Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction: A study on Saudi Arabia Universities

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Abstract. High productivity and efficiency have always been the goals of an organization. In order to achieve the goals, having highly satisfied employees is a must. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction among academic staff in Saudi Arabia universities. One hundred and seventeen respondents were chosen for this study. The results of this study revealed that there is a negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. This study has recommended that educational leaders at Saudi Universities should pay more attention to factors that influence employees' job satisfaction. The study also suggests further works to include other factors such work-family conflict, role ambiguity, and overload work.

Keywords: Role Conflict, Job Satisfaction, Saudi Arabia, Academic Staff.

1. Introduction

Universities, which are the most available sources of knowledge, play a vital role in the development of a country's economy and social well-being. In order to complete the vital role, universities need to retain and attract high quality academic staff. Skilful and knowledgeable academic personnel are important [1]. This is because they are responsible for conducting high quality teaching and research. They are also required to compete in the fast-changing environment, where everyday there is a huge inflow of new information. To complete the crucial role in developing a country's economy and social well-being, university management stresses on academic excellence, competitiveness, and responsibility. Stressed academics were reported to be lacking in organizational commitment and thus, intention to leave the university was higher among them [2].

Many countries in the world allocate more than 20% of their budget to promote and develop their education system and Saudi Arabia is not isolated in doing this. At the moment, Saudi is working towards improving the quality of education. No matter how good the improvement is, it will be useless if the job satisfaction of the academic staff is not taken into consideration. Therefore, it is very important for the management of universities to pay more attention to job satisfaction among academic staff.

According to Acker [3], it is very important for organizations to consider the employees' satisfaction level, if they would want to provide high quality services. This is because satisfied employees are productive [4,5]. Thus, productive employees would result in high quality services or products by the organizations. Job satisfaction has been found to affect job performance [6,7]. Job satisfaction can be contributed by many factors. Studies suggest that job stress is one of the factors that affect job satisfaction (8). Job stress can be caused by several stressors. Due to the multiple roles, role conflict is considered one of the stressors. It has a significant negative impact on job satisfaction [9]. Employees in organizations are subjected to conflict, and the impact of conflict is unavoidable, either positive or negative [10].

Despite the fact that many studies on the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction have been carried out worldwide, no study is yet done at Saudi universities. Therefore, there is a need for the current study to be conducted. This study will examine the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction among academic staff in Saudi universities.

2. Literature Review

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2.1 Role Conflict

When the employee is confronted by multiple roles, he or she experiences role conflict [11]. Role conflict takes place when there are different polices or demands which can cause employees dissatisfaction and thus, decreased organizational performance [12]. Rizzo et al. [13], described role conflict as the incompatibility of requirements and expectations from the role.

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been extensively studied in organizational behavior [7]. It is one of the topics that has attracted attention of both practitioners and researchers [14]. This is due to its impact on productivity [15]. Porter et al. [16], described job satisfaction as one's reaction against his/her job or organization.

2.3 Link between Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction

Several studies have tried to examine the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. A study among physical education teachers in Greece explored negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction [17]. A study of professional accountants found that role conflict was associated with low job satisfaction and high intention to leave [18]. Other studies also found that the role conflict experienced by employees could lead to job dissatisfaction [19,20]. Similarly, Theodorakis et al. [21], found that role conflict was negatively related to job satisfaction.

Based on the above evidences, it could be concluded that role conflict is shown to be negatively associated with job satisfaction. Therefore, the Hypothesis is formulated as follow:

Hypothesis: There is a negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Sample and Procedure

The population of this study is the academic staff from different universities in the city of Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. One hundred and fifty questionnaires were sent to the respondents via email. One hundred and nineteen questionnaires were returned with the response rate of 79.33 %.

3.2 Measures

Role conflict was measured by using eight items developed by Rizzo et al. [13]. Job satisfaction was measured by using Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire(MSQ) developed by Weiss et al. [22]. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was adopted to evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaires. The cronbach's alpha coefficient of Role conflict was 0.81 and job satisfaction was .87, which indicate that the instruments had sufficient internal reliability.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data was gathered using SPSS version 19. Pearson correlation (r) was performed to determine the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction.

4. Results

In table 1, correlation analysis test has revealed that role conflict is negatively correlated with job satisfaction (r= -.288, p<0.01) . The result show that an increase in role conflict leads to decrease in job satisfaction. This result support hypothesis of this study.

Table 1: Correlation

		Job satisfaction	Role conflict
Js3	Pearson Correlation	1	-.288[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117

new6	Pearson Correlation	-.288[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

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

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the this study was to examine the relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction among academic staff at Saudi Arabia universities. The finding of the study revealed that there was a negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. The finding of the this study was consistent with previous studies [18, 19, 20, 21, 22]. This study revealed that the findings found in some society might be evident in a different society. However, Employees under excessive role conflict tend to be less satisfied with their jobs. Therefore, Educational leaders should pay more attention to the factors that can lead to dissatisfaction such as role conflict. The work procedures should be clear and every employee should know his role in the organization. However, further studies are recommended to include other variables that can lead to less job satisfaction such as work-family conflict and role ambiguity, overload work.

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