

# Research on Job Satisfaction of Teachers in Private Colleges and Universities in Guangdong Province\*

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**Abstract**—The job satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities refers to teachers' attitude toward and evaluation on various aspects of their work, namely the extent they like to be a teacher. Taking teachers in private colleges and universities as the research object, this paper discusses the status quo of job satisfactions of teachers in different attributes. The purpose is to arouse the society's attention to private higher education institutions, and provide basis and reference for education authorities and private colleges and universities to formulate relevant management policies. This paper uses SPSS17.0 to analyze the sample data, and get the following main conclusions: different gender, title and marital status of teachers in private colleges and universities have significantly different satisfaction on the job; wherein, male teachers' job satisfaction is higher than female teachers'; professors' job satisfaction is higher than other teachers'; married teachers' job satisfaction is higher than unmarried teachers'.

**Keywords**—teachers in private colleges and universities; job satisfaction; factor analysis; variance analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of job satisfaction was firstly proposed by Hoppock in 1935. He used the Thurstone Scale to measure employees' satisfaction on their job and published the first research report on employee satisfaction. After that, this concept caused a warm response, and it is still a hot spot of research for many scholars. With regard to job satisfaction, the research in China mainly focuses on enterprise employees' job satisfaction. The research on teachers' job satisfaction is mainly concentrated in the field of basic education. The Taiwanese professors Chen Yunying and Feng Bolin are well-known researchers in this field. There are very few researches on the job satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities, and almost no influential research result.

Education is the most fundamental cause of a nation and the condition and driving force for promoting national development. Teachers of higher education institutions are precious treasures of a country, the successors and communicators of the precious heritages of human beings in science and technology, culture and art, the creators of new knowledge and new cultures, the organizers and implementer

of educational goals and the cultivators of specialized talents. The teachers' job satisfaction may directly affect their working enthusiasms, and indirectly affect students' learning attitudes and achievements. Nowadays, private colleges and universities are trying to attract external talents, but they often neglect the cultivation and further development of their internal teachers. Teachers' job satisfaction is not given due attention. How to find the existing talent resources and improve their working enthusiasm have become the problems to be urgently solved by management level of private colleges and universities.

Private colleges and universities is an important part of higher education in Guangdong Province. In recent ten years, the private higher education institutions in the province have undergone a rapid development. By the end of May 2017, there had been 151 common colleges and universities in the province, including 50 private colleges and universities accounting for 33.11%. In 2017, there were about 2.02 million students in colleges and universities in Guangdong Province, of which about 620,000 students were in private colleges and universities, accounting for about 30.6% of the total number of college students in the province. In the rapid development process, private education institutions in the province also faces many problems which need to receive more extensive attention from the society to ensure the healthy development of private colleges and universities. What is the current status of job satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities? How to improve the job satisfaction the teachers? It is worth discussing.

## II. THE COMPILATION OF JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The job satisfaction questionnaire for teachers in private colleges and universities is used as the tool of this research.

In order to make the questionnaire more in line with the actual situation of teachers in current private colleges and universities, on the basis of the literature review, this study also interviewed the teachers and administration personnel of several private universities and public universities to get to know their actual situations, and then a preliminary forecasting questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire was further revised according to the predictions of the forecasting questionnaire. During the period, relevant experts

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and scholars were also consulted to give amendment opinions; finally, a formal questionnaire was formed.

**A. Design of the Forecasting Questionnaire**

1) *Design method:* This study mainly uses literature method, interview method and questionnaire survey method to design the questionnaire. The research objects are mainly private colleges and universities. Teachers in private colleges and universities is defined as teachers engaged in teaching or research work, excluding administration personnel and teaching assistants, in private colleges and universities.

The main purpose of the literature review is to provide theoretical basis for this research and the questionnaire design, and provide reference for the design of the questionnaire content; the purpose of the interview method is mainly to find the current real job satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities and lay a foundation for the questionnaire design; the questionnaire survey method and interview method are for the same purpose, namely to make the design of the questionnaire more in line with the current actual situation.

2) *Questionnaire design process:*

a) *Data collection:* Relevant data are mainly collected in interview method and questionnaire survey method.

b) *Interview:* In response to the research need, teachers of three private colleges and universities (Guangzhou College of Technology and Business, Guangdong Baiyun University and Guangdong Peizheng College) were selected to participate in the interview. Among them, there are 12 lecturers, 5 associate professors and 3 professors. The interview is mainly to know about the things they are satisfied and dissatisfied with at work, and the things they concern the most in actual work. Secondly, administrative personnel of the schools were also selected to take part in the interview, with the aim to get to know the problems and confusions encountered in their management work from the angle of management personnel and know about teachers' job satisfaction from a side.

c) *Questionnaire survey:* In order to get a more comprehensive understanding of the current basic situation of teachers' job satisfaction, a simple questionnaire was also designed in this research and 50 teachers at all levels were selected to take part in the survey; the survey results are as shown in "Table I":

TABLE I. SAMPLE COMPOSITION OF THE FORECASTING QUESTIONNAIRE

<b>Gender:</b>	Male: 32 persons		Female: 18 persons	
<b>Age:</b>	10 persons under 30 years old	15 persons within 30-40 years old	15 persons within 40-50 years old	10 persons above 50 years old
<b>Professional title:</b>	Senior: 10 persons	Intermediate: 28 persons	Below the junior level: 12 persons	

d) *Analysis and sorting out:* Based on the interviews and questionnaire survey, an initial questionnaire for job satisfaction was analyzed and collated, including 22 items under 5 dimensions. Job satisfaction uses Likert's 5-point scoring method, having five options: "unmatched very much", "unmatched a little", "general", "matched relatively", and "matched very much". The questionnaire also sets the items of demographic variables, including gender, marital status, age, education background, professional title and years of working. According to previous researches, there is certain connection between those variables and job satisfaction.

e) *Expert consultation:* According to the collated questionnaire, a number of experts were consulted on the description and contents of the items. Among the experts, there is one scholar engaging in education management research, one scholar engaging in human resource management research, one scholar engaging in psychology research, and three expert scholars engaging in education and teaching research and management for decades in Guangzhou College of Technology and Business. In the process of expert consultation, the experts put forward revision opinions on the questionnaire from various angles, especially in the description of the items. After several revisions, the initial questionnaire for this study was obtained.

**B. Exploratory Factor Analysis**

After re-adjusting the questionnaire based on the results of previous analysis, the formal questionnaire was obtained and distributed; and an analysis of the formal questionnaire was started after that.

1) *Data collection by formal questionnaires:* The research objects are full-time teachers engaging in teaching and research work in private colleges and universities. In this research, 200 questionnaires were distributed, 190 questionnaires were collected, and 181 valid questionnaires were obtained at an effective collection rate of 90.5%. The questionnaire distribution is shown in "Table II". The samples were from Guangzhou College of Technology and Business, Guangzhou College of South China University of Technology, Guangdong Baiyun University and Guangdong Peizheng College. The composition of the samples is as shown in "Table III". Random sampling and snowballing sampling methods are adopted mainly.

TABLE II. COLLECTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

Nature of school	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questionnaires collected	Number of effective questionnaires	Effective collection rate
Private	200	190	181	90.5%

TABLE III. OVERALL COMPOSITION OF SAMPLES FROM PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

		Number of samples	Percentage, %
	Total number of samples/percentage	181	100
<b>Gender</b>	Male	71	39.2
	Female	110	60.8
<b>Age</b>	under 30 years old	47	26.0
	30-39	41	22.7
	40-49	35	19.3
	above 50 years old	58	32.0
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	158	69.0
	Unmarried	23	31.0
<b>Academic degree</b>	Bachelor's degree	149	82.3
	Master's degree	32	17.7
	Doctor's degree	0	0
<b>Professional title</b>	assistant teacher	59	32.6
	lecturer	39	21.5
	associate professor	66	36.5
	professor	17	9.4
<b>Years of working</b>	less than 5 years	48	26.5
	6-10 years	31	17.2
	11-15 years	12	36.4
	more than 15 years	90	49.7

2) *Exploratory factor analysis*: Before making exploratory factor analysis, the first is to check if the questionnaire is suitable for making factor analysis. Therefore, this research adopts KMO and Bartlett's Test to

check the questionnaire. The results are as shown in "Table IV".

TABLE IV. KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</b>			.787
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	Approx. Square	Chi-	3879.412
	df		153
	Sig.		.000

According to Kaiser's view of point (1974), factor analysis can be performed if the KMO coefficient is higher than 0.7, so the data collected in this research are suitable for making factor analysis. After the analysis on the suitability of conducting factor analysis, specific research on major factors analysis began. Factor with eigenvalue greater than 1 was selected. Finally, five factors were obtained, and reflected in a total of 18 items; each factor is reflected in more than 3 items; then the final formal questionnaire was obtained. In this questionnaire, there are five factors, 18 items; Likert's 5-point scoring method is used; and the statements in the questionnaire are 1'-5' respectively represent "unmatched very much" to "matched very much".

*C. Reliability Test*

In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used for making reliability test. The higher the Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained is, the more consistent the tested contents will be. The test results are shown in "Table V":

TABLE V. RESULTS OF RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	Job satisfaction questionnaire	Welfare treatment	Work stress	Colleague relationship	Leadership management	Self-realization
Cronbach's alpha	0.779	0.930	0.951	0.665	0.682	0.633

As can be seen from "Table V", the reliability of the entire questionnaire is 0.779, and the reliability of each dimension is above 0.6. According to Henson's opinion (2001), if the researcher's purpose is to prepare a predictive questionnaire or to test the pilot study of a concept, using a questionnaire having reliability coefficient at 0.5-0.6 is enough. If it is for the purpose of developing measurement tools, the reliability factor should be above 0.7. The reliability coefficient of this questionnaire has basically met the requirements for this research.

significant difference in job satisfaction of different genders of teachers. Male teachers' job satisfaction is higher than female teachers'. From the perspective of welfare treatment and leadership management, the results show that there is significant difference between male and female teachers; male teachers' satisfaction level is higher than female teachers', as shown in "Table VI".

III. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF SURVEY ON JOB SATISFACTION OF TEACHERS IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A. *Comparison of Job Satisfaction of Teachers of Different Genders*

Taking gender as the independent variable and job satisfaction and its various dimensions as the dependent variables, an internal comparison was made on private colleges and universities. The results show that there is a

TABLE VI. JOB SATISFACTION OF DIFFERENT GENDERS OF TEACHERS IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Gender	Job satisfaction					
	Welfare treatment	Self-realization	Work stress	Leadership management	Colleague relationship	Overall
<b>Male (n=71)</b>						
<i>M</i>	21.07	13.33	12.83	14.16	13.22	74.63
<i>SD</i>	8.42	1.15	2.15	1.04	1.30	10.08
<b>Female (n=110)</b>						
<i>M</i>	19.57	12.77	13.22	13.06	13.19	68.03
<i>SD</i>	3.55	4.74	2.15	1.34	1.33	10.78
<i>F</i>	19.306	0.969	1.459	34.629	0.029	16.968
<i>sig</i>	.000	.326	.229	.000	.864	.000

**B. Comparison of Job Satisfaction of Teachers Having Different Professional Titles**

In this aspect, an internal analysis and comparison was made, taking teachers' professional titles as the independent variable and the overall job satisfaction and the dimensions of satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities as the dependent variables. The results indicate that in terms of welfare treatment, there is significant difference between

teachers having different professional titles; assistant teachers' satisfaction is the lowest and professors' is the highest. Among the dimensions of job satisfaction, colleague relationship and self-realization show no significant difference between teachers having different professional titles, but the remained three dimensions show significant difference between teachers having different professional titles, as shown in "Table VII".

TABLE VII. JOB SATISFACTION OF TEACHERS HAVING DIFFERENT PROFESSIONAL TITLES IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Professional title	Welfare treatment	Self-realization	Work stress	Leadership management	Colleague relationship	Overall
<b>1. Assistant teacher (n=59)</b>						
<i>M</i>	9.32	12.76	13.55	12.93	13.06	61.64
<i>SD</i>	2.03	0.91	1.94	1.24	1.12	3.37
<b>2. Lecturer (n=39)</b>						
<i>M</i>	12.43	12.79	11.82	13.33	12.87	63.25
<i>SD</i>	2.77	7.86	2.79	1.73	1.28	9.77
<b>3. Associate professor (n=66)</b>						
<i>M</i>	26.30	13.28	13.40	13.95	13.42	80.37
<i>SD</i>	1.69	1.14	1.83	0.99	1.39	5.49
<b>4. Professor (n=17)</b>						
<i>M</i>	27.11	13.11	12.94	14.05	13.58	80.82
<i>SD</i>	2.05	2.05	1.02	1.02	1.54	25.65
<i>F</i>	871.301	.247	6.476	8.050	2.183	130.115
<i>sig</i>	.000	.864	.000	.000	.092	.000

**C. Comparison of Job Satisfaction of Teachers Under Different Marital Statuses**

In this aspect, an internal comparison was made, taking teachers' marital status as the independent variable and the overall satisfaction and the dimensions of satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities as the dependent variables. The results show that there is very significant job satisfaction difference between teachers under different marital statuses; married teachers' job satisfaction is higher than unmarried teachers', as shown in "Table VIII".

TABLE VIII. JOB SATISFACTION OF TEACHERS UNDER DIFFERENT MARITAL STATUSES IN PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Marital status	Job satisfaction					
	Welfare treatment	Work stress	Self-realization	Leadership management	Colleague relationship	Overall
<i>Married (n=158)</i>						
<i>M</i>	19.11	13.03	13.00	13.47	13.17	71.80
<i>SD</i>	8.09	2.21	4.02	1.36	1.37	11.19
<i>Unmarried (n=23)</i>						
<i>M</i>	9.21	13.30	12.95	13.65	13.39	62.52
<i>SD</i>	2.57	1.76	0.76	1.22	0.78	3.48
<i>F</i>	33.748	0.305	0.003	0.349	0.530	15.512
<i>sig</i>	.000	.582	.959	.556	.467	.000

#### IV. DISCUSSION

##### A. Discussion on Job Satisfaction Difference Between Teachers of Different Gender

From the analysis results, there is significant difference between different genders of teachers' job satisfaction; wherein, male teachers' job satisfaction is higher than female teachers'. In terms of welfare treatment and leadership management, female teachers' job satisfaction is significantly higher than male teachers'. This difference may be caused by a social prejudice against females, as male teachers in school often can get more and better opportunities for promotion in title. In addition, the difference may be caused for reason that female teachers also have to spend more time and energy in the family besides work.

##### B. Discussion on Job Satisfaction Difference Between Teachers Having Different Professional Titles

From the comparison results, there is significant job satisfaction difference between teachers having different professional titles; the higher the professional title is, the higher the job satisfaction will be. However among the dimensions of job satisfaction, colleague relationships and self-realization show no significant difference between teachers having different professional titles; the remained three dimensions show that the higher the professional title is, the higher the job satisfaction will be. This shows that there is no difference between professional titles with respect to colleague relationship, and of course it may be related to the characteristics of the profession of teacher. To be highly moral and educate students is the basic responsibility of all teachers. Therefore, they are relatively rational and accommodating in dealing with colleague relationships. There is also no significant difference between professional titles with respect to self-realization, which may be related to the management system of private colleges and universities.

##### C. Discussion on Job Satisfaction Difference Between Teachers Under Different Marital Statuses

From an internal comparison, there is significant job satisfaction difference between teachers under different

marital statuses; and married teachers' job satisfaction is higher than unmarried teachers'. Why? It may be mainly because most unmarried teachers in private colleges and universities have reached and been beyond the age of getting married. In addition, teachers generally have low wages, especially in private colleges and universities; Factors such as high housing and commodity price all have given great psychological pressure and blow to unmarried teachers. In the dimension of welfare treatment, married teachers have higher levels of satisfaction than unmarried teachers; and it is also found that this difference is particularly significant. The main reason is also because of the obvious problems existing in the structure of teachers in private universities, namely there is a fault between young and old teachers.

#### V. CONCLUSION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

##### A. Conclusion

After reviewing the concept and theory of job satisfaction, relevant assessment tools and the research status of job satisfaction of teachers in China and foreign countries in detail, this research adopted a self-made private college teachers' job satisfaction questionnaire to make relevant survey on private colleges and universities in Guangdong Province. Finally, the following conclusions are obtained:

- The evaluation indicators of job satisfaction of teachers in private colleges and universities mainly have five dimensions: welfare treatment, work stress, leadership management, colleague relationship and self-realization. By interview, screening, factor analysis and reliability test on those five dimensions, it has been proved that this questionnaire is stable and reliable, and meets the basic requirements of job satisfaction research.
- Different gender, title and marital status of teachers in private colleges and universities have significantly different satisfaction on the job; wherein, male teachers' job satisfaction is higher than female teachers'; professors' job satisfaction is higher than other teachers'; married teachers' job satisfaction is higher than unmarried teachers'.

- The differences in the dimensions of teacher satisfaction in private colleges and universities are mainly reflected in welfare treatment and leadership management. In terms of welfare treatment, married teachers' satisfaction is higher than unmarried teachers', and male teachers' satisfaction is higher than female teachers'; in leadership management, male teachers' satisfaction is higher than female teachers'.

### *B. Enlightenment*

Job satisfaction is a subjective emotional experience of teachers. Through the questionnaire survey, this research objectively reflects the status quo of teacher satisfaction of public colleges and universities and private colleges and universities, and the difference in the satisfaction between the two types of colleges and universities. Those conclusions will help managers to develop a reasonable teacher management system, so that teachers can play the role of teaching and educating people in a relaxed environment, realize the personal life value, and further promote improving the quality of the entire nation.

*1) Establishing a fair and reasonable salary system:* Although welfare treatment is not the only factor determining teachers' job satisfaction, it cannot be ignored. In terms of welfare treatment, there is still very significant difference between private colleges and universities and public colleges and universities. Private colleges and universities cannot be compared with public colleges and universities, because teachers' salary in public colleges and universities is funded by the state finance. Private colleges and universities cannot raise the welfare treatment to the level of public colleges and universities. The only way out is to establish a fair and reasonable salary system. Wherein, the first is to increase the income gap between different professional titles and academic degrees, which is conducive for private universities to set aside limited funds to maintain talents. It is inadvisable to set unclear income gap between different professional titles and academic degrees just as in public units so that teachers working enthusiasm is generally not high. The second is to establish a reasonable system for evaluating the performance of teachers to link salary with the results or performance effectively and truly reflect the principle of "good work deserves good pay". Only in this way can teachers be motivated to work positively and complete their work with a better attitude.

*2) Emphasis on the cultivation of young teachers:* From the perspective of this research, there is a clear fault in the structure of teachers in private colleges and universities. This is a very dangerous signal. Working in private college, the author has a very good understanding of the work and learning situation of young teachers in private colleges and universities. There is large gap in age between young teachers and old teachers; once old teachers leave or retire, there will be only a group of young teachers aged 20-30. Then private colleges and universities will face a very

embarrassing situation and dilemma, namely how to guarantee the quality of teaching. This is very unfavorable for the development of private colleges and universities. Therefore, private colleges and universities must speed up the pace of cultivating the young teachers. The feasible solutions are as follows: the first is to try to recruit teachers from relatively famous universities in Mainland China when recruiting young teachers, because teachers in the Mainland generally have lower requirements and expectations for welfare treatment and working conditions than teachers in coastal cities. The second is to make full use of the old teachers who are reemployed after retirement, let each young teacher following after one experienced old teacher to promote mutual learning; for old teachers, they are very willing to witness the constant growing of young teachers; for young teachers, they can also learn very rich teaching experiences and human experience from old teachers. The third is to encourage young teachers to participate in various advanced studies and training under funding assistance of school to some extent.

*3) Paying attention to taking care of female teachers:* As can be seen from the conclusions of this research, female teachers' satisfaction in all aspects is lower than male teachers, especially in welfare treatment and self-realization. In addition, in private colleges and universities, male teachers or management personnel account for a much lower proportion than female in quantity. This is mainly because private colleges are not treated well, while men generally bear greater family pressure and few of them are willing to stay in private colleges. Of course, it must be explained that although there are a few male faculties in private colleges, they still control most resources of colleges and universities and have the right to allocate resources. This further requires that the management personnel of private colleges and universities should strive to create a fair and reasonable environment to give female teachers a better space for development and opportunities for promotion. Although the equality between the sexes is advocated, there are still various gender discriminations in actual life. The weak position of female teachers in private colleges needs to be changed. The first is to provide an equal opportunity and give both male and female teachers the same treatment in aspects such as promotion in post; the second is to require private colleges and universities to make certain adjustment on their management personnel to further increase the proportion of female management personnel.

*4) Emphasis on the guiding of teachers' self-realization:* Studies have shown that self-realization is a very important factor affecting job satisfaction in private colleges and universities. Especially for private colleges and universities, it is necessary to pay more attention to guiding the self-realization of teachers, because their conditions in all aspects cannot be compared with the same type of public schools. To do this, school should pay attention to the following points: First, when recruiting teachers, it is necessary to get to know

the interest of teachers to be recruited to see if the candidates have a very positive perception and evaluation on the profession of teacher, and if they have a long-term plan for development in this profession. Second, in teaching, teachers should be given full freedom and discretion, "let a hundred flowers blossom" and encourage teachers to practice various teaching methods. Third, it is necessary to encourage teachers to conduct scientific research while working, and to give certain spiritual and material rewards to teachers who make certain achievements.

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