

A Study on Job Satisfaction of Secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

Radasa Pojard and Chutima Klaysung

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, 1-U-Thong Nok, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

E-Mail: Radasa.ph@ssru.ac.th, Chutima.kl@ssru.ac.th

Abstract

Job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing employee performance, motivation, and organizational efficiency in higher education institutions. This study aimed to examine the job satisfaction of secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, and to identify key factors affecting their satisfaction. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed, with data collected from 50 secretaries using a structured questionnaire adapted from Job Satisfaction Survey. Descriptive statistics were used to assess overall satisfaction levels, and inferential statistics, including t-tests and ANOVA, analyzed differences based on demographic factors. The results indicated that secretaries reported high overall job satisfaction, particularly in the dimensions of interpersonal relationships and work environment. Recognition and reward were also significant contributors to satisfaction, while workload and career development opportunities were moderately rated. Demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, and work experience did not significantly affect job satisfaction. The findings suggest that organizational and job-related factors, including supportive work environments and acknowledgment of contributions, are crucial for enhancing secretaries' satisfaction and performance.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Secretaries, Higher education, Work environment

1. Introduction

1.1 Principles and Rationale

Job satisfaction is a critical determinant of employee performance, organizational commitment, and overall productivity across various sectors, including higher education (Locke, 1976; Spector, 1997). It is generally defined as the positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's job and work experiences (Aziri, 2011). Employees who experience higher levels of job satisfaction are more likely to be motivated, productive, and committed to their organization, while dissatisfaction can lead to absenteeism, turnover, and reduced work efficiency (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Malik, 2016).

In universities, administrative personnel, including secretaries, play a pivotal role in ensuring smooth academic and operational processes. Secretaries serve as key intermediaries between faculty members, students, and administrative departments, handling tasks such as scheduling, correspondence, record management, and coordination of academic events (Amah,

2009; Chi et al., 2018). Their job satisfaction is essential not only for maintaining individual performance but also for ensuring the efficiency and quality of institutional operations.

Studies on job satisfaction in the context of administrative staff have identified several influencing factors, including workload, compensation, recognition, opportunities for career development, workplace environment, and interpersonal relationships (Spector, 1997; Aziri, 2011; Malik, 2016). Moreover, cultural and organizational context can affect how these factors impact satisfaction, highlighting the importance of studying job satisfaction within specific institutional settings (Chi et al., 2018).

In the context of Thailand, research on job satisfaction among secretaries in higher education remains limited, particularly at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Understanding the satisfaction levels and contributing factors among secretaries is critical for developing effective human resource strategies, enhancing employee morale, and fostering a supportive and productive work environment (Phumphuang et al., 2021). By identifying key determinants of job satisfaction, the university can implement targeted interventions to improve administrative efficiency and employee well-being. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the job satisfaction of secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, with the aim of providing practical recommendations for enhancing workplace satisfaction, motivation, and organizational performance.

1.2 Research Objective

The primary aim of this study is to examine the job satisfaction of secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, and to identify the key factors influencing their satisfaction. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the overall level of job satisfaction among secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science.
2. To examine the influence of demographic factors (such as age, gender, educational background, and work experience) on secretaries' job satisfaction.
3. To identify the key job-related factors that contribute to secretaries' satisfaction, including workload, recognition, career development opportunities, work environment, and interpersonal relationships.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely recognized as a key determinant of employee performance, organizational commitment, and overall workplace effectiveness. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences. Similarly, Spector (1997) emphasized that job satisfaction reflects employees' attitudes toward their work, encompassing intrinsic factors (e.g., achievement, recognition) and extrinsic factors (e.g., pay, work environment). High levels of job satisfaction are associated with improved motivation, productivity, and reduced turnover intentions, whereas dissatisfaction can lead to absenteeism, decreased efficiency, and organizational disruption (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

2.2 Job Satisfaction of Administrative Staff in Higher Education

Administrative staff, particularly secretaries, play a pivotal role in the effective functioning of universities. Their responsibilities include managing correspondence, scheduling, record keeping, and supporting faculty and students in academic processes (Amah, 2009; Chi, Wu, & Lee, 2018). Research indicates that job satisfaction among administrative staff is influenced by workload, recognition, opportunities for professional development, organizational support, and interpersonal relationships (Aziri, 2011; Malik, 2016). In the context of higher education, administrative employees' satisfaction is directly linked to the quality of services delivered to students and faculty, which impacts institutional performance and reputation (Phumphuang et al., 2021).

2.3 Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction of Secretaries

Previous studies have identified several factors that significantly affect the job satisfaction of secretaries and similar administrative roles:

Workload and Job Stress: Excessive workload and unclear job expectations negatively influence satisfaction, leading to fatigue and reduced efficiency (Amah, 2009; Chi et al., 2018).

Recognition and Reward: Recognition of effort and fair compensation are key motivators for secretarial staff. Lack of acknowledgment can decrease morale and commitment (Malik, 2016).

Career Development Opportunities: Opportunities for training, promotion, and skill enhancement are associated with higher satisfaction and motivation (Noe, 2020; Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Work Environment and Interpersonal Relationships: A supportive work environment, positive interpersonal relationships, and effective communication contribute to employee satisfaction and engagement (Spector, 1997; Aziri, 2011).

These factors highlight the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction, suggesting that both intrinsic and extrinsic elements must be considered in assessing the well-being of secretaries in academic settings (Sribunrueng et al., 2025).

2.4 Job Satisfaction in the Thai Higher Education Context

In Thailand, studies on job satisfaction among university administrative staff are relatively limited. Research indicates that secretaries' satisfaction is influenced by organizational culture, leadership style, and administrative policies (Phumphuang et al., 2021). The Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, as a representative higher education institution, requires its secretarial staff to maintain high efficiency and service quality. Understanding their satisfaction levels and influencing factors is essential for designing interventions that improve work conditions, professional development, and organizational performance (Chi et al., 2018; Zwolińska-Gładys, 2024).

By examining the job satisfaction of secretaries in this context, the study aims to provide actionable insights to enhance employee morale, increase service quality, and support the university's operational and academic objectives.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the job satisfaction of secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. A descriptive design is appropriate for understanding the current state of employee satisfaction and identifying key factors influencing it). The study focused on measuring levels of satisfaction across multiple dimensions, including workload, recognition, career development, work environment, and interpersonal relationships.

3.1 Population and Sample

The target population consisted of all secretaries employed at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, totaling 50 staff members. Due to the small and manageable population size, total population sampling was applied, ensuring that all secretaries were invited to participate in the study. This approach enhances the comprehensiveness of the findings and eliminates sampling bias.

3.2 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

Demographic Information: Including gender, age, educational level, work experience, and employment status.

Job Satisfaction Scale: Adapted from Spector's (1997) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), covering key dimensions:

- Workload and job stress
- Recognition and reward
- Career development opportunities
- Work environment
- Interpersonal relationships

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

3.3 Data Collection

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the Faculty of Management Science, and ethical approval was secured from the university to ensure compliance with research ethics. The questionnaires were distributed to all secretaries using both online forms and printed copies to maximize accessibility and response rates. Respondents were given a two-week period to complete and return the questionnaires, all returned questionnaires were carefully checked for completeness and accuracy before proceeding with data analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) to summarize levels of job satisfaction across dimensions. Inferential statistics, including t-tests and ANOVA, were employed to examine differences in satisfaction based on demographic factors such as age, gender, and years of experience.

The results of the analysis provide a comprehensive understanding of secretaries' job satisfaction and highlight areas for improvement in human resource management practices within the faculty.

4. Results

A total of 50 samples participated in the study, representing the entire population of administrative staff at the Faculty of Management Science. Most respondents were female (70%) and aged 31–40 years (50%), reflecting the typical demographic composition of administrative staff in higher education (Spector, 1997; Robbins & Judge, 2019). The majority held a bachelor's degree (80%) and had 6–10 years of work experience, which may influence their perceptions of job satisfaction.

4.1 Levels of Job Satisfaction

Respondents rated their job satisfaction across five dimensions using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Table 1 presents the mean scores and standard deviations.

Table 1 Job Satisfaction Levels

Dimension	Mean (\bar{x})	SD	Interpretation
Workload and Job Stress	3.70	0.55	Moderate to High
Recognition and Reward	3.85	0.60	High
Career Development Opportunities	3.60	0.65	Moderate to High
Work Environment	4.00	0.50	High
Interpersonal Relationships	4.10	0.45	High
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.85	0.52	High

Overall, secretaries reported high job satisfaction (Mean = 3.85), with interpersonal relationships (Mean = 4.10) and work environment (Mean = 4.00) rated most positively. Recognition and reward also contributed significantly to satisfaction, consistent with previous studies emphasizing the role of acknowledgment and supportive work environments in administrative job satisfaction. Workload and career development opportunities received slightly lower scores, suggesting areas for potential improvement.

4.2 Differences in Job Satisfaction by Demographic Factors

Independent-sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA were conducted to examine differences in job satisfaction based on gender, age, education level, and work experience.

Gender: No significant difference in overall job satisfaction between male and female secretaries ($t = 1.05, p > 0.05$).

Age: Secretaries aged 31–40 reported slightly higher satisfaction than other age groups, but differences were not statistically significant ($F = 2.10, p > 0.05$).

Education Level: No significant differences were observed between bachelor's and master's degree holders ($t = 0.95, p > 0.05$).

Work Experience: Secretaries with 6–10 years of experience had higher satisfaction levels compared to those with less or more experience; however, the difference was not statistically significant ($F = 2.30, p > 0.05$).

Demographic factors such as gender, age, education, and work experience did not significantly influence job satisfaction, suggesting that satisfaction is more strongly related to job-related factors, including work environment, recognition, and interpersonal relationships.

5. Conclusion

The study examined the job satisfaction of secretaries at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, focusing on key factors such as workload, recognition, career development, work environment, and interpersonal relationships. Overall, secretaries reported high levels of job satisfaction, particularly in areas related to interpersonal relationships and work environment, indicating that supportive colleagues and a positive workplace climate contribute significantly to their satisfaction (Spector, 1997; Robbins & Judge, 2019). Recognition and reward were also important contributors, highlighting the value of acknowledgment and fair compensation in enhancing employee morale (Malik, 2016).

Although workload and career development opportunities were rated moderately, they remain areas for potential improvement. Demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, and work experience did not significantly influence job satisfaction, suggesting that organizational and job-related factors play a more critical role than personal characteristics (Aziri, 2011; Chi, Wu, & Lee, 2018).

Based on these findings, university administrators should focus on maintaining a supportive work environment, providing recognition and reward mechanisms, and offering continuous professional development opportunities. Implementing these strategies can improve administrative efficiency, enhance staff motivation, and contribute to a more positive and productive organizational climate (Phumphuang, Srisopha, & Chokchai, 2021).

Acknowledgment

The author would like to formally express appreciations to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for financial support and the Faculty of Management Sciences for providing full assistance until this research was successfully completed. The author is also grateful for suggestions from all those who kindly provide consulting advices throughout the period of this research.

References

- Amah, E. (2009). Determinants of employees' job satisfaction: An empirical study of Nigerian universities. *African Journal of Business Management*, 3(8), 350–355.
- Aziri, B. (2011). Job satisfaction: A literature review. *Management Research & Practice*, 3(4), 77–86.
- Chi, N. W., Wu, C. H., & Lee, Y. C. (2018). Job satisfaction and performance of administrative staff in higher education: The mediating role of organizational commitment. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 19(2), 271–283.

- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Malik, M. E. (2016). Job satisfaction and employee performance: A case study of educational sector. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(5), 210–222.
- Noe, R. A. (2020). *Employee training and development* (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Phumphuang, N., Srisopha, N., & Chokchai, S. (2021). Work satisfaction and performance of administrative staff in Thai universities. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 10(3), 120–130.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2019). *Organizational behavior* (18th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*. SAGE Publications.
- Sribunrueng, P., Pungnirund, B., & Suwunniponth, W. (2025). Effectiveness of Duty Performance and Secretarial Services at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. *International Academic Multidisciplinary Research Conference in Madrid, 2025*, 250-256.
- Zwolińska-Gładys, K. (2024). Higher education staff development: A need-oriented perspective. *Scientific Reports*, 14, 18923.