

# Job Satisfaction among Employees of a Private Catholic Education Institution: A Baseline Study

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Originality 100% • Grammar Check: 98% • Plagiarism: 0%

## ABSTRACT

### *Article history:*

Received: 15 Aug 2023  
Revised: 19 March 2024  
Accepted: 24 May 2024  
Published: 26 July 2024

**Keywords** — Social Science, job satisfaction, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, private Catholic schools, literature review, descriptive-comparative, policy development, Philippines

This study investigates job satisfaction among employees at San Sebastian College-Recoletos, a private Catholic education institution in the Philippines. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used to understand employee satisfaction. The research design incorporates a descriptive-comparative methodology to explore the relationships between ages, gender, years of service, salary, campus, classification, and overall job satisfaction. A self-administered survey is the data collection instrument with 80 participants from different employee classifications. Statistical analyses such as mean and Analysis of Variance examine differences in job satisfaction levels. Overall, employees reported that they are satisfied and that safety and security needs are the most confident among other needs. Meanwhile, the overall satisfaction of the employees significantly



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differs when they are grouped according to age. An action plan has been proposed based on the study findings. Recommendations for future research include longitudinal studies, qualitative investigations, exploration of alternative job satisfaction models, and a focus on specific areas for improvement based on employee needs.

## INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is defined as an employee's "sense of achievement and success on the job," linked to productivity and well-being (Babu et al., 2022). Prihadini (2021) define it as the level of satisfaction workers have with their work, related to job duties, results, supervision, and feelings of relief and liking for the work they engage in. Darmawan et al. (2022) define job satisfaction as "the attitude or feelings of employees towards pleasant or unpleasant aspects of work," influenced by factors such as work environment satisfaction and employee welfare.

Job satisfaction level influences employee performance as revealed by the following studies: it is said that employees who experience job satisfaction will deliver a job performance of quality (Prihadini, 2021); job satisfaction and employee performance has found a positive and significant relationship (Sah & Pokharel, 2022); job satisfaction and organizational commitment is significantly correlated (Pergamino & Yuayan, 2021); and job satisfaction has an influence to retention (De Guzman et al., 2019).

Ensuring job satisfaction among its employees, including administrators, faculty, and staff, is crucial for San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite (SSC-RdC) in attracting and retaining talent, ensuring quality education and service, and fulfilling its mission as a Filipino, Catholic, Augustinian institution striving for educational excellence.

At the moment, SSC-RdC faces the challenges of high turnover rate, particularly among teachers and younger staff. Moreover, the unique Catholic school setting of SSC-RdC and the diverse roles played by some employees necessitate a comprehensive study of job satisfaction level to reveal challenges and opportunities for improvement.

Research on job satisfaction in private Catholic schools like SSC-RdC still remains under-researched. Many foreign and local studies about the job satisfaction of teachers exist, but only a few studies include other school personnel's job satisfaction levels. Therefore, this research is conducted to determine the overall job satisfaction level of SSC-RdC employees based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The employees consist of lay administrators, faculty members, academic non-teaching personnel, and non-teaching personnel.

Several studies on job satisfaction employ Maslow's hierarchy of needs to identify factors that contribute to satisfaction and these are from De Guzman et al. (2019), Arham et al. (2018), Rasskazova et al. (2016), Montag et al. (2020), Pergamino and Yuayan (2021), and Cusipag et al. (2024). Maslow's Needs Hierarchy Theory suggests the five levels of human needs: physiological, safety and security, love and belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. This theory was developed to explain human motivation and job satisfaction (Maslow, 1958).

While Maslow's theory was not initially designed to specifically address job satisfaction, it can be applied to understand how various needs influence one's satisfaction and motivation in the workplace. In the context of job satisfaction, physiological needs refer to employees needing a fair and adequate salary, access to breaks, and a comfortable work environment. If these basic needs are unmet, it can negatively impact job satisfaction. Safety and security needs in the workplace include job security, a safe and healthy work environment, and protection from workplace hazards. A lack of these factors can lead to anxiety and reduced job satisfaction. Love and belongingness need in the workplace are exhibited by employees seeking positive relationships with colleagues, a supportive work culture, and opportunities for teamwork and collaboration. Social isolation or a lack of positive relationships can affect job satisfaction. Therefore, job satisfaction can be influenced by several factors like recognition, feedback, and personal and professional growth opportunities. Employees who feel valued and respected are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. Lastly, self-actualization in the workplace context can be linked to opportunities for creativity, autonomy, and challenging tasks. Jobs that provide a sense of purpose and allow individuals to use their skills and abilities to the fullest can contribute to higher job satisfaction.

This study will contribute understanding of factors affecting job satisfaction in the education sector and a private Catholic school setting. In addition, evidence-based interventions to enhance job satisfaction levels at SSC-RdC will be proposed from the results of the study. This study will also provide insights for other organizations in the form of policy development, program design, and training initiatives on teacher and school employee well-being in the Philippines once research findings are disseminated through academic publications, conferences, and social media platforms.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Relationship between age and overall job satisfaction.*

Most studies suggest that job satisfaction level generally increases with age

or is higher among older employees, while other studies say that the relationship between age and job satisfaction is not straightforward and can be influenced by factors such as tenure, work values, job rewards, and other demographic variables. Age and tenure have different relationships with job satisfaction, with age increasing satisfaction and tenure decreasing satisfaction (Dobrow et al., 2018), while De Guzman et al. (2019) and Oshagbemi (2003) said that age is not significantly associated with overall job satisfaction.

*Relationship between years of service and overall job satisfaction.*

These studies suggest that tenure is generally associated with higher job satisfaction, but this relationship is influenced by factors such as age, gender, pay, job complexity, and organizational commitment, and may weaken or become negative as tenure increases. According to De Guzman et al. (2019), service longevity and overall satisfaction have a significant relationship. In addition, the study of Son and Ok (2019) and Kim et al. (2022) found that the job satisfaction of newcomers decreases after joining an organization but gradually increases afterward. On the other hand, Dobrow and Ganzach (2014) reported that people become less satisfied as their tenure within a given organization increases.

*Relationship between salary and overall job satisfaction.*

These studies suggest that salary is positively correlated to job satisfaction. Overall pay satisfaction and pay level affect satisfaction (Serreqi, 2020). Specifically, compensation and employee overall job satisfaction are positively correlated (Watkins & Fusch, 2021). Salary greatly affects job satisfaction, positively impacting employee performance (Ramli & Anuar, 2022).

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following objectives: (1) determine the overall job satisfaction level of SSC-RdC employees, (2) examine whether there is a significant difference in overall job satisfaction of employees when grouped by age, sex, years of service, salary, campus, and employee classification, and (3) propose actions based on the findings of the study.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used a quantitative approach. Moreover, a descriptive-comparative research design was used to determine the relationship between the variables. The study was conducted in San Sebastian College – Recoletos de Cavite, a private college institution operated by the Order of Augustinian Recollect priests and located in the City of Cavite, Philippines. Employees in the institution are divided into seven classifications: lay administrators, higher education faculty, basic education faculty, non-teaching personnel, academic non-teaching faculty, security personnel, and maintenance personnel. Since the security and maintenance personnel are outsourced from service providers, their employment relationship, compensation structure, and working environment differ significantly from those of the employed staff, which is why the researchers have decided to exclude them as respondents in the study. Part-time faculty members from the Higher Education and Basic Education departments are also excluded from this study because their responsibilities and schedules are different compared with full-time faculty. Their job satisfaction might be influenced by factors external to SSC-RdC, such as their workload from other institutions. From a total population of 95 employees, the required sample size calculated through the use of the G\*Power sample size calculator is 84. The researchers used stratified random sampling, where the stratum used was the population of employees per department. Table 1 presents the distribution of the population and respondents per classification.

**Table 1**  
*The Population and Sample Size of the Study*

Classification	Population	Percentage	Sample Size
Non-Teaching Personnel (NTP)	49	51.6%	43
Academic Non-Teaching Personnel (ANTP)	8	8.4%	7
Higher Education Faculty	12	12.6%	11
Basic Education Faculty	11	11.6%	10

However, the researchers collected data from only 80 respondents, thus a retrieval rate of 95%. A self-made research instrument was used to gather data for

the study. The instrument consists of two parts. The first part contains questions pertaining to the demographic profile of the respondents. The second part contains statements that measure the respondents' level of overall job satisfaction. The statements in the second part of the instrument were answered using a four-point Likert scale with the following values: 4 – Highly Satisfied, 3 – Satisfied, 2 – Dissatisfied, and 1 – Highly Dissatisfied. Before proceeding with the actual data gathering, the instrument was subjected to validation by three subject matter experts and a reliability test using Cronbach Alpha. The researchers used a combination of face-to-face and online surveys, and it took a total of four weeks to gather all the data from the respondents. The results of the data gathering were treated with utmost confidentiality, and all data were disposed of after use. For the data analysis, frequency distribution and percentage were used for the demographic profile of the respondents, mean was used to determine the level of overall job satisfaction of the respondents, and Analysis of Variance was used to determine if there was a significant difference in the overall job satisfaction when the participants are grouped according to their demographic characteristics.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to determine the overall job satisfaction level of SSC-RdC employees based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. The employees consist of lay administrators, faculty members, academic non-teaching personnel, and non-teaching personnel.

*Problem 1: What is the overall job satisfaction level of SSC-RdC employees?*

**Table 2**

*Per Need and Overall Job Satisfaction Level of SSC-RdC Employees*

Rank	Needs	Mean	Interpretation
1	Safety and Security Needs	3.07	Satisfied
2	Love and Belongingness Needs	3.06	Satisfied
3	Self-Actualization Needs	3.02	Satisfied
4	Esteem Needs	3.00	Satisfied
5	Physiological Needs	2.91	Satisfied
	Overall Job Satisfaction Level	3.01	Satisfied

The present study aimed to determine the overall job satisfaction level of SSC-RdC employees. The findings revealed an overall mean of 3.01 on a scale of 4.00, with 4.00 being the highest. This suggests that SSC-RdC employees are “satisfied” with their jobs. In terms of the five levels of needs, Safety and Security Needs received the highest score of 3.07, while Physiological Needs received the lowest score of 2.91.

Looking at the individual survey statements, the three needs with the highest level of satisfaction are: *provision of other benefits that contribute to my well-being such as free tuition for employee dependents* (3.35), *feeling safe and secure working at SSC-RdC* (3.33), and *required reporting hours at work* (3.20). On the other hand, the lowest scorers are: *salary that allows me to meet my basic needs and live comfortably* (2.55), *recognitions and rewards for employees’ achievements and contributions* (2.81), and *provision of adequate resources, materials, or equipment needed to carry on my job* (2.85).

The fact that the overall job satisfaction level is not close to the maximum score suggests there are aspects of the job that must be improved. Considering that higher job satisfaction level is often linked to improved quality of job performance (Prihadini, 2021; Sah & Pokharel, 2022), organizational commitment (Pergamino & Yuayan, 2021), and employee retention (De Guzman et al., 2019), looking for ways to level up satisfaction will be beneficial for SSC-RdC. Physiological needs receiving the lowest score among all levels of needs implies that employees tend to give more importance to meeting higher-level needs (Stefan et al., 2020). Moreover, meaningful work and work engagement, both of which are found in higher levels of needs, contribute to the reduction of the employees’ intent to leave the organization in the long term (Oprea et al., 2020). The results of another study focused on the university environment imply that an organization that promotes love and belongingness among its members is most likely to retain its best performers (Omodan, 2022).

*Problem 2: Is there a significant difference in the overall job satisfaction of employees when they are grouped according to sex, campus, and employee classification?*

A one-way ANOVA demonstrated a significant difference in the overall job satisfaction of SSC-RdC employees when they are grouped according to age,  $F(3, 76) = 3.55$ ,  $p = 0.01$ . Specifically, there is a significant difference on the overall job satisfaction of Millennials and Boomers,  $F(1, 25) = 5.06$ ,  $p = 0.03$ , with the Millennials being satisfied with their job while the Boomers are dissatisfied. Likewise, a significant difference in the overall job satisfaction of Gen Z employees and Boomers is found,  $F(1, 31) = 10.16$ ,  $p = 0.00$ . Younger employees are more

satisfied with their jobs than older generations. Table 3 shows the respondent's demographic characteristics, overall satisfaction level, and interpretation.

This is aligned with the findings of Kollman et al. (2020), where they found that younger employees are more satisfied with their jobs. The study by Wen et al. (2018) stated that younger generations, particularly millennials, view employee development as an important factor contributing to job satisfaction. Another study by Ngotngamwong (2020) revealed that the majority of millennials are generally satisfied with their jobs and attribute their satisfaction to supportive and open-minded management paired with challenging tasks while still having a work-life balance. However, this disagrees with the study of Dobrow et al. (2018), which says that age increases satisfaction. Meanwhile, the researchers found no statistically significant difference in their overall job satisfaction when they were grouped according to the remaining demographic characteristics.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of the Respondents per Demographic Profile and their Satisfaction Level*

Characteristics	N	%	Mean	Interpretation
<b>Age</b>				
18 – 27 years old (Gen Z)	31	39	3.03	Satisfied
28 – 43 years old (Millennials)	25	31	3.14	Satisfied
44 – 59 years old (Gen X)	22	28	2.89	Satisfied
60 and above (Boomers)	2	2%	2.45	Dissatisfied
<b>Sex</b>				
Female	46	58%	2.99	Satisfied
Male	34	42%	3.04	Satisfied
<b>Years of Service</b>				
Less than 5 years	34	43%	3.06	Satisfied
5 – 10 years	20	25%	3.00	Satisfied
21 – 25 years	10	13%	2.80	Satisfied
16 – 20 years	8	10%	3.06	Satisfied
11 – 15 years	6	8%	3.08	Satisfied
26 – 30 years	1	.5%	2.44	Dissatisfied
31 years and above	1	.5%	3.33	Satisfied
<b>Average Monthly Salary</b>				



P10,957.00 – P21,914.00	53	66%	3.02	Satisfied
P21,915.00 – P43,828.00	25	31%	3.04	Satisfied
Below P10,957.00	1	1.5%	2.36	Dissatisfied
Above P219,140.00	1	1.5%	2.47	Dissatisfied
<b>Campus</b>				
Main	68	85%	3.01	Satisfied
Canacao	12	15%	3.00	Satisfied
<b>Classification</b>				
Non-teaching Personnel	44	55%	3.01	Satisfied
Higher Education Faculty	12	15%	2.92	Satisfied
Basic Education Faculty	9	11%	3.01	Satisfied
Lay Administrators	8	10%	3.16	Satisfied
Academic Non-teaching Personnel	7	9%	2.99	Satisfied

*Problem 3: Based on findings, what strategies may be proposed?*

**Table 4**  
*Proposed Strategies to Enhance Job Satisfaction*

Objectives	Strategies/Activities
Address salary and compensation concerns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review current compensation scheme to ascertain it's competitive.</li> <li>2. Consider other employee benefit options valued by the employees.</li> </ol>
Improve employee recognition and reward programs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate existing recognition and reward programs and identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>2. Gather employee insights about what type of recognition or reward they value the most.</li> <li>3. Benchmark recognition and reward programs of other institutions of similar size</li> <li>4. Provide necessary trainings to employees that will improve performance and increase opportunity for recognition and rewards</li> </ol>
Improve provision of resources for employees.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Audit the current resources provided by the school to the employees (e.g., equipment and software) to identify gaps.</li> <li>2. Review the current requisition procedure to determine areas for enhancement.</li> <li>3. Allocate the necessary budget for top priority requests</li> </ol>

Increase overall job satisfaction score while addressing age differences of employees

1. Conduct a follow-up qualitative study to understand reasons behind the current level of job satisfaction and differences between the younger and older employees.
  2. Conduct longitudinal study that will monitor the
  3. sentiments of employee overtime
  4. Review exit interview data
- 

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the overall job satisfaction of San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite (SSC- RC) employees through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The findings revealed that overall, employees are "satisfied" (score of 3.01 on a 4.00 scale), suggesting there's room for improvement in certain aspects of employee well-being.

While employees reported feeling safe and secure at work and appreciated benefits like free tuition for dependents, their satisfaction with salary and recognition was lower. This indicates a potential gap between what employees feel they need for basic physiological safety and security needs according to Maslow's hierarchy.

This study extends new knowledge by shedding light on the key factors influencing job satisfaction among employees at San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite. Moreover, the integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs into the study provides a comprehensive understanding of employee well-being and satisfaction in the context of a private Catholic school setting. These allow for the identification of concrete strategies and interventions to enhance job satisfaction and foster a positive work culture at SSC-RdC, contributing valuable insights for organizational management, human resource management, and employee well-being in educational institutions.

This investigation has several limitations. First, the study has a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to track employee satisfaction and sentiments over time and to establish a causal relationship between factors and satisfaction. Second, the collected data through the survey is self-reported and susceptible to social desirability bias. Third, while Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides a good framework for the study, there are other models or theories related to the topic.

This study contributes to policy development by providing evidence-based insights that can inform the design of targeted interventions and programs aimed at enhancing job satisfaction and employee well-being in educational institutions,

particularly within the context of private Catholic schools.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Conduct a longitudinal study that tracks employees' experiences and sentiments over time. This could help administrators better understand what predicts employee satisfaction.

Qualitative studies will be conducted through focus groups or interviews with employees, along with a job satisfaction survey. Also, other secondary data sources, such as exit interviews and performance evaluations, should be looked at. These could show a bigger picture and reveal specific predictors of both positive and negative feelings about their job.

Explore other models of theories of job satisfaction, aside from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory or Job Classification model, to gain deeper insights into what influences satisfaction among educational institution employees.

Formulate generation-relevant strategies aimed at fulfilling employees' needs. Focus on the needs that received the lowest satisfaction level. The administration could examine these aspects and tailor interventions to better meet employees' needs.

## **TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH**

Practical translational research initiatives from this study include developing targeted training programs for management and staff to enhance recognition and reward systems, creating employee feedback mechanisms to gather continuous input on job satisfaction, implementing well-being programs that promote work-life balance and professional development, and conducting a comprehensive review of existing policies on compensation and recognition to align them with employee needs. Collectively, these initiatives aim to translate the study's findings into actionable strategies that foster a positive work environment and enhance employee satisfaction in educational institutions.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND FUNDING**

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, that could influence or bias the content of this article. This study was conducted independently without any external funding from organizations or

individuals that could have a vested interest in the findings.

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon request to ensure transparency and facilitate independent verification of the results. AI was utilized ethically solely to enhance readability, with due diligence and mindfulness applied to ensure that it did not contribute to the analysis or interpretation of the content.

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