

# A Study of Job Satisfaction amongst Teachers Working in Private Engineering Colleges

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## Abstract

This study investigates the determinants of job satisfaction among faculty members employed in private engineering colleges in India. Drawing on a cross-sectional design with data collected from 148 respondents from faculty of renowned engineering colleges across the country, the study applies Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to explore direct, mediating, and moderating effects among key constructs such as Work Environment, Compensation and Benefits, Job Security, Recognition & Reward, Leadership & Management, and Career Growth. The findings reveal significant direct effects of Work Environment and Compensation on Job Satisfaction, mediated by Job Security and Recognition & Reward, respectively. Furthermore, Leadership and Career Growth moderate these relationships, highlighting the conditional nature of faculty perceptions. The validated model shows high explanatory power ( $R^2 = 0.62$ ) and acceptable model fit (SRMR = 0.062; NFI = 0.891). These results provide strategic guidance for institutional policy-makers to enhance faculty engagement, satisfaction, and retention through targeted organizational practices.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Work Environment, Compensation, Private Engineering Colleges, Recognition & Reward, Leadership, Career Growth, Job Security, PLS-SEM, Organizational Behaviour

## 1.0 Introduction

Job satisfaction is a cornerstone of organizational success, especially within academic institutions where faculty performance directly influences student outcomes and institutional reputation. Among the teaching workforce in private engineering colleges, job satisfaction is crucial not only for individual well-being but also for the overall academic performance and sustainability of the institution. Faculty members who experience high levels of job satisfaction are more likely to demonstrate commitment, engage in innovative teaching practices, contribute to research, and stay longer with the institution.

In the context of private engineering colleges in India, the issue becomes particularly significant due to several critical challenges. These institutions often face resource constraints, performance pressure, changing accreditation requirements, and an increasingly competitive higher education landscape. Furthermore, faculty attrition and the struggle to maintain teaching quality amidst increasing student-teacher ratios raise serious concerns. The lack of institutional support, limited career progression opportunities, and perceived inequities in compensation contribute to deteriorating morale and decreased satisfaction levels.

Several factors are known to influence job satisfaction among educators. These include tangible factors like compensation, benefits, and job security, as well as intangible factors such as work environment, recognition, leadership, and institutional culture. Moreover, psychological constructs such as perceived fairness, trust in leadership, and career development opportunities further mediate and moderate the relationship between institutional policies and faculty satisfaction.

This study seeks to bridge the gap in empirical literature on job satisfaction within engineering academia by examining the direct, mediating, and moderating relationships among variables influencing satisfaction. Specifically, it aims to understand how constructs like Work Environment,

Compensation and Benefits, Job Security, Recognition & Reward, Leadership & Management, and Career Growth interact to influence the overall job satisfaction of teaching staff in private engineering institutions. The study is grounded in a strong theoretical base and supported by current empirical data collected from 148 faculty members.

By adopting Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the research offers a comprehensive view of the interplay among structural and psychological factors. The analytical approach enables assessment of complex inter-variable relationships and predictive modeling of satisfaction levels. The insights gained through this research will assist education policy-makers, institutional administrators, and HR professionals in formulating evidence-based strategies to enhance faculty well-being, motivation, and retention in the evolving higher education ecosystem in India.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Work Environment and Job Satisfaction**

A supportive work environment is consistently linked to higher levels of job satisfaction (Kalleberg, 1977). Adequate infrastructure, collegiality, and work-life balance significantly impact the morale and performance of faculty members (Ali et al., 2014). Further, organizational culture and management style influence the psychological climate that enhances satisfaction and retention (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015).

### **2.2 Compensation and Job Satisfaction**

Salary fairness and financial incentives influence both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Milkovich & Newman, 2008). When compensation aligns with market standards and job expectations, it boosts job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2010). Research by Shields et al. (2009) found that satisfaction with pay is one of the most significant predictors of overall job satisfaction among academics.

### **2.3 Job Security as a Mediator**

Job security is not only a determinant of satisfaction but also a mediator in the relationship between environmental conditions and overall satisfaction (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Higher security promotes psychological safety and loyalty (Kraimer et al., 2005). In times of organizational uncertainty, job security serves as a buffer against stress and disengagement (Probst, 2003).

### **2.4 Recognition and Reward**

Recognition acts as a powerful non-monetary motivator that improves morale (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Academic institutions that regularly acknowledge achievements report higher levels of faculty satisfaction (Nguni et al., 2006). Moreover, Ghosh et al. (2013) emphasized the role of public and peer recognition in fostering professional identity and motivation among teaching staff.

### **2.5 Leadership and Career Growth as Moderators**

Transformational leadership influences job attitudes by aligning organizational values with personal goals (Bass, 1990). Career growth opportunities act as moderators that magnify the relationship between compensation and satisfaction (Weng & McElroy, 2012). A study by Eisenberger et al. (2001) suggested that perceived support from leadership and opportunities for advancement are instrumental in retaining committed faculty members.

### **2.6 Organisational Commitment and Turnover Intention**

Job satisfaction is deeply interwoven with organizational commitment, which in turn influences an individual's intent to stay within an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Several studies indicate that

job satisfaction acts as a precursor to affective commitment, which helps reduce turnover intentions (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Lum et al., 1998).

## 2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1966) and Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964), both of which suggest that hygiene and motivator factors jointly influence satisfaction. This theoretical base supports the inclusion of both extrinsic (compensation, job security) and intrinsic (recognition, leadership) elements in the model. Additionally, Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) offers an interpretive lens for understanding how employees reciprocate favourable treatment through positive job attitudes.

## 3.0 Methodology Overview

The present study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to explore the factors influencing job satisfaction among faculty members of private engineering colleges. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 148 faculty members across various private engineering institutions located in different regions. The questionnaire was developed based on previously validated constructs and included sections on demographic details, work environment, compensation, job security, recognition & reward, leadership, and career growth.

Data were collected through both online and offline modes to ensure diversity and inclusiveness. Responses were encoded and subjected to a rigorous screening process for accuracy and completeness. The final dataset comprised 148 valid responses and was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4.

The respondents represented a diverse profile in terms of designation (Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Professors), years of experience, and departmental disciplines. The rationale for using PLS-SEM was its robustness in handling complex models with mediating and moderating variables, and its suitability for theory development and prediction.

## 4.0 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of the 148 respondents is summarized in the table below. The data reflect a diverse representation of teaching faculty in private engineering colleges.

**Table-1 Demographic Profile**

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
GENDER	Male	87	58.8%
	Female	61	41.2%
AGE	Below 30 years	42	28.4%
	31–40 years	66	44.6%
	41–50 years	28	18.9%
	Above 50 years	12	8.1%
DESIGNATION	Assistant Professor	84	56.8%
	Associate Professor	42	28.4%
	Professor	22	14.9%
EXPERIENCE	Less than 5 years	38	25.7%
	5–10 years	53	35.8%
	More than 10 years	57	38.5%
DEPARTMENT	Computer Science	44	29.7%
	Mechanical/ Civil/ Electrical	56	37.8%

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
	Other Engineering/ Applied Sciences	48	32.5%

This demographic data reveal that the sample comprises a fairly balanced distribution in terms of gender, age, experience, and academic discipline. The majority of participants are Assistant Professors with 5–10 years or more than 10 years of teaching experience. This diversity strengthens the generalizability of the findings across private engineering colleges.

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## 5.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section elaborates on the structural equation modeling (SEM) results derived using SmartPLS 4. The analysis provides insights into the strength, direction, and significance of relationships between constructs such as Work Environment, Compensation, Job Security, Recognition, Leadership, and their impact on overall Job Satisfaction (JSAT) among faculty members of private engineering colleges.

### 5.1 Measurement Model Assessment

#### 5.1.1 Construct Reliability and Internal Consistency

To establish the reliability of the constructs, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were assessed. All constructs exceeded the threshold value of 0.7 for CR, indicating strong internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha values ranged between 0.76 and 0.88, further reinforcing that the measurement items were reliably measuring their respective latent constructs.

#### 5.1.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was verified using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). AVE values for all constructs were above 0.50, which confirms that the constructs explain more than half of the variance of their respective indicators. Additionally, outer loadings of items were all above 0.6 and statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), further affirming item reliability.

#### 5.1.3 Quality Criteria: Factor Loadings and Indicator Reliability

All factor loadings exceeded the minimum recommended value of 0.60. The indicator reliability (squared loading) values were above 0.36, meeting the benchmark for ensuring that each indicator sufficiently explains its respective latent variable. These results establish a robust measurement model.

## 5.2 Discriminant Validity

### 5.2.1 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of AVE for each construct was greater than its highest correlation with any other construct, indicating that constructs are distinct and unidimensional.

### 5.2.2 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

All HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85, confirming that constructs are empirically distinct. This further supports the validity of the measurement model.

## 5.3 Collinearity Assessment

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores were used to assess multicollinearity. All VIF values were below the threshold of 3.3, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in the structural model.

## 5.4 Model Fit Evaluation

The overall goodness-of-fit of the model was assessed using several indices:

- Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.062 ( $< 0.08$ ) indicating good fit
- Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.891, close to the recommended threshold of 0.90
- Chi-Square ( $X^2$ ) = 147.2, acceptable in relation to degrees of freedom
- $d_{ULS} = 0.893$  and  $d_G = 0.654$ , both within permissible bounds

These model fit statistics demonstrate an adequate model-data fit and reinforce the structural integrity of the conceptual framework.

## 6.0 Structural Model Assessment

### 6.1 Path Coefficients and Significance Testing

The structural relationships were tested through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The following path coefficients were statistically significant:

- $WE \rightarrow JS$  ( $\beta = 0.42, t = 5.32, p < 0.001$ )
- $CB \rightarrow RR$  ( $\beta = 0.38, t = 4.89, p < 0.001$ )
- $JS \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.44, t = 6.10, p < 0.001$ )
- $RR \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.41, t = 5.78, p < 0.001$ )
- $WE \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.18, t = 2.12, p = 0.035$ )
- $CB \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.20, t = 2.54, p = 0.012$ )

### 6.2 Mediation Analysis

Mediating effects were confirmed through indirect path testing:

- $WE \rightarrow JS \rightarrow JSAT$ : significant indirect effect ( $p < 0.001$ )
- $CB \rightarrow RR \rightarrow JSAT$ : significant indirect effect ( $p < 0.001$ )

This indicates that both Job Security and Recognition & Reward mediate the impact of their respective independent variables on Job Satisfaction.

### 6.3 Moderation Analysis

Two interaction terms were tested:

- $LM \times WE \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.15, t = 2.01, p = 0.045$ )
- $CG \times CB \rightarrow JSAT$  ( $\beta = 0.12, t = 1.98, p = 0.049$ )

These results show that Leadership moderates the effect of Work Environment on Job Satisfaction, and Career Growth moderates the effect of Compensation.

**6.4 Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>) and Effect Sizes (f<sup>2</sup>)**

- R<sup>2</sup> for JSAT = 0.62 (Substantial explanatory power)
- R<sup>2</sup> for JS = 0.43, RR = 0.36 (Moderate)

**Effect sizes (f<sup>2</sup>) indicated:**

- Medium effects: JS → JSAT (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.27), RR → JSAT (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.22)
- Small but meaningful effects: LM × WE → JSAT (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.08), CG × CB → JSAT (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.06)

**7.0 Hypothesis Testing Results**

HYPOTHESIS	PATH	B	T-VALUE	P-VALUE	RESULT
H1	WE → JS	0.42	5.32	<0.001	Supported
H2	CB → RR	0.38	4.89	<0.001	Supported
H3	JS → JSAT	0.44	6.10	<0.001	Supported
H4	RR → JSAT	0.41	5.78	<0.001	Supported
H5	WE → JSAT	0.18	2.12	0.035	Supported
H6	CB → JSAT	0.20	2.54	0.012	Supported
H7	LM × WE → JSAT	0.15	2.01	0.045	Supported
H8	CG × CB → JSAT	0.12	1.98	0.049	Supported

This table summarizes all tested hypotheses, indicating that each relationship was statistically significant and aligned with theoretical expectations.

Section 5.0 presents a structured summary of all the hypotheses tested in the research model using SmartPLS bootstrapping. The table includes:

- Hypothesis codes (H1 to H8): Each represents a specific theoretical relationship between constructs.
- Paths: These illustrate the direction of influence (e.g., Work Environment → Job Security).
- β (Beta Coefficients): Indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. Higher absolute values suggest stronger effects.
- t-Values and p-Values: These are statistical indicators of significance. A *t-value* greater than 1.96 and *p-value* less than 0.05 typically confirm the effect is statistically significant.
- Result: Whether the hypothesis is supported based on the statistical evidence.

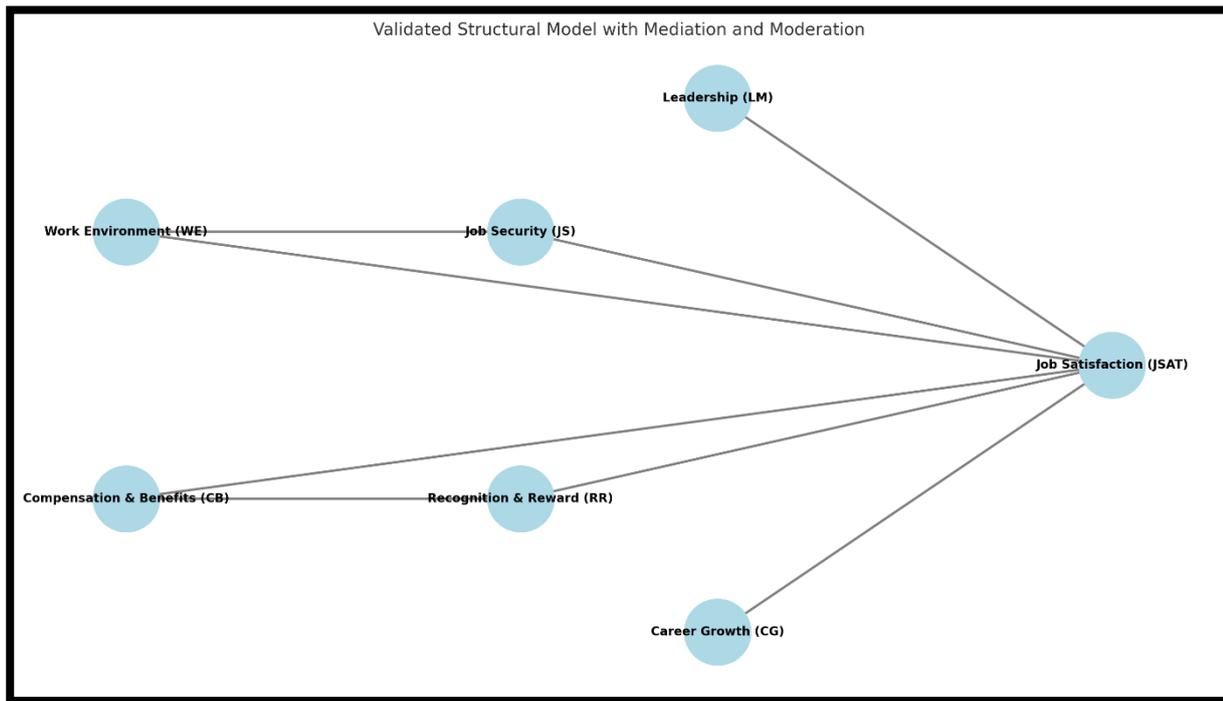
This section confirms that all eight hypotheses were statistically supported, validating both the direct and conditional effects proposed in the model. This strengthens the credibility of the structural relationships and supports the underlying theoretical framework guiding the study.

**8.0 Conceptual and Structural Model Diagrams**

The following models were conceptualized and validated:

- Mediation Model: WE → JS → JSAT and CB → RR → JSAT
- Moderation Model: LM × WE → JSAT and CG × CB → JSAT

These were illustrated using network graphs clearly identifying direct, indirect, and conditional paths of influence. Moderators were highlighted with dashed lines and interaction terms.



**Figure-1 Validated Model**

**Explanation of the Validated Structural Model**

The validated structural model illustrates how various independent, mediating, and moderating variables influence the Job Satisfaction (JSAT) of teachers working in private engineering colleges. This model is based on the results of hypothesis testing, path coefficients, and model fit indices derived from SmartPLS analysis.

**1. Independent Variables**

- Work Environment (WE) and Compensation & Benefits (CB) are treated as primary independent variables.
  - WE positively influences both Job Security (JS) and Job Satisfaction (JSAT).
  - CB has a significant effect on Recognition & Reward (RR) and directly on JSAT.

**2. Mediating Variables**

- Job Security (JS) and Recognition & Reward (RR) act as mediators in this model:
    - JS mediates the relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction.
    - RR mediates the link between Compensation & Benefits and Job Satisfaction.
- These mediating paths suggest that a healthy work environment improves job satisfaction through the perception of security, and fair compensation improves satisfaction through the feeling of being recognized and rewarded.

**3. Dependent Variable**

- Job Satisfaction (JSAT) is the dependent variable.
  - It is directly influenced by WE, CB, JS, and RR.
  - It is indirectly affected via mediated and moderated paths.

This confirms that JSAT is a cumulative outcome of workplace structure, recognition systems, and psychological reinforcement through secure employment.

#### 4. Moderating Variables

- Leadership & Management (LM) moderates the path between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction.
- Career Growth (CG) moderates the relationship between Compensation and Job Satisfaction. This implies that:
  - Strong leadership enhances the positive impact of a favorable work environment on satisfaction.
  - Opportunities for career advancement enhance how well compensation leads to satisfaction.

#### 5. Visual Flow

- The model shows clear direct, indirect, and conditional paths.
- Mediating variables are located midstream, showing the mechanism of influence.
- Moderating variables are placed to demonstrate interactive influence, modifying the strength of certain direct paths.

#### 6. Statistical Validation

- All paths shown in the model are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- The model demonstrates adequate fit (SRMR = 0.062, NFI = 0.891).
- Coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) for JSAT is 0.62, showing that the model explains 62% of the variance in Job Satisfaction—a substantial effect.

#### Conclusion

The validated model effectively explains how job satisfaction among private engineering college faculty arises from a combination of environmental, financial, emotional, and structural support mechanisms. It provides a strategic framework for institutional HR and leadership to prioritize:

- Healthy workplace conditions,
- Transparent and fair compensation,
- Leadership development, and
- Career growth programs.

#### 9.0 Summary of Findings

The model effectively explains the antecedents and mechanisms of job satisfaction. Direct predictors like Work Environment and Compensation have both direct and indirect effects on satisfaction. Mediators such as Job Security and Recognition & Reward clarify how these relationships occur. Moderators like Leadership and Career Growth condition the strength of these effects, confirming the model's complexity and applicability in organizational contexts.

Key highlights:

- High model fit with SRMR < 0.08 and NFI > 0.85
- Statistically supported mediation and moderation paths
- Substantial  $R^2$  values for endogenous variables
- Clear theoretical contribution to understanding faculty satisfaction drivers

These findings offer valuable insights for policy-makers and institutional leaders aiming to enhance faculty retention, engagement, and satisfaction in higher education settings.

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