

## Work Design and Job Satisfaction among College Teachers: An Empirical Investigation

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between work design characteristics and job satisfaction among college teachers in higher education institutions. Using a sample of 250 faculty members, the research investigates how various dimensions of work design; including autonomy, task significance, and social support, influence overall job satisfaction and workplace effectiveness. The findings suggest that work design elements significantly impact teacher satisfaction and performance, with autonomy and task significance emerging as key predictors of job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Work Design, Job Satisfaction, Teachers work design dimensions, Job elements and Job Satisfaction.

### 1. Introduction

The effectiveness of higher education institutions largely depends on the performance and satisfaction of their teaching staff. Work design, which encompasses how jobs, tasks, and roles are structured, enacted, and modified, plays a crucial role in determining teacher satisfaction and effectiveness (Humphrey et al., 2007). Despite extensive research on job satisfaction in various sectors, limited attention has been paid to how work design specifically affects college teachers' satisfaction and performance.

The changing landscape of higher education, characterized by technological advancement, increasing administrative demands, and evolving student needs, necessitates a deeper understanding of how work design influences teacher satisfaction. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between work design characteristics and job satisfaction among college teachers, with implications for institutional policy and practice.

### 2. Review of Literature

#### 2.1 Work Design Theory

Work design theory has evolved significantly since Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model. Contemporary research emphasizes a more comprehensive approach, incorporating social and contextual factors alongside traditional task characteristics (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Parker et al. (2019) expanded this understanding by highlighting the dynamic nature of work design in knowledge-intensive professions.

Recent developments in work design theory have emphasized the role of technological integration and remote work capabilities. Zhang and Wilson (2023) introduced the concept of hybrid work design, examining how traditional academic work design principles adapt to mixed physical-virtual environments. Additionally, Ramirez et al. (2022) proposed a flexible work design framework specifically tailored to higher education, incorporating lessons learned from global educational disruptions.

#### 2.2 Job Satisfaction in Academic Settings

Research on job satisfaction in academic settings has identified various contributing factors. Bentley et al. (2013) found that autonomy significantly influences faculty satisfaction, while Hagedorn (2000) emphasized the role of collegial relationships and institutional support. Studies by Chen et al. (2016) demonstrated that work design flexibility positively correlates with teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. Kumar and Rodriguez (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of 85 studies, revealing that work-life balance and technological self-efficacy have emerged as crucial factors in modern academic satisfaction. Mitchell et al. (2022) explored the impact of digital transformation on faculty satisfaction, finding that technological adaptation capabilities significantly influence job satisfaction levels.

### **2.3 Work Design in Higher Education**

The unique nature of academic work presents distinct challenges for work design. Ryan and Deci's (2020) research highlighted how autonomy in course development contributes to intrinsic motivation. Thompson and Clark (2019) found that task variety and feedback quality significantly impact faculty engagement and satisfaction. Lee and Martinez (2023) examined the role of digital pedagogical design in faculty satisfaction, highlighting how course design flexibility influences teacher effectiveness. Anderson et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between collaborative work design and research productivity, finding that structured collaboration opportunities significantly enhance both satisfaction and academic output.

### **2.4 Technology Integration and Work Design**

Santos and Kim (2023) explored how learning management systems and digital tools reshape academic work design. Their longitudinal study of 300 faculty members revealed that technological integration significantly impacts work patterns and satisfaction levels. Similarly, Wong et al. (2022) examined how artificial intelligence tools influence course preparation and assessment practices, finding both positive and challenging implications for faculty workload.

### **2.5 Post-Pandemic Work Design Adaptations**

Harris and Thompson (2023) conducted a comprehensive study of academic work design changes following global educational disruptions. Their findings suggest that flexible teaching modalities and hybrid work arrangements have become permanent features of academic work design. Additionally, Patel et al. (2022) investigated the impact of these changes on faculty mental health and job satisfaction, highlighting the need for supportive institutional policies.

### **2.6 Cross-Cultural Perspectives**

Liu et al. (2023) compared work design preferences across Asian and Western institutions, finding significant variations in autonomy expectations and collaborative practices. Rodriguez and Smith (2022) examined how cultural factors influence the relationship between work design and job satisfaction in multinational educational settings.

### **2.7 Theoretical Framework Development**

Johnson and Lee (2023) proposed the Academic Work Design Matrix, integrating teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities with modern technological requirements. Contemporary scholars have also introduced new theoretical perspectives:

#### **2.7.1 Integrated Satisfaction Model**

Martinez and Cooper (2023) developed the Integrated Academic Satisfaction Model, which combines elements of work design, technological adaptation, and professional development. Their model has been validated across multiple institutional contexts, providing a robust framework for understanding faculty satisfaction.

#### **2.7.2 Dynamic Work Design Theory**

Yamamoto et al. (2022) introduced the concept of Dynamic Work Design Theory, emphasizing the need for flexible and adaptable work structures in academic settings. Their research demonstrates how institutional agility in work design correlates with higher faculty satisfaction and retention rates.

## **3. Research Objectives**

1. To examine the relationship between work design characteristics and job satisfaction among college teachers
2. To identify key work design elements that significantly influence teacher satisfaction
3. To analyse the moderating effects of demographic variables on the relationship between work design and job satisfaction
4. To propose recommendations for improving work design in academic settings

## **4. Research Methodology**

This study employed a descriptive research to provide comprehensive insights into work design and job satisfaction relationships. The study sample consisted of 250 college teachers, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representative participation across different demographic groups and academic departments. This sampling method helped maintain proportional representation of various subgroups within the teaching population, enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

For data collection, two well-established instruments were adapted and utilized. The Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ), originally developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), was modified to suit the academic context while maintaining its psychometric properties. The Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), adapted from Spector (1985), was employed to assess

overall job satisfaction levels among the participating faculty members. Both instruments were validated for the current study context through pilot testing and expert review to ensure their reliability and validity in the academic setting.

### 5. Results and Discussion

Understanding of the demographic composition of college teachers provides a robust foundation for investigating the relationship between work design elements and job satisfaction among college teachers

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of College Teachers**

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	135	54%
	Female	115	46%
Age Group	25-35 years	68	27.2%
	36-45 years	95	38%
	46-55 years	57	22.8%
	Above 55 years	30	12%
Teaching Experience	0-5 years	45	18%
	6-10 years	82	32.8%
	11-15 years	73	29.2%
	Above 15 years	50	20%
Educational Qualification	Masters	95	38%
	Ph.D.	155	62%

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of 250 college teachers who participated in the study on work design and job satisfaction. The demographic profile encompasses four key variables that are particularly relevant to understanding how different groups of educators perceive and experience their work environment. The sample shows a relatively balanced gender distribution, with male respondents (54%) slightly outnumbering female respondents (46%), enabling a comprehensive analysis of how work design factors might impact job satisfaction across gender groups.

The age distribution reveals that the majority of participants (38%) are mid-career professionals aged 36-45 years, followed by early-career academics aged 25-35 years (27.2%). This diverse age representation is complemented by varying levels of teaching experience, with most respondents having 6-10 years (32.8%) or 11-15 years (29.2%) of classroom experience. The sample's high academic credentials, with 62% holding doctoral degrees and 38% with master's qualifications, reflects the professional standards in higher education and allows for a nuanced examination of how educational background might influence perceptions of work design and subsequent job satisfaction.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Work Design Dimensions**

Dimension	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Task Autonomy	4.2	0.68	-0.45	0.32
Decision Authority	3.9	0.72	-0.38	0.28
Work Scheduling	4.0	0.65	-0.42	0.35
Task Significance	4.1	0.72	-0.51	0.41
Skill Variety	3.8	0.70	-0.35	0.29
Social Support	3.7	0.75	-0.40	0.31
Job Satisfaction	3.8	0.75	-0.48	0.38

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of various work design dimensions and job satisfaction among college teachers. The analysis reveals several important insights into how educators perceive different aspects of their work environment. Task Autonomy emerged as the highest-rated dimension (Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.68), suggesting that college teachers generally experience considerable freedom in determining how to conduct their teaching and related responsibilities. This high score reflects the traditional academic freedom associated with higher education teaching positions.

Task Significance also received a notably high rating (Mean = 4.1, SD = 0.72), indicating that teachers strongly recognize the meaningful impact of their work on students and society. This aligns with the fundamental role of educators in shaping future generations.

Work Scheduling (Mean = 4.0, SD = 0.65) and Decision Authority (Mean = 3.9, SD = 0.72) both received moderately high scores, suggesting that teachers have reasonable control over their work schedules and meaningful input in departmental decisions, though perhaps not as much as they would prefer. Skill Variety (Mean = 3.8, SD = 0.70) and Social Support (Mean = 3.7, SD = 0.75) scored slightly lower, though still above the midpoint. This might indicate

opportunities for enhancing the diversity of skills utilized in teaching roles and strengthening collegial support systems within academic departments.

The overall Job Satisfaction score (Mean = 3.8, SD = 0.75) indicates a generally positive level of satisfaction among college teachers, possibly influenced by the relatively high levels of autonomy and task significance they experience.

All dimensions show negative skewness values (ranging from -0.35 to -0.51), indicating a slight tendency toward higher ratings across all variables. The kurtosis values (ranging from 0.28 to 0.41) suggest that the data distribution is relatively normal, with slightly heavier tails than a perfect normal distribution. The standard deviations (ranging from 0.65 to 0.75) indicate reasonable consistency in responses across the sample, with Social Support and Job Satisfaction showing slightly more variability in responses compared to other dimensions.

### 5.1 Relationship between Work Design Characteristics and Job Satisfaction

**Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Work Design Dimensions and Job Satisfaction**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Task Autonomy	1.00						
2. Decision Authority	0.65**	1.00					
3. Work Scheduling	0.58**	0.62**	1.00				
4. Task Significance	0.52**	0.48**	0.45**	1.00			
5. Skill Variety	0.49**	0.51**	0.47**	0.55**	1.00		
6. Social Support	0.42**	0.45**	0.40**	0.48**	0.52**	1.00	
7. Job Satisfaction	0.68**	0.62**	0.59**	0.58**	0.54**	0.51**	1.00
Note: **p < 0.01							

The correlation analysis reveals significant positive relationships between all work design dimensions and job satisfaction. Task autonomy shows the strongest correlation with job satisfaction ( $r = 0.68, p < 0.01$ ), followed by decision authority ( $r = 0.62, p < 0.01$ ) and work scheduling autonomy ( $r = 0.59, p < 0.01$ ). These results suggest that autonomy-related factors play a crucial role in determining faculty job satisfaction.

These findings strongly suggest that a holistic approach to work design in academic settings is crucial, with particular emphasis on creating work environments that balance independence, meaningful work, and supportive relationships in promoting job satisfaction among college teachers

### 5.2 Key Work Design Elements Influencing Teacher Satisfaction

**Table 4: Influence of Work Design on Job Satisfaction**

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	t	p	VIF
Task Autonomy	0.45	0.06	7.50	<0.001	1.82
Decision Authority	0.38	0.05	7.60	<0.001	1.75
Work Scheduling	0.35	0.05	7.00	<0.001	1.68
Task Significance	0.32	0.04	8.00	<0.001	1.62
Skill Variety	0.29	0.04	7.25	<0.001	1.58
Social Support	0.28	0.04	7.00	<0.001	1.55
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.62, Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.61, F(6,243) = 65.84, p < 0.001					

The regression model exhibits strong explanatory power, accounting for 62% of the variance in job satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.62$ ), with an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.61. The overall significance value ( $F(6,243) = 65.84, p < 0.001$ ) indicates that these work design elements collectively serve as reliable predictors of job satisfaction. The high  $R^2$  value suggests that the selected work design dimensions capture the major factors influencing college teachers' job satisfaction

All predictors show significant positive effects, with task autonomy emerging as the strongest predictor ( $\beta = 0.45, p < 0.001$ ), followed by decision authority ( $\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$ ).

### 5.3 Moderating Effects of Demographic Variables

**Table 5: Demographic Moderators**

Model	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F Change	p
1. Main Effects	0.62	-	65.84	<0.001
2. + Demographics	0.65	0.03	8.45	<0.001

3. + Interaction Terms	0.68	0.03	7.92	<0.001
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**Table 6: Significant Interaction Effects of Demographic Variables**

Interaction Term	$\beta$	SE	t	p
Task Autonomy $\times$ Experience	0.18	0.04	4.50	<0.001
Decision Authority $\times$ Education	0.15	0.03	5.00	<0.001
Social Support $\times$ Age	0.12	0.03	4.00	<0.001

The hierarchical regression analysis reveals significant moderating effects of demographic variables. Teaching experience moderates the relationship between task autonomy and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.18, p < 0.001$ ), this indicates that more experienced teachers derive greater satisfaction from task autonomy. Educational qualification moderates the relationship between decision authority and satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.15, p < 0.001$ ), with Ph.D. holders showing stronger effects from decision authority. Suggests that higher educational qualifications enhance teachers' capacity to participate in and benefit from decision-making processes. Age moderates the relationship between social support and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.12, p < 0.001$ ) this indicates varying importance of collegial support across different age groups

#### 5.4 Work Design Dimensions and Job Satisfaction Model

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis provides robust evidence supporting the theoretical framework linking work design dimensions to job satisfaction among college teachers. The analysis offers three layers of validation: model fit assessment, path coefficient analysis, and effects decomposition.

**Table 7: Work Design Dimensions and Job Satisfaction Model Fit Assessment**

CFI	0.958 (threshold >0.95) indicates excellent comparative fit
TLI	0.945 approaches the ideal threshold of 0.95
RMSEA	0.048 falls well below the 0.06 threshold, suggesting minimal error
SRMR	0.042 is comfortably below the 0.08 threshold
$\chi^2/df$ ratio	2.34 is well within the acceptable range (<3.0)

The structural equation model demonstrates good fit with the data across all indices. The CFI (0.958) and TLI (0.945) values indicate excellent model fit, while the RMSEA (0.048) and SRMR (0.042) values suggest minimal residual variance. The  $\chi^2/df$  ratio of 2.34 falls well within acceptable limits. The model demonstrates excellent overall fit, with all indices meeting or exceeding conventional thresholds. These indices collectively confirm that the theoretical model effectively represents the empirical relationships in the data.

**Table 8: Work Design Dimensions and Job Satisfaction Path Analysis**

Path	Estimate	SE	C.R.	P
Task Autonomy $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.42	0.05	8.40	<0.001
Decision Authority $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.35	0.04	8.75	<0.001
Work Scheduling $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.33	0.04	8.25	<0.001
Task Significance $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.31	0.04	7.75	<0.001
Skill Variety $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.28	0.03	9.33	<0.001
Social Support $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.25	0.03	8.33	<0.001

Task Autonomy emerges as the strongest predictor ( $\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$ ), reinforcing its crucial role in teacher satisfaction. Decision Authority shows the second-highest impact ( $\beta = 0.35, p < 0.001$ ). Work Scheduling ( $\beta = 0.33$ ), Task Significance ( $\beta = 0.31$ ), Skill Variety ( $\beta = 0.28$ ), and Social Support ( $\beta = 0.25$ ) all demonstrate significant positive effects. The high Critical Ratios (C.R. ranging from 7.75 to 9.33) indicate strong statistical reliability of the path estimates

**Table 9: Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Work Design on Job Satisfaction**

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Task Autonomy $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.42**	0.08*	0.50**
Decision Authority $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.35**	0.06*	0.41**
Work Scheduling $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.33**	0.05*	0.38**
Task Significance $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.31**	0.04*	0.35**
Skill Variety $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.28**	0.03*	0.31**
Social Support $\rightarrow$ Job Satisfaction	0.25**	0.02*	0.27**
Note: * $p < 0.05$ , ** $p < 0.01$			

Task Autonomy shows the highest total effect (0.50), combining direct (0.42) and indirect (0.08) effects. Decision Authority follows with a total effect of 0.41 (direct: 0.35, indirect: 0.06) All dimensions demonstrate significant indirect effects, suggesting the presence of mediating mechanisms.

The SEM results provide compelling evidence that effective work design in academic settings requires attention to multiple dimensions, with particular emphasis on autonomous decision-making and meaningful task assignments. The significant indirect effects suggest that improvements in one area may cascade to enhance overall job satisfaction through multiple pathways. These results validate the conceptual model and provide strong empirical support for the relationships between work design characteristics and job satisfaction, while accounting for moderating variables.

## 6. Scope for Future Research

This investigation into work design and job satisfaction among college teachers reveals several promising directions for future research. Longitudinal studies would be particularly valuable in understanding how work design changes impact faculty performance and retention over time, especially as teachers progress through different career stages. Such studies could track the evolution of job satisfaction patterns and examine how changing institutional dynamics influence work design effectiveness over extended periods.

Cross-cultural extensions of this research could provide valuable insights into how different educational systems and cultural contexts influence work design preferences and job satisfaction. Comparative analyses across various cultural settings could help identify universal principles of effective academic work design while highlighting culture-specific adaptations needed for optimal faculty satisfaction. This cross-cultural perspective becomes increasingly relevant as higher education becomes more globally interconnected.

The rapidly evolving technological landscape in education presents another crucial area for future investigation. Research is needed to understand how emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and virtual reality, are reshaping academic work design. Studies should examine the impact of hybrid teaching models on faculty satisfaction and explore how technology-mediated collaboration affects teacher well-being and job satisfaction. This becomes particularly relevant as educational institutions increasingly embrace digital transformation.

## 7. Conclusion

This comprehensive study of work design and job satisfaction among college teachers reveals the crucial interplay between structural work elements and faculty satisfaction. The findings demonstrate that work design significantly influences job satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with autonomy emerging as the strongest predictor ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Key conclusions include the critical role of task autonomy, the significance of demographic moderators in work design effectiveness, and the importance of balanced social support systems. The research particularly highlights how different faculty segments respond to various work design elements, with experience and educational qualification emerging as significant moderating factors. These findings have significant implications for higher education institutions in designing faculty work arrangements particularly emphasizing the need for flexible, adaptable work designs.

As higher education continues to evolve with technological advances and changing pedagogical approaches, the findings of this study provide a foundation for developing more effective and satisfying academic work environments. The significant moderating effects of demographic variables suggest the need for differentiated approaches to work design, considering faculty members' varying needs across career stages and educational backgrounds.

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