In our study on job satisfaction, we highlighted the need to consider factors that shape the work process and those that determine its outcome.

Table 3

Job satisfaction with the professional activities of university teachers

Category	Category parameters	Question 1. Do you feel satisfied with your current professional duties?	Question 2. Do you feel satisfied with what you have achieved in your work?
Gender	Female	89.5 %	88.3 %
	Male	90 %	85.7 %

Continuation of Table 3

Category	Category parameters	Question 1. Do you feel satisfied with your current professional duties?	Question 2. Do you feel satisfied with what you have achieved in your work?
Age	22-33	90.7 %	90.7 %
	34-44	87.6 %	86 %
	45-55	92 %	90 %
	56-66	88.8 %	88.8 %
	67<	87.5 %	62.5 %
Teaching experience	1-10	87.6 %	89 %
	11-20	93 %	88 %
	21<	88.8 %	86 %
Academic degree	Candidate of sciences\PhD	88 %	85 %
	Doctor of Sciences	100 %	92 %
	No	88.8 %	88.8 %
Job position	Assistant	88.7 %	90 %
	Senior Teacher	91 %	86 %
	Associate Professor	86 %	86 %
	Professor	94 %	94 %

Table 1 demonstrates that the factors characterizing the labor process include workload intensity, organization of work, working conditions and safety, and provision of necessary resources. For example, labor intensity was determined by the response to the statement, “I feel overloaded with work” (Q3) (Table 4). 59.81 % of respondents answered “agree” and “rather agree,” 31.3 % answered “disagree” and “rather disagree,” and 8.87 % found it difficult to answer. Female teachers report a high workload (62 %), but only 5 % of men agree.

Teachers aged 33–34 years, unlike other age groups (65.7 %) and assistants (72 %), experience excessive workloads (Table 4). The next factor/indicator is the organization of work, which was determined by statements such as “My work timetable is manageable” (Q4) and “I receive clear and timely guidance from the department head regarding my tasks” (Q5) (Table 4). Thus, 73.83 % and 72.89 % of participants affirmed that their work schedule is convenient and that their direct supervisor assigns tasks effectively, whereas 23.35 % and 19.15 % disagreed with these statements. The analysis of the results showed that factors such as “Working conditions and safety” and “Support for the development of the academic community” became the most important factors influencing the satisfaction of university teachers.

Factors such as “Work environment and job stability” and “Advancing the university’s academic environment” were identified as the most important factors that influence teachers’ satisfaction in their professional activities.

The survey showed that only 72.42 % of teachers are satisfied with the technical equipment of their workplaces and the presence of comfortable conditions at the university (Q6). In contrast, the other quarter of teachers “disagree” and “rather disagree”, i.e., the subjective assessment was not high.

The situation is the same with the factor “Advancing the university’s academic environment”, which was determined through the statement, “The university’s initiatives for professional learning align well with my career advancement goals” (Q7), i.e., 71.4 % of teachers agree and are satisfied, and 21.1 % do not believe that support for their academic growth at the university exists (Table 4).

Table 4

Workflow Factors						
Category	Category parameters	Workload	Work Organization		Work environment and job stability	Advancing the university's academic environment
		Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
Gender	Female	62 %	76 %	75 %	75 %	76 %
	Male	5 %	64 %	64 %	61.9 %	52 %
Age	22-33	64.8 %	85 %	79.6 %	79.6 %	75.9 %
	34-44	65.0 %	67 %	67 %	71 %	65.7 %
	45-55	48 %	73 %	75 %	65 %	76.9 %
	56-66	62.9 %	66 %	66.6 %	74 %	66.6 %
	67<	37.5 %	87.5 %	87.5 %	75 %	75 %
Teaching experience	1-10	63 %	80.8 %	78 %	78 %	76.7 %
	11-20	66 %	70 %	66.6 %	66.6 %	61.6 %
	21<	74 %	51.8 %	70 %	73 %	71.65
Academic Degree	Candidate of sciences/PhD	56 %	67 %	69 %	68 %	69 %
	Doctor of sciences	46 %	92 %	92 %	85 %	85 %
	no	63 %	76 %	73 %	73.5 %	71 %
Job position	Assistant	72 %	79 %	79 %	79 %	79 %
	Senior Teacher	57 %	70 %	68 %	69 %	65 %
	Assoc. Professor	59 %	68 %	70 %	68 %	75 %
	Professor	37.5 %	94 %	87.5 %	81.25 %	75 %

Job satisfaction with workflow factors

Indicators of the factor that determines satisfaction with labor results include “Contentment with remuneration” (Q8-10), “Evaluation of career opportunities” (Q11), “Evaluation of interactions with management” (Q12-15), “Evaluation of interactions with colleagues” (Q16-17), “Assessing the results of your professional development” (Q18) and “Benefit for society” (Q19) (Table 5). It was found that over 50 % of respondents are quite satisfied with their pay (about 52 %), over 60 % of respondents need additional income (about 62 %), and only about 56 % of respondents are able to earn additional income and bonuses for additional work at their university. Regarding career (Q11), only slightly more than 60 % of respondents see potential for professional advancement.

Let us study the assessment of the quality of interaction with management using subjective criteria. Low satisfaction was determined for all indicators describing this relationship. For example, 43.93 % of respondents believe that they can influence management decisions at the university (Q12), 63.04 % of respondents have the opportunity to take part in solving complex and non-standard problems (Q13), 64.48 % believe that they are appreciated by managers (Q14) and 67.28 % of teachers hope for fairly objective feedback from the manager (Q15). University teachers rated their relationships with colleagues quite highly. Nearly 80 % of faculty members report that their professional achievements are duly recognized by their col-

leagues (Q16). Approximately 96.3 % of respondents report the existence of trusting and supportive relationships within their team (Q17). Approximately 86 % of survey participants agree that professional development is essential and contributes to the university's overall progress, stating: "My personal and professional growth is a step forward for the entire university" (Q18). Nearly 90 % of employees also believe that their work is meaningful and beneficial to society (Q19) (Table 6).

Table 5

Job satisfaction with factors results

Factors	Indicators	Statements	Gender		Age				
			Female	Male	22-33	34-44	45-55	56-66	67+
Factors-results	Contentment with remuneration	Q8	54 %	40 %	62.9 %	46 %	42 %	55 %	75 %
		Q9	61 %	64 %	79.6 %	72.6 %	50 %	25 %	37.5 %
		Q10	59 %	40 %	68 %	43.8 %	57.6 %	55 %	62.5 %
	Evaluation of career opportunities	Q11	66.8 %	42.8 %	74 %	64 %	59.6 %	48 %	25 %
		Q12	47 %	28 %	59 %	32.8 %	50 %	25.7 %	62.5 %
	Evaluation of interactions with management	Q13	66.8 %	47.6	70 %	56 %	65 %	59 %	75 %
		Q14	69 %	45 %	74 %	63 %	61 %	55 %	62.5 %
		Q15	70.9 %	52 %	75.9 %	68 %	63 %	55 %	62.5 %
	Evaluation of interactions with colleagues	Q16	82.5 %	69 %	83 %	73.9 %	78.8 %	88.8 %	87.5 %
		Q17	95.9 %	97.6 %	100 %	93 %	98 %	92.5 %	100 %
	Assessing the results of your professional development	Q18	87.7 %	78 %	94 %	80 %	80 %	92.5 %	87.5 %
	Benefit to society	Q19	88.9 %	92 %	87 %	87 %	94 %	96 %	75 %

Table 6

Job satisfaction with factors results

Factor	Indicators	Statements	Teaching experience			Academic degree			Job position			
			0-10	11-20	21<	PhD	Doctor	No	Assis tant	Senior Teacher	Assos. Prof	Professor
Factors-results	Contentment with remuneration	Q8	63 %	36.9 %	46.9 %	47 %	77 %	52 %	62 %	44 %	45 %	81.25 %
		Q9	75.3 %	71.6 %	60 %	57 %	15 %	69 %	77 %	65 %	47 %	25 %
		Q10	58,9 %	45 %	42 %	53 %	92 %	53 %	62 %	44 %	61 %	87.5 %
	Evaluation of career opportunities	Q11	75.3 %	58 %	53 %	59 %	54 %	65 %	75 %	58 %	54 %	62.5 %
		Q12	53.4 %	38 %	39.5 %	39 %	77 %	43 %	64 %	33 %	36 %	68.75 %
	Evaluation of interactions with management	Q13	67 %	56.6 %	64 %	62 %	85 %	61 %	75 %	49.5 %	73 %	81.25 %
		Q14	72.6 %	60 %	60 %	56 %	85 %	67 %	79 %	55 %	61 %	81.25 %
		Q15	72.6 %	68 %	62 %	61 %	92 %	68 %	79 %	62 %	54 %	94 %

Continuation of Table 6

Factor	Indicators	Statements	Teaching experience			Academic degree			Job position			
			0-10	11-20	21<	PhD	Doctor	No	Assis tant	Senior Teacher	Assos. Prof	Professor
Factors-results	Evaluation of interactions with colleagues	Q16	82.1 %	73.3 %	83 %	76 %	100 %	79 %	87 %	73 %	82 %	94 %
		Q17	97. %	96.6 %	95 %	95 %	100 %	96 %	98 %	96 %	93 %	100 %
	Assessing the results of your professional development	Q18	92 %	65.7 %	85 %	81 %	100 %	87 %	85 %	84 %	86 %	100 %
	Benefit to society.	Q19	85 %	91.6 %	92 %	92 %	85 %	87 %	87 %	87 %	95 %	94 %

To analyze the teaching staff's job satisfaction, we compare factors related to the work process and those related to its outcomes. As an example, we consider only the data for the category "scientific and teaching experience." For this purpose, we will transform the data from the group of work process outcome factors presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Coefficients of job satisfaction with the factors results

Factor	Indicator	Statement (i)	Teaching experience (j)		
			1-10	11-20	>21
Factors results	Contentment with remuneration	Q8	63 %	36.9 %	46.9 %
		Q9	75.3 %	71.6 %	60 %
		Q10	58,9 %	45 %	42 %
	Evaluation of career opportunities	Q11	75.3 %	58 %	53 %
		Q12	53.4 %	38 %	39.5 %
		Q13	67 %	56.6 %	64 %
		Q14	72.6 %	60 %	60 %
		Q15	72.6 %	68 %	62 %
	Evaluation of interactions with management	Q16	82.1 %	73.3 %	83 %
		Q17	97. %	96.6 %	95 %
	Assessing the results of your professional development	Q18	92 %	65.7 %	85 %
	Benefit to society	Q19	85 %	91.6 %	92 %

For the purpose of analysis, transformations were carried out using the following formula, based on the linear normalization of indicators (Normalization by Maximum) [1]. Let's define $KS_{ij} = KS_{11} = 63/63 = 1$, $KS_{12} = 36.9/63 = 0.59$, $KS_{13} = 46.9/63 = 0.74$. This way, we find all the coefficients and enter them into Table 8.

Table 8

Table of coefficients of job satisfaction with factors results

Factor	Indicator	Statement (i)	Teaching experience (j)		
			1-10	11-20	>21
Factors-results	Contentment with remuneration	Q8	1	0.59	0.74
		Q9	1	0.95	0.80
		Q10	1	0.76	0.71
	Evaluation of career opportunities	Q11	1	0.77	0.70
		Q12	1	0.71	0.74
	Evaluation of interactions with management	Q13	1	0.84	0.96
		Q14	1	0.83	0.83
		Q15	1	0.94	0.85
	Evaluation of interactions with colleagues	Q16	0.99	0.88	1
		Q17	1	0.99	0.96
	Assessing the results of your professional development	Q18	1	0.71	0.92
	Benefit to society	Q19	0.92	0.99	1

The next stage of data transformation is to sum the coefficient values. We determine satisfaction using the “Contentment with remuneration” indicator.

The data obtained (Tables 7-9) demonstrate satisfaction indicators within a single group, in our case, the “scientific and teaching experience” group, but across different indicators. This technique allows us to determine which professional groups are least or most satisfied with a particular indicator. Table 9 shows that among outcome factors, the most satisfied teachers are those with 1-10 years of experience (11.91), and the least satisfied are those with 11-20 years of experience (9.96). Upon closer examination, according to the “Contentment with remuneration” indicator, the most satisfied are teachers at the start of their careers (i.e., those with 1-10 years of experience; 3), and the least satisfied are teachers with more than 21 years of experience (2.25).

Table 9

Table of coefficients of job satisfaction with factors-results

Factor	Indicator (i)	Teaching experience (j)			Maximum value of K
		1-10	11-20	>21	
Factors-results	Contentment with remuneration	3	2.3	2.25	3
	Evaluation of career opportunities	5	4.09	4.08	5
	Evaluation of interactions with management				
	Evaluation of interactions with colleagues	1.99	1.87	1.96	2
	Assessing the results of your professional development	1	0.71	0.92	1
	Benefit to society	0.92	0.99	1	1
	Overall satisfaction rate by factor results	11.91	9.96	10.21	12
	Relative overall odds from their maximum value	0.99	0.83	0.85	

An analysis of the indicators “Evaluation of career opportunities” and “Evaluation of interactions with management”, showed that the most satisfied teachers were those with 1 to 10 years of experience, while the least satisfied were those with more than 21 years of experience. No significant differences were observed in the indicators “Evaluation of interactions with colleagues” and “Benefit for society”; in the indicator “Assessment of the results of one’s professional development”, teaching staff with 11-20 years of experience are the least satisfied.

The same transformations were made with the work process factors for the “scientific and teaching experience” group, and the results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Table of coefficients of job satisfaction with workflow factors

Factor	Indicator (i)	Teaching experience (j)			Maximum value of K
		1-10	11-20	>21	
Workflow factors	Work Organization	2	1.73	1.54	2
	Work environment and job stability	1	0.85	0.94	1
	Advancing the university’s academic environment	1	0.80	0.93	1
	Workload	0.85	0.89	1	1
	Overall satisfaction rate by factor results	4.85	4.27	4.41	5
	Relative overall odds from their maximum value	0.97	0.85	0.88	

Analysis of the data in Table 10 shows that beginning teachers (i.e., those with 1 to 10 years of experience) are more satisfied with the results of their professional activities, and teachers with 11 to 20 years of experience are less satisfied. A detailed analysis shows that, according to the “Workload” indicator, teaching staff with extensive experience are the most satisfied, while novice teachers are the least satisfied. According to the “work organization” criterion, beginning teachers (1-10 years) are the most satisfied, while teaching staff with extensive experience are the least satisfied. According to the indicator “Advancing the university’s academic environment”, teachers with 11-20 years of experience are unsatisfied.

The next step in the comparative analysis of teaching staff satisfaction in the category we have chosen, “research and teaching experience,” is to classify teachers according to their degree of satisfaction with the factors of the work process and the factors of the results of the work process. In Figure 1, the levels of job satisfaction are presented based on the relative overall coefficients of satisfaction with work process factors and work process outcome factors. The graphical results presented in Figure 1 may serve as a tool for comparing faculty satisfaction levels and identifying areas to enhance motivation.

Ranking the satisfaction coefficients in descending order, we obtain the overall picture of teaching staff job satisfaction (Table 11), from which we see that novice teachers with up to 10 years of experience are more satisfied than teachers in other groups.

Table 11

Differentiation of levels of job satisfaction

Work experience	Workflow factors	Ranking	Factors-results	Ranking
1-10	0.97	1	0.99	1
11-20	0.85	3	0.83	2
>21	0.88	2	0.85	3

The study showed that factors such as “Evaluation of interactions with management” and “Evaluation of career opportunities” have the most negative impact on job satisfaction and, accordingly, on teachers’ awareness of their importance. A negative trend was observed among respondents in changes in job satisfaction. It has been established that the actual status, motivation, and satisfaction of higher education teachers

remain at levels that require improvement to address the complex problems and challenges facing modern Kazakh society.

The study's results demonstrate that professional job satisfaction is heterogeneous. Although certain factors, such as interpersonal climate and engagement, received relatively positive evaluations, a substantial proportion of respondents reported experiencing a high professional workload. Specifically, 59.81 % of faculty members agreed with the statement about being overworked, suggesting pronounced strain in their professional activities. This finding does not indicate a high overall level of satisfaction, but rather highlights structural imbalances between professional demands and available resources. Therefore, teachers' job satisfaction is differentiated: while there is a generally positive attitude toward the profession, specific aspects of the organizational environment require improvement.

Almost all male and retired teachers believe the amount of work they must do is excessive. Also, the male half of the team believes they need help influencing university management decisions. Due to insufficient or low income, young teachers are forced to look for additional income on the side. More than half of respondents are satisfied with their salaries, while the remaining half seek additional income, including teachers with an academic degree. Only every second of those surveyed sees career growth prospects at the university, but the fewest are male teachers and professors.

The observed gender gap in the assessment of professional workload warrants further analysis. The greater proportion of women reporting excessive workloads may result from the intersection of professional and family responsibilities, as well as the specific allocation of academic tasks within universities. Additionally, these disparities may reflect differences in the perception of work-related stress and responsibility levels. These findings underscore the necessity for a more comprehensive examination of gender-related aspects of faculty professional activity.

A detailed analysis of these data revealed the following: some respondents' answers for each category are extremely contradictory; what the respondents' existing needs are; what managers should do to improve employee satisfaction; there is a need for teachers' self-reflection and independent assessment of the working climate and their relationships with colleagues and management.

We offer the following recommendations to solve the problematic issues identified during the survey that reduce the satisfaction of teaching staff with their professional activities:

- To overcome the identified problems, it is proposed to conduct regular monitoring of job satisfaction in universities and create a corporate culture based on recognition of the value of the work of a higher education teacher.
- Institutional corporate culture plays an essential role in increasing faculty satisfaction
- Information about the faculty is necessary to assess the current level of corporate culture and identify areas for improvement.
- Receiving constant feedback from employees.
- Taking timely measures to positively influence the university and its employees.
- Motivating teachers with salary increases.
- Supporting young teachers financially and morally.
- Involving male teachers in management decisions at the university.
- Changing the management's attitude towards the needs of employees.
- Increasing career opportunities for young teachers.
- Reviewing of the amount of work that teaching staff have to perform.
- Identification of career prospects at the university for male teachers, professors, and young teachers.
- Conducting frequent employee engagement surveys is one of the most effective ways to provide constructive and actionable data that allows employees to grow and develop.

Conclusions

Thus, our study of teachers' satisfaction with their professional activities in three higher education institutions confirmed its relevance and importance necessary for achieving strategic plans for the development of higher education institutions in Kazakhstan, the implementation of which provides a solution to many of its issues, such as staff development, new digital formats, international cooperation, new forms of labor organization in universities, etc. Therefore, the study of job satisfaction among higher education teachers is considered an urgent task, and identifying the factors that influence faculty satisfaction enables us to develop tools for managing faculty motivation in higher education institutions and provide recommendations to im-

prove faculty satisfaction. Furthermore, such research will help address this issue, particularly by conducting scientific research and developing a methodology for analyzing its results.

Job satisfaction is a state of well-being and happiness associated with one's work and its environment. Faculty satisfaction with their jobs is of great importance to the university. Satisfaction can stimulate positive energy, creativity, and increased motivation to succeed. A good work experience breeds satisfaction, so it is crucial that faculty consistently experience positive experiences. Faculty are the university's most valuable resource, and maintaining their satisfaction strengthens the university in many ways.

Job satisfaction is a state of well-being and happiness associated with one's professional activities and the work environment. It is crucial for the university that faculty members are satisfied with their jobs. A sense of satisfaction can foster positive energy, creativity, and increased motivation to succeed. Positive experiences in the workplace contribute to job satisfaction, so it is important that faculty regularly experience positive emotions in their professional environment. Faculty are the university's most valuable resource, and maintaining their satisfaction helps strengthen the university in many ways.

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Университет оқытушыларының жұмысына қанағаттануы: мәртебесі, бағалауы, проблемалары және ұсыныстары

Мақалада Қазақстанның үш университетіндегі профессор-оқытушылар құрамының еңбекке қанағаттану деңгейін бағалау мақсатында олардың кәсіби қызметін зерттеу нәтижелері ұсынылған. Зерттеу барысында қанағаттануға әсер ететін негізгі институционалдық және жеке факторлар анықталды. Оларға еңбек жағдайлары, жалақы деңгейі, мансаптық өсу мүмкіндіктері, кәсіби белсенділік, жұмыстың тұрақтылығы және қабылданатын жұмыс жүктемесі жатады. Сонымен қатар университет басшылығына мотивациялық саясатты жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстар әзірлеу үшін оқытушылардың басым қажеттіліктері айқындалды. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы — Қазақстанның жоғары білім беру жүйесіне тән бірыңғай эмпирикалық модель аясында институционалдық детерминанттар мен жеке кәсіби сипаттамаларды біріктіретін оқытушылардың еңбекке қанағаттануын бағалаудың интегративті моделін әзірлеу. Жынысы, лауазымы, жасы, ғылыми дәрежесі және еңбек өтілі сияқты көрсеткіштерді ескере отырып, үш университет бойынша жүргізілген салыстырмалы талдау қанағаттану деңгейінің әртүрлі үлгілерін және кәсіби белсенділіктің жоғары деңгейі мен қабылданатын жұмыс жүктемесінің елеулі болуы арасындағы құрылымдық тенгерімсіздіктерді анықтады. Алынған нәтижелер басқарушылық шешімдерді мақсатты түрде қабылдауға, институционалдық коммуникацияны жетілдіруге, қаржылық ынталандыру жүйесін дамытуға, жас оқытушыларды қолдауға, сондай-ақ университеттердің тұрақты дамуын қамтамасыз етудің стратегиялық құралы ретінде оқытушылардың еңбекке қанағаттануы мен кәсіби белсенділігін жүйелі түрде мониторинг жүргізуге эмпирикалық негіз болады.

Кілт сөздер: жұмысқа қанағаттану, қанағаттану факторы, университет оқытушысы, жоғары білім беру, кәсіби жұмыс.

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Удовлетворенность работой преподавателей университета: состояние, оценка, проблемы и рекомендации

В данной статье представлены результаты исследования профессиональной деятельности преподавателей университетов с целью оценки уровня удовлетворённости работой профессорско-преподавательского состава в трёх казахстанских университетах. В исследовании выявлены ключевые институциональные и индивидуальные факторы, влияющие на удовлетворённость, такие как условия труда, уровень заработной платы, возможности карьерного роста, профессиональная вовлечённость, стабильность занятости и воспринимаемая рабочая нагрузка. Также определены приоритетные потребности преподавателей, которые могут быть использованы руководством университетов для совершенствования политики мотивации. Научная новизна исследования заключается в разработке интегративной модели оценки удовлетворённости преподавателей профессиональной деятельностью, объединяющей институциональные детерминанты и индивидуальные профессиональные характеристики в рамках единой эмпирической модели, адаптированной к системе высшего образования Казахстана. Сравнительный анализ трёх университетов с учётом пола, должности, возраста, учёной степени и стажа работы выявил дифференцированные модели удовлетворённости и структурные дисбалансы между высоким уровнем профессиональной вовлечённости и значительной воспринимаемой рабочей нагрузкой. Полученные результаты создают эмпирическую основу для принятия адресных управленческих решений, развития институциональной коммуникации, совершенствования системы финансового стимулирования, поддержки молодых преподавателей, а также для систематического мониторинга удовлетворённости и вовлечённости преподавателей как стратегических инструментов устойчивого развития университетов.

Ключевые слова: удовлетворенность работой, фактор удовлетворенности, преподаватель университета, высшее образование, профессиональная деятельность.

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