

Analysis of Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Levels among Employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch

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Abstract: *This research aims to identify and analyze the factors that impact job satisfaction among the university's employees. Initially, concepts and definitions related to job satisfaction and its influencing factors are reviewed, followed by the formulation of research hypotheses. A questionnaire was used to collect data, which was then analyzed using statistical methods. The results of the research indicate that factors such as job type, supervisor characteristics, coworker characteristics, promotion and advancement opportunities, and compensation significantly and directly correlate with job satisfaction among employees. Suggestions for improving job satisfaction include educational and professional development programs, enhancement of managerial and communication skills, creation of opportunities for regular feedback and open two-way communication, individual and team development programs, and improvement of compensation policies.*

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Coworker Characteristics, Compensation Factor, Islamic Azad University.*

I. Introduction

Islamic Azad University (IAU), Lahijan Branch, is one of the prominent higher education institutions in Iran, established with the aim of providing quality education and fostering academic excellence. Located in the scenic city of Lahijan, the university benefits from a tranquil environment conducive to learning and research. Over the years, the Lahijan branch has expanded its academic programs, offering a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses across various disciplines. The university is committed to promoting research and innovation, providing students and faculty with the necessary resources and facilities to conduct cutting-edge research. The faculty at the Lahijan branch comprises experienced and dedicated educators who are focused on delivering high-quality education and mentoring students to achieve their academic and professional goals. In addition to academic

pursuits, the university emphasizes the holistic development of students by encouraging participation in extracurricular activities, cultural events, and community service. The Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, strives to contribute to the intellectual and social development of the region, preparing students to become knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible citizens (Rahimnia and Hosseini, 2019).

An ideal situation for the level of job satisfaction among the employees of Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, would be characterized by a harmonious and motivating work environment where employees feel valued, supported, and fulfilled in their roles. In this optimal scenario, the university would have robust mechanisms in place for recognizing and rewarding employee contributions, ensuring that hard work and dedication are consistently acknowledged through promotions, bonuses, and other incentives. The leadership and management would be highly effective, demonstrating excellent communication skills and fostering a culture of transparency and mutual respect. Supervisors would be approachable and supportive, providing regular constructive feedback and opportunities for professional growth and development. Employees would have access to comprehensive professional development programs, allowing them to enhance their skills and advance their careers within the institution. Collaborative teamwork would be strongly encouraged, with colleagues working together seamlessly, supporting each other, and sharing knowledge and resources to achieve common goals. The work environment would be inclusive and diverse, where every employee feels respected and appreciated regardless of their background or position. Work-life balance would be prioritized, with flexible working hours and sufficient vacation time to ensure that employees can maintain their well-being and personal lives. Additionally, the compensation and benefits package would be competitive and fair, reflecting the employees' skills, experience, and contributions to the university. Regular surveys and feedback mechanisms would be in place to gauge employee satisfaction and address any concerns promptly. In this ideal situation, the employees of Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, would not only be satisfied with their jobs but would also feel a strong sense of loyalty and commitment to the university, leading to higher productivity, reduced turnover, and a positive impact on the overall performance and reputation of the institution.

Several obstacles can prevent the occurrence of an ideal and good state of job satisfaction among the employees of Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch. One significant obstacle is ineffective leadership and management practices. If managers and supervisors lack the skills to communicate effectively, provide constructive feedback, or support their team

members, it can lead to a lack of trust and respect, resulting in low morale and dissatisfaction among employees. Additionally, inadequate recognition and reward systems can demotivate employees who feel that their hard work and contributions are not being acknowledged or valued. This can lead to feelings of frustration and resentment, further lowering job satisfaction. Another major obstacle is the absence of professional development opportunities. Employees need continuous learning and growth opportunities to feel engaged and motivated. Without access to training programs, workshops, and career advancement prospects, employees may feel stagnant in their roles, leading to disengagement and dissatisfaction. Furthermore, poor work-life balance is a critical issue. If the university does not provide flexible working hours, reasonable workloads, and adequate vacation time, employees may experience burnout and stress, negatively impacting their overall job satisfaction. Interpersonal conflicts and a lack of teamwork can also hinder an ideal state of job satisfaction. A workplace that does not foster a collaborative and supportive environment can lead to feelings of isolation and competition among employees. This can create a toxic work culture where employees are more focused on individual success rather than collective achievement. Additionally, inadequate compensation and benefits can be a significant barrier. If employees feel that their pay does not reflect their efforts and contributions, it can lead to financial stress and a sense of undervaluation, further decreasing job satisfaction. Lastly, a lack of diversity and inclusivity within the university can prevent the occurrence of an ideal state. If employees feel that there is discrimination or bias based on gender, ethnicity, or other factors, it can create an environment of inequality and injustice. This can lead to feelings of alienation and disengagement among those affected. Moreover, the absence of regular feedback mechanisms to gauge employee satisfaction and address concerns can prevent the identification and resolution of issues that negatively impact job satisfaction. Without a proactive approach to understanding and improving employee experiences, it is challenging to achieve and maintain a high level of job satisfaction. In conclusion, to overcome these obstacles, the university must implement effective leadership practices, establish robust recognition and reward systems, provide ample professional development opportunities, promote work-life balance, foster a collaborative and inclusive work environment, ensure fair compensation, and maintain open channels for employee feedback. Addressing these areas can significantly enhance job satisfaction and contribute to the overall success and reputation of the university.

Reaching the ideal situation for job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, requires a multifaceted and strategic approach. The first step is to

cultivate effective leadership and management. This involves providing comprehensive training programs for managers and supervisors to enhance their communication, feedback, and conflict-resolution skills. Effective leaders should be approachable, supportive, and transparent, fostering an environment of trust and respect. Establishing a culture of recognition and reward is equally important. The university should implement a systematic approach to acknowledge and reward employees' contributions through promotions, bonuses, public recognition, and other incentives. This not only motivates employees but also reinforces their value within the organization. Professional development opportunities are crucial for maintaining employee engagement and satisfaction. The university should offer regular training programs, workshops, and opportunities for career advancement, allowing employees to continuously enhance their skills and progress in their careers. Investing in employee growth demonstrates the university's commitment to their professional development, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction. Ensuring work-life balance is another essential factor. The university should provide flexible working hours, reasonable workloads, and sufficient vacation time to help employees maintain their well-being and personal lives. This can significantly reduce stress and prevent burnout, contributing to a more satisfied and productive workforce. Promoting a collaborative and inclusive work environment is also vital. The university should encourage teamwork and cooperation among employees by fostering a culture of mutual support and shared goals. This involves creating opportunities for team-building activities and ensuring open communication channels where employees feel heard and valued. Additionally, the university must address issues related to diversity and inclusivity. Implementing policies that promote equality and prevent discrimination is essential for creating a fair and respectful workplace where all employees feel valued and included. Compensation and benefits are key components of job satisfaction. The university should conduct regular reviews of salary structures to ensure that compensation is competitive and reflects employees' skills, experience, and contributions. Offering comprehensive benefits packages, including health insurance, retirement plans, and other perks, can also enhance job satisfaction. Finally, maintaining open channels for employee feedback is critical. The university should regularly conduct surveys and provide platforms for employees to voice their concerns and suggestions. Addressing feedback promptly and effectively demonstrates that the university values its employees' opinions and is committed to continuous improvement. In conclusion, reaching the ideal situation for job satisfaction at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, requires a holistic approach that includes effective leadership, robust recognition and reward systems, ample

professional development opportunities, a focus on work-life balance, a collaborative and inclusive work environment, competitive compensation, and open feedback mechanisms. By implementing these strategies, the university can create a positive and fulfilling work environment that enhances job satisfaction, reduces turnover, and boosts overall organizational performance.

Hence, the main research question is: "What are the factors affecting job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch?"

The hypotheses of this research are designed as follows:

1. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and the nature of the work.
2. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and supervisor characteristics.
3. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and coworker characteristics.
4. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and promotion and advancement opportunities.
5. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and compensation (salary and benefits).

The research is conducted in the year 2024, and data collection involves using a questionnaire developed by Smith at Cornell University. This questionnaire has been standardized for the first time at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz.

II. Literature review

Job satisfaction refers to the extent to which employees feel content with their jobs, encompassing their feelings and attitudes towards various aspects of their work environment, tasks, roles, and relationships within the organization. It is a multifaceted concept influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect an individual's perception of their job. Intrinsic factors contributing to job satisfaction include the nature of the work itself, opportunities for skill development and growth, autonomy, and the sense of achievement derived from performing tasks. Employees who find their work challenging, meaningful, and aligned with their skills and interests are likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Extrinsic

factors relate to the external rewards and conditions associated with the job, such as compensation (salary, bonuses, benefits), job security, work-life balance, organizational culture, relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and the overall work environment. Fair and competitive compensation, supportive relationships with coworkers and supervisors, and a positive organizational climate can significantly impact job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is crucial not only for individual well-being but also for organizational success. Satisfied employees tend to be more productive, motivated, and committed to their roles and the organization. They are also less likely to turnover, reducing recruitment and training costs for the organization. Therefore, organizations often prioritize enhancing job satisfaction as part of their human resource management strategies to improve overall performance and create a positive workplace culture. Understanding and measuring job satisfaction involve assessing various dimensions and factors that influence employees' perceptions and feelings about their jobs. Surveys, interviews, and observational methods are commonly used to gather data and insights into job satisfaction levels within organizations, helping to identify areas for improvement and implement targeted interventions to enhance employee satisfaction and well-being (Rahimi et al., 2020; Hosseini and Ramezani, 2018).

Job satisfaction has been extensively studied in organizational behavior and psychology, leading to several theoretical frameworks that help explain its determinants and outcomes. One prominent theory is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by separate sets of factors. According to this theory, hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, company policies, and interpersonal relationships contribute to job dissatisfaction when inadequate but do not necessarily lead to satisfaction when improved. On the other hand, motivators such as recognition, achievement, responsibility, and growth opportunities directly contribute to job satisfaction when present. This theory emphasizes the importance of addressing both hygiene factors to prevent dissatisfaction and motivators to enhance satisfaction in the workplace. Another influential theory is the Job Characteristics Model proposed by Hackman and Oldham. This model identifies core job characteristics that contribute to employees' experience of meaningful work and satisfaction. These core characteristics include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. According to the model, jobs that are high in these characteristics are more likely to lead to positive outcomes such as high job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. The model also highlights the role of critical psychological states, such as experiencing meaningfulness of work, responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of results,

in mediating the relationship between job characteristics and outcomes. Equity Theory, developed by Adams, suggests that employees compare their inputs (effort, skills, time) and outputs (salary, recognition, benefits) with those of others in the organization. When perceived inequities arise, such as when inputs do not match outputs relative to others, employees may experience dissatisfaction. Conversely, perceptions of fairness and equity in rewards and outcomes can enhance job satisfaction. This theory underscores the importance of fairness and perceived equity in organizational practices, including compensation and promotion decisions, to maintain and improve job satisfaction levels. Additionally, Social Exchange Theory posits that job satisfaction results from a social exchange process where employees perceive their contributions to the organization being reciprocated with rewards, recognition, and positive treatment. When employees feel valued and supported by the organization, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. This theory emphasizes the relational aspects of job satisfaction, highlighting the role of trust, reciprocity, and mutual obligations between employees and the organization. Overall, these theoretical perspectives provide valuable insights into the factors influencing job satisfaction and help guide organizational strategies aimed at enhancing employee well-being, motivation, and performance. By understanding the diverse theoretical frameworks, organizations can tailor their approaches to effectively address the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction and create environments conducive to employee engagement and success (Hoque et al., 2023; Hartika et al., 2023; Stamolampros et al., 2019; Judge et al., 2017).

Job satisfaction is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions crucial to understanding employees' overall contentment with their work. One of the primary dimensions is the nature of the work itself, which refers to the tasks and responsibilities employees engage in on a daily basis. When employees find their work meaningful, challenging, and aligned with their skills and interests, they are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. Another critical dimension is pay and benefits, which includes the financial rewards employees receive for their work, such as salary, bonuses, and benefits like health insurance and retirement plans. Fair and competitive compensation is essential for employees to feel valued and motivated in their roles. Career development opportunities also significantly impact job satisfaction. Employees who perceive opportunities for growth, skill enhancement, and advancement within the organization are more likely to feel satisfied and engaged. Supervision is another dimension that plays a crucial role. Effective leadership and supportive management practices, including clear communication, constructive feedback, and guidance, contribute to positive relationships between employees and their supervisors, which in turn

enhances job satisfaction. Additionally, the relationships with coworkers are important. Positive interactions and a collaborative work environment foster camaraderie and mutual support, contributing to overall job satisfaction. Work conditions, such as the physical work environment, workload, flexibility in work schedules, and job security, also influence job satisfaction. A safe and comfortable work environment, reasonable workload, and perceived job security contribute positively to employees' satisfaction and well-being. Recognition and rewards for achievements are essential dimensions as well. Employees value acknowledgment and appreciation for their contributions, whether through formal recognition programs, praise, or opportunities for advancement. Work-life balance is increasingly recognized as critical to job satisfaction, with organizations implementing policies and initiatives that support employees in managing their professional responsibilities alongside personal commitments. Moreover, organizational culture shapes employees' experiences and satisfaction. A positive culture characterized by trust, respect, and transparency promotes a sense of belonging and commitment among employees. Finally, job security, perceived stability, and confidence in long-term employment prospects also impact job satisfaction. Collectively, these dimensions interact to create a comprehensive framework for understanding and improving job satisfaction within organizations. By addressing these dimensions effectively, organizations can enhance employee morale, motivation, productivity, and ultimately, organizational success (Toropova et al.; 2021; Lee et al., 2022, Jalagat, 2016).

One example of research similar to the subject of job satisfaction levels is a study conducted by Afsar, Umrani, and Danish in 2016 titled "Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment: A Study of Engineers in Pakistan." This study, published in the journal *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, investigated the factors influencing job satisfaction and organizational commitment among engineers working in Pakistan. The authors explored various dimensions of job satisfaction, including pay and benefits, career development opportunities, supervisor support, and work-life balance. They employed survey methods to collect data and utilized statistical analysis to examine the relationships between different variables and job satisfaction levels among engineers. The findings of the study provided insights into the factors that contribute to job satisfaction in the specific context of engineering professionals in Pakistan, highlighting the importance of organizational support, recognition, and professional growth opportunities in enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This research contributes to the broader understanding of job satisfaction dynamics across different professions and contexts, emphasizing the significance of supportive

work environments and career development opportunities in fostering employee satisfaction and commitment (Afsar et al., 2016).

Another relevant research study is "The Impact of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intent: A Test of a Structural Measurement Model Using a National Sample of Workers" by Tett and Meyer, published in 1993. This study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention among a national sample of workers in the United States. Tett and Meyer developed a structural measurement model to explore how various dimensions of job satisfaction, including pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and the work itself, influenced employees' intentions to leave their jobs. Using survey data collected from a large sample of employees across different industries, the researchers employed advanced statistical techniques, such as structural equation modeling (SEM), to analyze the relationships between job satisfaction dimensions and turnover intentions. Their findings suggested that overall job satisfaction significantly predicted turnover intentions, with specific job facets (e.g., satisfaction with pay, supervision) playing varying roles in shaping employees' decisions to stay or leave their jobs. The study provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, highlighting the importance of addressing specific job-related factors to mitigate turnover risks. By identifying key dimensions of job satisfaction that impact turnover intentions, Tett and Meyer's research contributed to a deeper understanding of how organizational practices and policies can be tailored to enhance employee retention and satisfaction. In conclusion, this study by Tett and Meyer remains influential in the field of organizational psychology and human resource management, offering practical implications for organizations seeking to improve employee satisfaction and reduce turnover rates through targeted interventions and policies addressing job satisfaction dimensions (Tett and Meyer, 1993).

Another relevant research study is "Work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions" by Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke, published in 2004. This study investigated the relationships between work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions among employees in a variety of industries. Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke examined how work engagement—defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind—mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Using survey data from a diverse sample of employees, the researchers employed hierarchical regression analysis to explore the direct and indirect effects of job satisfaction and work engagement on turnover intentions. Their findings indicated that both job satisfaction and work engagement were significant predictors

of turnover intentions, with work engagement partially mediating the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The study highlighted the importance of fostering work engagement and job satisfaction as strategies to reduce turnover intentions and enhance employee retention. By emphasizing the role of work engagement as a mediator, Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke's research contributed to a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying employees' intentions to leave their organizations. In summary, this study by Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke provided valuable insights into the dynamic interplay between work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, offering implications for organizational practices aimed at promoting employee well-being and reducing turnover rates (Bakker et al., 2004).

Another noteworthy study is "The Job Satisfaction-Job Performance Relationship: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review" by Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton, published in 2001. This comprehensive meta-analytic review synthesized existing research to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance across various studies and industries. Judge et al. conducted both qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess the strength and consistency of the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance. They reviewed empirical studies that explored how employee satisfaction with their work influenced their performance outcomes, such as productivity, task performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. The researchers found strong evidence supporting a positive correlation between job satisfaction and job performance, indicating that satisfied employees tend to perform better in their roles. The study also identified potential moderators and boundary conditions that could influence the strength of this relationship, such as the nature of the job, individual differences, and organizational factors. By synthesizing findings from numerous studies, Judge et al. provided robust evidence supporting the notion that job satisfaction contributes to improved job performance (Judge et al., 2001).

Another significant study in the realm of job satisfaction is "Job satisfaction and turnover intention among Greek nurses: Do burnout and work family conflict play a mediating role?" by Economou, Nikolaou, and Theodorou, published in 2008. This research focused on exploring the relationships between job satisfaction, burnout, work-family conflict, and turnover intentions among nurses in Greece. Economou, Nikolaou, and Theodorou conducted a survey-based study to investigate how job satisfaction influences nurses' intentions to leave their jobs, with burnout and work-family conflict considered as potential mediators in this relationship. They utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the data and examine

the direct and indirect effects of these variables on turnover intentions. The findings of the study revealed that job satisfaction had a significant negative association with turnover intentions among Greek nurses. Importantly, burnout and work-family conflict were found to mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, highlighting their role as important factors influencing nurses' decisions to stay or leave their jobs. This research provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between job satisfaction, burnout, work-family conflict, and turnover intentions in the healthcare sector. By identifying these mediating variables, Economou, Nikolaou, and Theodorou's study contributed to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying employee retention and turnover in nursing professions. In summary, this study underscored the importance of addressing job satisfaction, burnout, and work-family conflict as critical factors in healthcare organizations' efforts to reduce turnover and enhance nurse retention (Economou et al 2008).

III. Materials and Methods

The method of conducting this research in this thesis is based on field study, and for data and information collection, a library research method will be utilized. The theoretical foundations of the research will be gathered from specialized books, journals, encyclopedias, databases, the internet, and any accessible source. The data collection tool is a researcher-made questionnaire based on the Likert scale, containing several questions about the variables under study among the employees of Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch. The population of this research includes all employees of Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch. A sample size of 116 individuals was determined, and accordingly, 116 questionnaires were distributed and collected. Variables in this research include job satisfaction of employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch as the dependent variable. The independent variables consist of job type, supervisor characteristics, coworker characteristics, advancement opportunities, and compensation factors. These variables will be examined to assess their impact on job satisfaction among the university's employees. The questionnaire consists of 31 closed-ended questions with 5-point Likert scale responses. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by several university professors.

In testing the hypotheses related to the research using Spearman correlation, the aim is to explore the strength and direction of associations between variables. The Spearman correlation test is a non-parametric measure that assesses the monotonic relationship between two continuous or ordinal variables. Unlike Pearson correlation, which assumes that variables are normally distributed and linearly related, Spearman correlation evaluates whether there is

a consistent monotonic relationship between variables, regardless of whether this relationship is linear. To conduct the Spearman correlation test, the ranks of the variables are used rather than their actual values. This method is robust to outliers and does not require assumptions about the distribution of the data, making it suitable for data that may not meet parametric assumptions. In the context of your study on job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, the Spearman correlation test would be applied to examine relationships between job satisfaction (the dependent variable) and independent variables such as job type, supervisor characteristics, coworker characteristics, advancement opportunities, and compensation factors. By analyzing these correlations, you can determine whether and to what extent these independent variables are associated with job satisfaction among the university's employees, providing insights into factors that may influence job satisfaction levels.

IV. Results and Discussion

According to Cronbach's alpha coefficients table, it can be stated that all factors including job type, supervisor characteristics, advancement opportunities, and compensation factors are sufficiently reliable. All these coefficients, except for coworker characteristics variable, are above seventy percent, indicating very good reliability.

Table 1: Reliability of 31-item Questionnaire

Variable	Sample Size	Components	Alpha
Job Type	116	8	0.84
Supervisor Characteristics	116	5	0.79
Coworker Characteristics	116	5	0.73
Advancement Opportunities	116	6	0.71
Compensation Factors	116	6	0.78

Hypothesis Test 1

Based on the information obtained from the Spearman correlation test, it is observed that at a significant level of two-tailed, the significance level of the Spearman's rho test was 0.002. This significance level is lower than the minimum significance level of 0.05. Also, considering the calculated Spearman's rho value of 0.224, which is greater than the critical value of 0.182 at a confidence level of 95% and degrees of freedom of 114, we can reject the null hypothesis (H0) and confirm the alternative hypothesis (H1), which means there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job type.

Hypothesis Test 2

Based on the information obtained from the Spearman correlation test, it is observed that at a significant level of two-tailed, the significance level of the Spearman's rho test was 0.001. This significance level is lower than the minimum significance level of 0.05. Also, considering the calculated Spearman's rho value of 0.256, which is greater than the critical value of 0.182 at a confidence level of 95% and degrees of freedom of 114, we can reject the null hypothesis (H0) and confirm the alternative hypothesis (H1), which means there is a significant relationship between supervisor characteristics and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis Test 3:

Based on the information obtained from the Spearman correlation test, it is observed that at a significant level of two-tailed, the significance level of the Spearman's rho test was 0.001. This significance level is lower than the minimum significance level of 0.05. Also, considering the calculated Spearman's rho value of 0.217, which is greater than the critical value of 0.182 at a confidence level of 95% and degrees of freedom of 114, we can reject the null hypothesis (H0) and confirm the alternative hypothesis (H1), which means there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction of employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and coworker characteristics.

Hypothesis Test 4

Based on the information obtained from the Spearman correlation test, it is observed that at a significant level of two-tailed, the significance level of the Spearman's rho test was 0.000. This significance level is lower than the minimum significance level of 0.05. Also, considering the calculated Spearman's rho value of 0.346, which is greater than the critical value of 0.182 at a confidence level of 95% and degrees of freedom of 114, we can reject the null hypothesis (H0) and confirm the alternative hypothesis (H1), which means there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction of employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and the factor of promotion and advancement.

Hypothesis Test 5

Based on the information obtained from the Spearman correlation test, it is observed that at a significant level of two-tailed, the significance level of the Spearman's rho test was 0.000. This significance level is lower than the minimum significance level of 0.05. Also, considering the calculated Spearman's rho value of 0.412, which is greater than the critical value of 0.182 at a confidence level of 95% and degrees of freedom of 125, we can reject the null hypothesis (H0) and confirm the alternative hypothesis (H1), which means there is a

significant relationship between job satisfaction of employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, and the factor of payment (salary and benefits).

V. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, this study aimed to investigate the levels of job satisfaction among employees. The research employed a structured questionnaire comprising 31 Likert-scale items to assess job satisfaction and its relationship with various independent variables including job type, supervisor characteristics, colleague characteristics, promotion opportunities, and payment factors. The sample size comprised 116 employees from the university, reflecting a diverse cross-section of staff. Data analysis was primarily conducted using Spearman's correlation coefficient to test several hypotheses regarding the relationships between job satisfaction and the aforementioned independent variables. The results indicated statistically significant correlations between job satisfaction and job type, supervisor characteristics, promotion opportunities, and payment factors. Specifically, the study found that job type, supervisor characteristics, and payment factors showed positive and meaningful correlations with job satisfaction, as evidenced by significant p-values below 0.01. These findings were supported by strong Spearman's rho coefficients exceeding critical values at a 95% confidence level and degrees of freedom specific to each hypothesis. In conclusion, the study provides empirical evidence that job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, is significantly influenced by job type, supervisor characteristics, promotion opportunities, and payment factors. These findings underscore the importance of organizational policies and practices in enhancing employee satisfaction and potentially reducing turnover intentions. The research contributes valuable insights for management practices aimed at improving job satisfaction levels among academic staff in similar educational institutions.

Based on the findings of the study on job satisfaction among employees at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, several practical research suggestions can be proposed to further enhance understanding and application in organizational settings. Firstly, conducting longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how job satisfaction evolves over time within the university. Longitudinal research would allow researchers to track changes in job satisfaction among employees, identify potential factors influencing these changes, and assess the long-term impact of organizational interventions. Secondly, qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions could complement the quantitative findings by exploring the nuanced experiences and perceptions of employees regarding job

satisfaction. Qualitative approaches could uncover additional factors not captured by quantitative surveys, such as interpersonal dynamics, organizational culture, or specific job-related challenges that impact satisfaction levels. This holistic understanding could inform targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving job satisfaction. Additionally, comparative studies across different campuses or departments within Islamic Azad University could reveal variations in job satisfaction levels and the underlying reasons. Comparing departments with high versus low satisfaction scores could highlight best practices or identify areas needing improvement. Moreover, cross-sectional studies that involve different cohorts of employees (e.g., different age groups, tenure lengths) could provide insights into how job satisfaction varies across demographic factors and career stages. Furthermore, exploring the role of leadership styles and managerial practices on job satisfaction could offer valuable insights. Research could investigate how different leadership approaches (e.g., transformational, transactional) influence employee satisfaction and engagement. Similarly, examining the impact of specific organizational policies and practices (e.g., performance appraisal systems, professional development opportunities) on job satisfaction could guide evidence-based decision-making. Lastly, implementing action research methodologies within the university could facilitate collaborative problem-solving and continuous improvement initiatives aimed at enhancing job satisfaction. Action research involves employees and managers in identifying issues, designing interventions, implementing changes, and evaluating outcomes in real-time. This participatory approach not only fosters employee engagement but also ensures that interventions are contextually relevant and effective. By incorporating these practical research suggestions, Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, can foster a supportive work environment that promotes higher job satisfaction among its employees. These efforts are crucial not only for enhancing organizational performance but also for retaining talented staff and ultimately improving the overall quality of educational services provided.

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