

Faculty Perceptions of Work Environment and Their Association with Job Satisfaction: A Study with Special Reference to Pharmacy Self-Financing Colleges in Kollam District

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between faculty perceptions of their work environment and job satisfaction in self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District, Kerala. The research aimed to examine the association between work environment factors, such as workload, administrative support, infrastructure, and collegial relationships, and faculty job satisfaction. A quantitative approach was employed, and data were collected through surveys from 100 faculty members. The findings revealed that faculty perceptions of their work environment significantly influenced their job satisfaction, with administrative support and collegial relationships emerging as strong predictors of satisfaction. The study's results showed that faculty in pharmacy self-financing colleges in Kollam District were moderately satisfied with their work environment, with collegial relationships being the most positively perceived aspect. However, excessive workload and lack of administrative support were significant concerns.

(Key Words: Work Environment, Job Satisfaction, Pharmacy Self Financing College, Kollam District)

Introduction

The work environment in higher education institutions played a pivotal role in shaping faculty job satisfaction, influencing both individual well-being and institutional performance. In self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District, where resources and infrastructure often varied compared to government-funded institutions, faculty perceptions of their work environment—encompassing physical facilities, interpersonal relationships, and administrative support—were critical to understanding their satisfaction levels. These colleges, driven by private funding, faced unique challenges such as financial constraints and high workload, which potentially affected faculty morale and productivity. The study aimed to explore how faculty perceived their work environment and how these perceptions correlated with their job satisfaction, contributing to the broader discourse on organizational behavior in educational settings.

This investigation was motivated by the increasing recognition of job satisfaction as a determinant of faculty retention, teaching quality, and institutional reputation in self-financing colleges. By focusing on pharmacy colleges in Kollam District, the study addressed a specific yet under-researched context, where faculty navigated professional demands within a competitive and resource-constrained environment. The research sought to provide empirical evidence to guide administrators in enhancing workplace conditions, thereby fostering a more satisfied and productive faculty workforce. It drew on established theories, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, to frame the relationship between work environment factors and job satisfaction outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Faculty in self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District operated in a dynamic yet challenging work environment characterized by limited resources, high teaching loads, and varying levels of administrative support. These conditions often led to dissatisfaction, which manifested in reduced motivation, lower teaching effectiveness, and higher turnover intentions, posing significant challenges to institutional stability and academic quality. The lack of comprehensive studies exploring how faculty perceived their work environment and its impact on job satisfaction in this specific context created a gap in understanding the factors that shaped their professional experiences.

Moreover, anecdotal evidence suggested that faculty in these colleges faced issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited opportunities for professional development, and strained interpersonal relationships, all of which potentially undermined their job satisfaction. Without empirical data to clarify these perceptions and their association with satisfaction, administrators struggled to implement targeted interventions. The study, therefore, sought to address this problem by examining faculty perceptions of their work environment and their relationship with job satisfaction, aiming to provide actionable insights for improving workplace dynamics in self-financing pharmacy colleges.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the association between faculty perceptions of their work environment and their job satisfaction in self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District.

Scope of the Study

The study confined its investigation to faculty members employed in self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District, Kerala, during the academic year 2023–2024. It focused exclusively on full-time faculty, including professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, excluding part-time or visiting faculty to ensure consistency in assessing work environment perceptions and job satisfaction. The research utilized a quantitative approach, employing standardized questionnaires to measure perceptions of the work environment and job satisfaction, with data collected through surveys conducted across multiple colleges in the district.

The scope was limited to self-financing pharmacy colleges to capture the unique organizational dynamics of privately funded institutions, which often faced distinct challenges compared to government-aided colleges. While the findings were specific to Kollam District,

they offered potential insights for similar self-financing institutions in other regions, provided contextual differences were considered. The study did not explore non-faculty staff or student perspectives, focusing solely on faculty to maintain a clear and manageable research focus.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between faculty perceptions of their work environment and job satisfaction in self-financing pharmacy colleges in Kollam District. A survey method was used to collect data from 100 faculty members, including professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The survey instrument consisted of standardized questionnaires to measure perceptions of the work environment and job satisfaction, with items assessing workload, administrative support, infrastructure, and collegial relationships. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis, regression analysis, independent samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA. The study also employed thematic analysis to examine qualitative feedback on the work environment.

Literature Review

Prior research on faculty job satisfaction in higher education consistently highlighted the work environment as a critical determinant of satisfaction levels. Studies such as those by Herzberg (1966) and Locke (1976) established that factors like supportive leadership, collegial relationships, and adequate resources (motivators) enhanced satisfaction, while poor working conditions and inadequate compensation (hygiene factors) led to dissatisfaction. In the context of Indian higher education, research by Kumar and Amritkumar (2019) found that faculty in self-financing institutions often reported lower satisfaction due to limited infrastructure and professional development opportunities, underscoring the need to examine work environment perceptions in such settings.

Empirical studies specific to pharmacy education, such as those by Surratt et al. (2002), identified that faculty satisfaction was closely tied to workload, administrative support, and opportunities for research. In the Indian context, research by Nair and Nair (2021) on self-financing colleges in Kerala revealed that faculty valued interpersonal relationships and autonomy but were dissatisfied with physical facilities and salary structures. These findings informed the current study, which extended the literature by focusing on pharmacy colleges in Kollam District, exploring how faculty perceptions of their work environment shaped their job satisfaction in a resource-constrained, privately funded academic setting.

Results and Discussions

Faculty Perceptions of Work Environment

A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to summarize faculty perceptions of their work environment in pharmacy self-financing colleges in Kollam District. Variables such as workload, administrative support, infrastructure, and collegial relationships were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated for each variable.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Faculty Perceptions of Work Environment

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Workload	3.2	0.8	Moderate dissatisfaction
Administrative Support	2.8	0.9	Low satisfaction
Infrastructure	3.5	0.7	Relatively satisfied
Collegial Relationships	3.8	0.6	High satisfaction

The mean scores for workload ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.8$) indicated moderate dissatisfaction, suggesting faculty perceived their workload as excessive. Administrative support scored lower ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 0.9$), reflecting inadequate guidance from management. Infrastructure ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 0.7$) and collegial relationships ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.6$) showed relatively higher satisfaction, indicating positive peer interactions and acceptable facilities.

Association between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

A Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between faculty perceptions of the work environment (composite score of workload, support, infrastructure, and relationships) and overall job satisfaction. The composite work environment score was derived by averaging responses across variables, and job satisfaction was measured using a validated job satisfaction index.

Table 2: Correlation between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Job Satisfaction (r)	Significance (p)
Composite Work Environment	0.62	< 0.01

A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$) was observed between work environment perceptions and job satisfaction. This indicated that faculty who perceived their work environment more favorably reported higher job satisfaction. The result suggested that improving environmental factors could enhance satisfaction levels.

Work Environment Factors on Job Satisfaction

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine which work environment factors (workload, administrative support, infrastructure, collegial relationships) predicted job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was the dependent variable, and the four environmental factors were independent variables.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis of Work Environment Factors on Job Satisfaction

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	Significance (p)	Interpretation
Workload	0.12	n.s.	Weak effect
Administrative Support	0.38	< 0.01	Strong positive predictor
Infrastructure	0.15	n.s.	Weak effect
Collegial Relationships	0.29	< 0.05	Moderate positive predictor
Model Summary	$R^2 = 0.45$	$p < 0.001$	Explains 45% variance

The regression model was significant ($R^2 = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 45% of the variance in job satisfaction. Administrative support ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$) and collegial relationships ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.05$) were significant predictors, while workload and infrastructure showed weaker effects. This suggested that supportive leadership and positive peer interactions were key drivers of satisfaction.

Gender Differences

An independent samples t-test was used to compare job satisfaction levels between male and female faculty members in pharmacy self-financing colleges. The test assessed whether gender influenced perceptions of the work environment and subsequent job satisfaction.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test of Job Satisfaction by Gender

Gender	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Male	3.4	0.7			No significant difference
Female	3.3	0.8	0.67	0.51	Slightly lower admin support

No significant difference was found in job satisfaction between male ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 0.7$) and female faculty ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.8$; $t(98) = 0.67$, $p = 0.51$). However, female faculty reported slightly lower satisfaction with administrative support ($p < 0.05$), suggesting gender-specific challenges in perceived managerial fairness.

Job Satisfaction across Experience Levels

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore differences in job satisfaction across faculty experience levels (less than 5 years, 5–10 years, and more than 10 years). The dependent variable was job satisfaction, measured on a Likert scale.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA of Job Satisfaction across Experience Levels

Experience Level	Mean (M)	SD	F-value	p-value	Post-hoc Comparison
Less than 5 years	3.1	0.8			Lower satisfaction than >10 years ($p < .05$)
5–10 years	3.4	0.7	4.12	0.03	No significant difference with other groups
More than 10 years	3.7	0.6			Higher satisfaction than <5 years ($p < .05$)

The ANOVA revealed significant differences ($F(2, 97) = 4.12$, $p < 0.05$). Post-hoc tests showed that faculty with more than 10 years of experience ($M = 3.7$, $SD = 0.6$) reported higher job satisfaction than those with less than 5 years ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.8$; $p < 0.05$). This suggested that experienced faculty adapted better to the work environment or had higher job security.

Feedback on Work Environment

A thematic analysis was conducted on open-ended survey responses from faculty about their work environment. Responses were coded and categorized into themes using an inductive approach, focusing on factors influencing job satisfaction.

Table 6: Thematic Analysis of Faculty Feedback on Work Environment

Theme	Key Findings
Workload Stress	Excessive teaching hours, administrative duties, lack of time balance
Lack of Recognition	Feeling undervalued, limited appreciation from management
Positive Peer Support	Strong collegial bonds, teamwork and peer collaboration mitigated stress

Three main themes emerged: (1) workload stress, with faculty citing excessive teaching and administrative duties; (2) lack of recognition, with many feeling undervalued by management; and (3) positive peer support, highlighting strong collegial bonds as a mitigating factor. These themes underscored the complex interplay of environmental factors affecting satisfaction.

Findings

1. Faculty in pharmacy self-financing colleges in Kollam District were moderately satisfied with their work environment, with collegial relationships being the most positively perceived aspect. However, excessive workload and lack of administrative support were significant concerns, aligning with broader studies on self-financing colleges where resource constraints and managerial inefficiencies were common.
2. The work environment significantly influenced job satisfaction among faculty in pharmacy colleges in Kollam District. This finding corroborated studies indicating that positive work conditions, such as supportive management and adequate resources, were critical for faculty satisfaction.
3. Administrative support and collegial relationships were the strongest predictors of job satisfaction among pharmacy faculty in Kollam District. This finding aligned with research highlighting the importance of leadership and interpersonal relationships in academic settings.
4. Gender did not significantly affect overall job satisfaction, but female faculty perceived less administrative support, potentially due to systemic biases or unequal workload distribution, consistent with findings in pharmacy education.
5. Faculty with longer tenure in pharmacy colleges in Kollam District reported greater job satisfaction, possibly due to established relationships and familiarity with institutional systems. This finding echoed studies linking experience to job satisfaction in academia.
6. Qualitative data revealed that workload and lack of recognition were significant barriers to job satisfaction, while peer support was a key facilitator. This aligned with research emphasizing the role of non-financial factors, such as recognition and relationships, in faculty satisfaction.

Suggestions

1. College administrations implemented workload management strategies, such as redistributing teaching responsibilities and hiring additional faculty. Regular feedback sessions with management were established to improve administrative support, addressing faculty concerns about transparency and communication.
2. Institutions prioritized investments in improving work environment aspects, such as upgrading infrastructure and fostering supportive leadership. Professional development workshops were introduced to enhance faculty engagement, reinforcing the link between environment and satisfaction.

3. College leaders implemented mentorship programs to strengthen collegial relationships and conducted leadership training for administrators to enhance support mechanisms. These initiatives aimed to boost faculty satisfaction and retention.
4. Colleges adopted gender-sensitive policies, such as transparent workload assignments and regular equity audits, to address disparities in administrative support. Faculty forums were created to discuss gender-related workplace concerns, promoting inclusivity.
5. Institutions developed onboarding programs for new faculty to accelerate their adaptation to the work environment. Mentorship from senior faculty was encouraged to support less experienced colleagues, enhancing their satisfaction early in their careers.
6. Colleges introduced recognition programs, such as annual awards for teaching excellence, to address feelings of being undervalued. Workload reduction strategies, including hiring support staff for administrative tasks, were implemented to alleviate stress.

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