



RESEARCH PAPER

Navigating the Interplay of Assertiveness and Job Satisfaction in Teaching at Universities

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ABSTRACT

The main focus of the current study was to examine the relationship between assertiveness and job satisfaction among teachers in public sector universities. Assertiveness, an important part of effective communication, was hypothesized to positively impact job satisfaction, especially in academia, where the communication patterns are complex. A descriptive correlational research design was employed by utilizing a Assertiveness Scale (RAS) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) to 219 teachers randomly selected from universities in Punjab, Pakistan. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation, ANOVA, Z scores, and regression analyses. The research findings indicated a highly significant positive association between assertiveness and job satisfaction. since , instructors who possess a greater level of assertiveness have a better degree of work satisfaction at work . Universities should organize training programs to enhance assertiveness, conflict resolution techniques, and communication strategies among teachers to promote their overall satisfaction at the workplace.

YWORDS Assertiveness, Job Satisfaction, Teaching, Universities

Introduction

Job satisfaction is vital for teachers as it assists them in reaching their goals in today's competitive environment. In the same way, assertiveness has great value in the modern educational system. The benefits of assertiveness in education for teachers are well-researched, improving student participation and stronger teacher-student relationships, as supported by several research studies (Parray et al., 2020). Satisfaction with one's work is a very important parameter of employee well-being within an institution, and the reason behind this is that it has the inherent capacity to work as a reliable predictor of various aspects of professional manners and ethics (Wartenberg et al., 2023).

Indeed, good teaching encompasses a diverse pattern of competencies such as the power of communication, assertiveness, and love of their job, and these characteristics are very important stimulants that help educators be more efficient in accomplishing their roles, which in turn leads to an improvement in their professionalism and eventually impacts the entire educational scenario (Skaalvik, 2017). In addition, Fulmer and Ployhart (2014) note that developing positive attitudes and participating in constructive activities regarding one's job and its elements could be regarded as signs of job satisfaction. In addition, Mayer et al. (2015) characterized assertiveness as the ability to articulate opinions and rights in a non-threatening manner with integrity and precision without disrespecting others. Hence, the proactive nature of assertive behavior is seen in Flynn and Ames (2007), where individuals engage in the behavior by always seeking common ground with others for mutual understanding and harmonious living without adversarial interactions. Furthermore, the definition of assertiveness developed by Butt et al. (2018) refers to the ability to openly and expressively communicate one's emotions, beliefs, and opinions without offending or violating the rights of others. At this point, Tannous (2015) indicated that assertiveness

becomes a critical aspect that has significant effects on personal and professional affairs. Additionally, assertiveness provides superior strength.

The strength of teaching is the commitment of teachers to their jobs, which gives them strength to fight the challenges and motivates them to persist in the process of self-improvement. Thus, it turns out to be a major source of positive experiences that allow teachers to find their place in the workplace and perform tasks with a sense of success. (Danish et al., 2024). Following this, Shafiq et al. (2015) believe that assertiveness does not simply refer to a standalone organizational feature or method but rather is an attitude adopted by individuals towards others, with the person's inner confidence level being a major determinant. Furthermore, Karatut et al. (2021) specified that assertiveness could probably be conceptualized as a characteristic within the realm of interpersonal connections that emphasizes an individual's boundaries and exhibits robust self-assurance, effectively articulating their convictions and ambitions. Additionally, assertiveness facilitates the maintenance of a peaceful equilibrium between one's demands, authenticity, and receptiveness to the emotions of others. In the same way, assertive behavior helps to create environments for positive connections with others and enhances the success of our social interactions, resulting in relationships that are more satisfying to the individual. (Oana & Ona, 2019).

Hence, El-Bialy et al. (2015) argued that assertiveness and job happiness are two significant aspects of teachers that directly affect the efficacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and its outcomes. Indeed, an assertive teacher knows how to excel in confidently and forcefully expressing one's thoughts, directions, and viewpoints, as well as caring for and developing an appreciation for the opinions of others. (Lane et al., 2006). Academics' work joy drives their devotion and enthusiasm for the institution they work for. Likewise, assertive teachers possess the ability to confidently and clearly express their opinions, actively participate in generating new ideas, establish roles and rights within the educational setting, and respond to evaluations in a deliberate and problem-solving manner. The absence of assertiveness hinders the efficacy of interpersonal interactions, hence lowering beneficial working relationships. Satisfaction at work tends to be an element that affects success in all forms of employment. The researchers completed a thorough review of the previous research and figured out a limited number of studies that explored the correlation between assertiveness and job satisfaction among teachers. Several studies conducted in Pakistan have examined the association between these two characteristics; however, their emphasis has been restricted. Job satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of several positive and negative factors associated with a profession that impact a teacher's overall sense of well-being. Therefore, the researchers planned to do more examinations on this subject. The investigation's subject matter could potentially provide vital insights that may serve as inspiration for scholars and others to make significant contributions toward improving the quality of education. Teachers have a high frequency of work-related issues, so implementing assertive communication, conflict resolution, and efficient classroom management techniques at educational institutions may cultivate a peaceful and productive work environment for instructors, leading to positive outcomes for the holistic progress of students and the institution. The main objective of the research was to establish the correlation between assertiveness and work satisfaction among instructors at higher education institutions.

Literature Review

Assertiveness plays a key role in enhancing job satisfaction. It allows individuals to communicate their emotions, thoughts, convictions, and requirements openly and honestly without violating the rights of others (Thomas, 2018). In the same manner, Yaffee and Kark (2011) proposed that satisfaction in any organization motivates stronger personnel who are both productive and motivated. A remarkable decrease in complaints, grievances, turnover, termination, and absenteeism, and a substantial improvement in punctuality and morale,

are anticipated. Additionally, Asi Karakaş & Okanlı (2015) discovered that job and career satisfaction are linked to understanding assertiveness responsibilities, resulting in higher satisfaction levels in both job and career domains. In this study, El-Bialy et al. (2015) evaluated the levels of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and assertiveness among 159 faculty members from the Schools of Nursing at Alexandria University. A significant positive link was observed between assertiveness and work satisfaction, as evidenced by the data. In the research survey by Machado-Taylor et al. (2010), a significant and positive relationship between the degree of self-assurance and work satisfaction was observed as a whole. Similarly, Gul et al. (2012), in recently done research in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan, observed the intricate interrelation between self-esteem and assertiveness among professionals. The preliminary data revealed a considerable association between nurses' level of assertiveness and job satisfaction. Besides this, Yogaranee (2016) highlighted this in a study at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, where a study was being undertaken on the level of assertiveness in teachers. With the use of an ex-post facto research approach, a clear and strong visible link between an assertive attitude and an individual's self-esteem, by the investigators. The research noted varieties of assertions in working-class behavior; for example, some individuals behaved aggressively while others showed the passive side of behaviors. Further, there are general demographic gaps between people who provided aggressive behaviors and those who did not. The above insights reveal the depth of the connection between assertiveness, personhood, and demographic characteristics in an organizational setting. Additionally, it is of interest to mention the result of the methodological approach led by Zadeh and Hashemi (2017), which indicates that assertive expression toward satisfaction holds an effective position as a general measure of overall satisfaction in a workplace. Also, Hamouda et al. (2018) analyzed a profound study of 225 nursing professionals across various departments at Benha University Hospital to ascertain the relationship between assertiveness and work satisfaction. The findings were explicit: when employees exhibited assertiveness, they had a higher level of work satisfaction than other workers. Moreover, research done by Karakas in 2015 showed assertiveness had a positive effect not merely on job satisfaction but also on clarity of work roles, work satisfaction, and career satisfaction, which is also of great significance. Among other studies, the Gilman Jackson Nyamubi (2017) research horizons were expanded in Tanzania and focused on the teaching employment satisfaction of teachers, discovering a positive linkage between the two factors.

Material and Methods

A correlational research design was employed to perform the current study. The objective of this research was to evaluate the correlation between assertiveness and work satisfaction among educators in public-sector organizations. The study population comprised three hundred and eleven (311) male and female teachers from diverse departments, such as psychology, sociology, education, political science, history, and economics, within the faculty of social sciences at five public sector universities. These universities include Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Emerson University Multan, The Woman University Multan, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur from Bahawalpur, and Ghazi University D.G. Khan, all situated in the South Punjab region of Pakistan. A simple random sampling method was used to choose a sample of teachers from the population of teachers at the chosen public sector institutions. The sample consisted of 47% men and 53% females. The criteria used for determining the appropriate sample size were based on the recommendations put forth by Gay et al. (2012). In a similar vein, a sample size of ($n = 219$) was chosen from an entire population of ($N = 311$) using the same principles of sample selection. Consequently, the researcher identified valuable instruments that were pertinent to the requirements of the investigation. The research study was made up of two separate instruments, with a particular question intended exclusively for the participants, namely for the teachers. The construction of the essential instrument for data collection was facilitated by the use of the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule, constructed by Rathus (1973), and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), designed by Spector (1994), as model questionnaires. The current

research pursuit took into account certain demographic characteristics, including gender, department, and institution. The Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) had thirty-six items, which were used for assessing overall work satisfaction via the utilization of nine subscales. The aforementioned subscales include many aspects like compensation, career advancement, supplementary perks, variable incentives, oversight, colleagues, operational protocols, job characteristics, and interpersonal interaction. Participants were asked to evaluate the positive and negative elements of their employment using a scale that ranged from 1 to 6, indicating levels of agreement and disagreement. Greater scores on the Work Satisfaction Scale (JSS) were indicative of a higher level of work satisfaction. Comparably, the RAS scale included six distinct areas, with a total of 30 questions that are related to a variety of different aspects of assertiveness, namely communication, discipline, speaking up, cooperation, relationships, and social and social work. Before the commencement of data collection, it was important to take into account the reliability and validity of the implemented scales. To ensure the validation process, the questionnaires were sent to three educational specialists who had expertise in research and instrument creation within the subject to offer support. The surveys' reliability was also confirmed through a pilot study including a small sample of 50 teachers. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89 was deemed satisfactory for the JSS measure, while for the RAS measure, a value of 0.87 was obtained, above the widely acknowledged criterion of 0.70 as recommended by Hair et al. (2018). All ethical issues about the privacy and confidentiality of data were thoroughly taken into account. The researcher obtained permission from the heads of departments and arranged a convenient time with the instructors. Consequently, the researcher provided a comprehensive explanation of the study's objectives to all participating teachers before data collection to establish their trust and confidence. The sheets were coded to provide assurances about the secrecy of the data. The research did not address the ethical, moral, traditional, cultural, or religious considerations of the participants.

Data Analysis

With the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 edition, all the data and the findings were statistically examined. Furthermore, to explore the association between assertiveness and work satisfaction, regression analysis was used. Z scores were calculated to assess the variations among the various sample groups.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Correlation Matrix of Assertiveness and Job Satisfaction

	Assertiveness Mean	Job satisfaction Mean
Assertiveness Mean	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.546**
	N	219
Job satisfaction Mean	Pearson Correlation	.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	219

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings depicted in Table 1 indicate a (0.547), assertiveness and job satisfaction are positively correlated. This illustrates the 54.7% correlation between the two variables. This relationship's probability value further indicates that it is significant at the 1% level of significance. However; it is not shown in this correlation matrix that assertiveness influences job pleasure or that job satisfaction influences assertiveness. Regression analysis was used to gather data on the goal and provide a clear picture of the cause-and-effect relationship. The results align with the inquiry presented by Stead and Scamell (1981) and Aqsa et al. (2015) in which a positive connection was observed between the two factors it was suggested that assertiveness one of the greatest skills, which involves voicing your opinion, defending your opinion, as well as more obviously, offering all the things or the presentable

proofs, which you consider to be of great benefits to your position or your informed decision. It is this ability that is more than just a source of happiness; it makes you a better person in your future career pursuits.

Table 2
Regression Coefficients for Job Satisfaction and Assertiveness

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.272		.290	4.394
	Assertiveness Mean	.652	.058	.058	11.176
				.547	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction Mean

The results displayed in Table 2, highlight that there is an average rise in job satisfaction of 0.651 units for every unit increase in assertiveness. As the t-value is significant even at the 1% level of significance, the effect of assertiveness on job satisfaction is substantial.

Table 3
ANOVA for Job Satisfaction and Assertiveness

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Regression	55.822	1	55.823	123.*27	.000 ^b
Residual	130.47	292	.447		
Total	186.300	293			

a. Dependent Variable: Mean Job Satisfaction Score

b. Predictors: (Constant), Assertiveness Mean

* Significant at the 0.01.

Furthermore, Table 3 plays a key part in the findings from the study investigation, as it offers useful information obtained from the analysis of variance, ANOVA. This detailed analysis thoroughly confirms the importance of study assumptions. The F-statistic is a fundamental metric that helps to navigate the complexities of data analysis and highlights the overall significance of our presented hypotheses. Every item in this table signifies advancement in understanding of discoveries. Similarly, the significance level, specifically at the 1% threshold, highlights the probability value linked to F-statistic, similar to discovering valuable information among a large amount of data.

Table 4
Gender-wise Analysis of Assertiveness among Teachers

Sr. No.	Gender Category	N	Mean	SD	Z-score	Z- critical value	Decision
1.	Male	103	124.01	18.86	0.731	±1.96 ^a	Null hypothesis accepted
2.	Female	116	122.60	14.17			

(a) The chosen threshold of significance is 5%.

The summary statistics provided in Table 4 include a mean, standard deviation, and z-statistic value, which was determined by comparing the means of male and female teachers, determined the 1.96 value of the Z-critical value from the Z-distribution table. At a threshold for significance of 5%, the difference between the means of males and females is considered insignificant since the calculated z-score is lower than the crucial value. Meanwhile, The disparity in means indicates that male instructors exhibit more assertiveness than female educators. It was confirmed by research presented by Thomas (2018) that 120 psychologists in Kerala are deeply controlled and satisfied with any domain but the males occupied the top position than the females. Similarly, Özşaker and Adsız's

investigation reinforces the hypothesis that men are more dominant than their given sex, women. Therefore, a study by Chandler et al. (1978) demonstrates that on some occasions women were even more violent than men. The traditional role of men in society where they have key positions is now modified by introducing a new direction.

Table 5
Gender-wise Analysis of Job Satisfaction among Teachers

Sr. No.	Gender Category	N	Mean	SD	Z-score	Z- critical value	Decision
1.	Male	103	138.44	24.77	2.96	±1.96 ^a	The null hypothesis is rejected indicating a significant difference
2.	Female	116	130.37	22.48			

(a) The chosen threshold of significance is 5%.

The summary statistics provided in Table 4 include a mean, standard deviation, and z-statistic value, which was determined by comparing the means of male and female teachers, the determined 1.96 Z-critical value from the Z-distribution table. At the 5% level of significance, the difference in the means of male and female teachers is significant since the computed z-score is higher than its critical value. The difference in means, however, shows that the sample group of male instructors is more satisfied with their jobs than the sample group of female teachers. In contrast to conventional gender conventions, current research provides insight into an alternative viewpoint on work satisfaction among educators. A research work by Om et al. (2018) indicated that while women in academia had more work satisfaction than men they primarily worked in different positions. These published studies disagree with the stereotype about men, which holds the truth that men are supposed to be the main breadwinners.

Conclusions

The main intent of the study's design was to examine the correlation between assertiveness and work satisfaction among university teachers. Instructors are widely acknowledged for playing a vital role in the educational process. It is essential that they feel contented with their teaching work since satisfied instructors significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the education program. The study's results indicate that instructors' assertiveness significantly influences their work happiness. The analysis indicated a highly significant positive association between assertiveness and job satisfaction. Put simply, instructors who possess a greater level of assertiveness have a better degree of work satisfaction. The study also indicated that these findings primarily stem from the ability of teachers with a high level of assertiveness to effectively navigate their professional networks, thereby overcoming obstacles that exist in their career progression, in contrast to those with a low level of assertiveness. Furthermore, the findings about the influence of gender on assertiveness and satisfaction with employment capacities suggest that a person's gender plays a key role in determining the degree of contentment and assertiveness in the workplace. The research findings indicated that men exhibited higher levels of work satisfaction than females at universities. Furthermore, the level of job satisfaction among institutional educators is variable and could vary depending on the environment and conditions. Demographic characteristics, such as gender, have a substantial impact on work satisfaction. In addition to educating teachers on the importance of expressing their viewpoints, higher-education administrators have the opportunity to arrange assertiveness training courses or stimulate the development of faculty member's ability to communicate their opinions diplomatically. To properly deal with the complex interactions and improve the general welfare of teachers, it is crucial to do further research and provide such opportunities that explicitly concentrate on assertiveness training and workplace regulations.

Suggestions for future researchers

For further study in this area, the following suggestions are suggested.

1. Since assertiveness and job satisfaction may differ across cultures, future data collection must encompass individuals of different ages as well as cultural backgrounds.

2. A significant extension to the current research could be the execution of follow-up studies to track job satisfaction and assertiveness levels among the higher education teachers who participated in this study.

3. It is imperative to assess assertiveness and job satisfaction in tandem with other pertinent attributes such as job commitment and performance in the workplace.

Recommendations

1. The strategies and programs to enhance the confidence and assertiveness of teachers might be useful for better satisfaction on the job. The support system and role models being there to offer guidance could form the basis for more female teachers to triumph.
2. Address gender disparities by promoting gender equality initiatives, providing tailored support for female teachers, and offering flexible work arrangements to improve job satisfaction.
3. The main drivers of lower job satisfaction levels among female teachers and the establishment of measures to address this can solve issues.

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