Does Teaching Contribute to One’s Wellbeing: An Examination of the Relationship between Teaching Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction among University Teachers

Shaima Ahammed, Ph.D., UAE University

Abstract:

University teachers comprise one of the most important groups of professionals, playing a vital role in shaping the future of any nation. Therefore, their subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction becomes an important subject matter that deserves attention and exploration. This research examined the relationship between life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction among full-time university teachers. Participants were 103 full-time, tenure-track university faculty from the UAE University. The two scales used in the study were the ‘Teaching Satisfaction Scale’ (TSS; Ho & Au, 2006) and the ‘Satisfaction with Life Scale’ (SWLS; Diener et al, 1985). Both the scales were found to have moderately high reliability scores with Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.70 for the ‘Teaching Satisfaction Scale’ and 0.71 for the ‘Satisfaction with Life Scale’.

The results demonstrated higher than average mean scores of 29.04 on the ‘Satisfaction with Life Scale’ and 29.20 on the ‘Teaching Satisfaction Scale,’ indicating high levels of life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction among the participants. However, a correlation coefficient of only 0.32 (p < 0.01), demonstrated a weak relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction. Results from t-tests revealed that scores on life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction were not significantly different for respondents belonging to different groups based on their age, gender or experience. Overall, the results seemed to imply that teaching by itself does not become a source of subjective wellbeing among university faculty. The paper concludes with a note on the implications of the results for university teachers’ sense of wellbeing and life satisfaction. Emphasis is on considering the potential actions to be taken by university teachers to preclude life dissatisfaction and urging them to re-examine their convictions, if any, that teaching can predominantly contribute to life satisfaction.

Key Words:

Life Satisfaction; Subjective Wellbeing; Teaching Satisfaction; Teachers
Introduction

Unlike many other professions, when teaching is a “calling” it reflects a moral inseparability between work and one’s life itself. Thus, “teachers teach to realize what in ancient Greece is called arête” (Bullogh, 2009). This term reflects ‘virtue,’ and thus holds out a promise of happiness and wellbeing. What this means, in simpler terms, is that teaching can be a source of life satisfaction and wellbeing for teachers. While a positive relationship between general job satisfaction and life satisfaction is a well proven fact (Judge and Locke, 1993; Near, Rice and Hunt, 1978; Rice, Near and Hunt, 1980; Judge, Locke, Durham and Kluger, 1998), the relationship may be stronger when the job is teaching, the assumption being that work is more central to a teacher’s life than it is for many other professions. The opposite may also be presumed, bearing in mind that teachers are professionals highly vulnerable to burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981; Maslach, Jackson and Leiter, 1996; Maslach, 1999) demanding and unpredictable environments (Helsing, 2007) and pressures of ‘performativity’ (Ball, 2003). These factors, with all probability, take away the meaningfulness that teaching provides to one’s life and thus reduce the likelihood of teaching satisfaction contributing to life satisfaction.

The two central variables in this study are – ‘Life Satisfaction’ and ‘Teaching Satisfaction’. ‘Life satisfaction’ in general refers to a conscious global judgment of one’s life and is often synonymous with (as well as embedded in) a broader concept, named Subjective wellbeing (SWB). Subjective wellbeing (SWB) thus refers to how people evaluate their lives, and includes variables such as life satisfaction, positive emotions and lack of negative emotions (Diener, 2000). Specifically, it consists of two distinctive components (cf. Diener, 1994: p. 106): an affective part, which refers to both the presence of positive affect (PA) and the absence of negative affect (NA), and a cognitive part that evaluates life satisfaction. The concept is often described as the individual’s cognitive assessment of one’s life in such a way that it includes everything (job, marriage, health) (Diener and Diener, 1995; Pavot et al., 1991). Given the fact that every aspect of one’s life plays an important role in life satisfaction, it is only reasonable to assume the role of teaching and the ensuing sense of fulfillment derived from it (as a vocation facilitating expression and engagement of self), in one’s subjective wellbeing. The rather familiar and explicable notion of ‘teaching satisfaction’ is based on Locke’s (1969) concept of job satisfaction – “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating one’s job values” (p.316). As explained by Zembylas & Papnastasiou (2004), it refers to a teacher’s affective relation to his or her teaching role and is a function of the perceived relation between what one wants from one’s job and what one perceives teaching as offering or entailing.

Even with the equally plausible, contrary arguments contending the direction of relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction, practically no empirical research has attempted to explore this very central question of whether teaching satisfaction (or teaching itself) can be a source of wellbeing and life satisfaction. Therefore, this research attempts to examine the relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction among university teachers. University faculty is the chosen focus, owing to the fact that, they, as teachers, are often likely candidates, subjected to the paradoxes of teaching. On a negative note, factors such as
relationships with large numbers of students, staff and administrators (Blix et al, 1994), stress related to high self-expectations, finding financial support for research, insufficient time, low pay and striving for publication (Gmelch, Lovrich and Wilke, 1984), heavy workload and role ambiguity (Goldenberg and Waddell, 1990) all tend to diminish the meaning and worth that teaching contributes to one’s life satisfaction. Contrary to this, a score of positive factors, unique to university teaching, such as the ‘content’ of the work itself (Castillo and Cano, 2004), increased instructional autonomy (Kim et al, 2008), sense of professional fulfillment and collegial as well as student relationships (Peterson and Wiesenberg, 2004), faculty working conditions as tenure track position, equitable income, sabbatical leaves, work control, involvement and consultation in university decision-making (Horton, S. 2006) fulfills most of the prerequisites of job satisfaction (such as job autonomy, task identity, achievement motivation, job involvement) and thereby conceivably fosters the sense of life satisfaction among university faculty.

While there appears to be some scepticism, regarding the relationship between life satisfaction and satisfaction pertaining to one’s particular profession, i.e., teaching, the relationship between general job satisfaction and life satisfaction is one that is quite well established. Work, being one of the five major life tasks (Myers et al., 2000), providing individuals with social interactions, self-identity, psychological benefits and economic resources (Herr & Cramer, 1988), it is only logical to maintain that job satisfaction is a strong predictor of overall perceived quality of life (Burke & McKeen, 1995; Lam, Foong & Moo, 1995). A good number of recent research studies have suggested significant positive relationships between life satisfaction and job satisfaction (e.g., Judge et al., 1998). The linkage between these two variables is quite clearly explicated in Judge and Locke’s (1993) contention that “an obvious reason for job satisfaction playing a causal role in subjective wellbeing is that it represents a part-whole relationship; that is the job is a part of life and thus is taken into account when rating overall life satisfaction”. This part-whole line of reasoning has also been corroborated by other researchers and is well established as a consistent and significant relationship ($r= 0.68$) in Judge, et al’s study (1998).

Given the awareness that job satisfaction and career fulfillment may be related to life satisfaction and subjective wellbeing, it is important to consider the question of whether teaching satisfaction is related to subjective wellbeing among teachers. Exploring this question could offer new insights and understandings regarding faculty members’ sense of fulfillment with their academic work as well as personal life and the relationship between the two. It is especially important given the fact that the personal and professional facets of faculty members’ sense of fulfillment, while they impact each other, also influence the success of educational programs and the quality of education delivered and this, in turn, reflects in the success and the wellbeing of those they teach and thereby in a society’s progress.

While there is an abundance of research examining Life Satisfaction and Teaching Satisfaction, variables separately and in various other contexts, studies linking the two variables seem to be very limited in number. Regardless of this dearth of studies, the need to explore the relationship between life satisfaction and sense of fulfillment in
teaching seems to be well reflected in those few studies, as may be seen from the following excerpt:

To what extent is academic work reflected in the broader arena of life?... Recent research by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching indicated that the extent to which work intruded into personal life has a primary factor in influencing overall dissatisfaction as well as satisfaction among faculty members. (Sorcinelli & Near, 1989)

The understanding that teaching, unlike other professions, is more central to one’s life is at its best expressed in the words of Bullogh Jr. and Pinnegar (2009). In their words, “for most teachers, teaching is not only a job, but an expression of an inner ambition and moral conviction that defines the self.” All the assertions in their article, seemed to center around one basic premise that the experience of teaching is a life affirming and life fulfilling experience, one that can help people achieve what is called ‘eudaimonia’ (happiness). Indeed, with the same understanding of considering teaching as a calling, Bellah et al (1985) also maintained that, ’work constitutes a practical ideal of activity and character that makes a person’s work morally inseparable from his/her life.’

As mentioned previously, studies linking teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction among university faculty are quite rare. One study, however, warrants special mention in this context due to the valuable information it has provided on the spillover effect between work and life away from work among university teachers. Sorcinelli and Near (1989) explored the ways in which work and personal life may be related among faculty members and found evidence for a high correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction among them. The study is of particular importance in the present context, in view of the fact that it substantiates the assumption of work being more central to the lives of faculty members than it is to the broad population.


A majority of these studies, implicitly or explicitly refer to teachers’ intrinsic motivation as one of the most important factors contributing to their sense of satisfaction. This brings us to what Patterson (1991) calls ‘teaching from innerness,’ which is at the heart of the concept of ‘teaching satisfaction,’ which this study tries to emphasize and relate to life satisfaction.

The Present Study

From the preceding discussions, it is quite clear that the question of whether teaching can be a source of life satisfaction, is indeed a crucial one to be explored, especially in light of increasing research findings that indicate declining life satisfaction
and wellbeing among university teachers. Given this awareness, the specific objectives, this research sets out to address are as following:

- To determine the extent of life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction among university faculty.
- To examine the relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction among the total sample as well as different demographic cohorts.
- To explore how teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction differs among university faculty belonging to different psychosocial variables.

Based on these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- H1 - There will be a significant positive correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction among university faculty.

Numerous studies have time and again confirmed the association between job satisfaction and life satisfaction in the general population as well as among university faculty. While this has provided a broader context for the inference of the hypothesis, a more direct assumption is that work satisfaction becomes more central to life satisfaction, when the profession is teaching.

- H2 - Life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction scores will significantly vary among university faculty belonging to different psychosocial variables.

A review of previous studies, presents a mixed picture of findings regarding the impact of psychosocial variables on teaching satisfaction. However, empirical research and theoretical literature does support the assumption that general job satisfaction differs among demographic variables. With regard to life satisfaction, a concluding supposition has been that variables such as age, gender and marital status do have an effect on subjective wellbeing and satisfaction with life (Frey and Stutzer, 2002). However, one psychosocial variable, gender, calls for special mention in this context. A hitherto established and consistent finding regarding this variable as insignificant or causing no variance in life satisfaction, was recently invalidated by compelling evidence from a large sample study that demonstrated the existence of significant gender-related differences in subjective well-being. (Inglehart, 2002). Overall, the evidence regarding the impact of psychosocial variables on life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction is more or less inconsistent, and needs further confirmation.

- H3 - The correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for female faculty than for male faculty.

A random review in the realm of spillover effects between work and life suggests that the strong relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is more marked among men than it is among women (Sorcinelli and Near, 1989). Likewise, the general stereotype of work assuming lesser importance for women given their traditional roles and norms may also be a convincing factor for one to presume a weaker correlation between work and life satisfaction among women (Sorcinelli and Near, 1989; Rice et al, 1985). However, the interaction effects of other variables on gender and the fact that work satisfaction in the modern era is as important to women as it has been for men...
may be sufficient reasons to presuppose the above hypothesis. (Sorcinelli and Near, 1989)

- H4- The correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for faculty with longer teaching experience than those with shorter teaching experience.

With no convincing previous studies specific to teaching satisfaction, to draw a conclusive inference, this hypothesis is one that is based on a general assumption inferred from theoretical literature, that, longer teaching experience, presupposes a commitment to the profession and thus a stronger relationship to one’s life satisfaction (Sarason, 1977).

- H5- The correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for senior faculty members than for younger faculty members.

Although not specifically in the context of satisfaction with teaching, Sorcinelli and Near (1989), hypothesized a positive spill over between work and life impacting a stronger correlation between work satisfaction and life satisfaction among senior faculty members. These researchers assumed that one of the possible reasons for work being more central to senior faculty members’ life satisfaction is their liberation from many of the stresses typically endured by younger faculty members.

Method

The study used a descriptive-correlate survey method and the data was collected using three sets of questionnaires.

Participants

The sample consisted of 103 (58 males and 45 females) full-time, tenure- track faculty members from UAE University, who were randomly selected from the university data base. The average age of the participants was 45.5 with a minimum age of 27 (youngest in the total sample) and a maximum age of 64 (oldest in the total sample). In terms of ranks held by the faculty members, 49 were assistant professors, 38 were associate professors, 12 were professors and 4 of them did not identify their rank. On average the faculty members had been teaching for 13.5 years, with the teaching experience ranging from five years to twenty-two years. Participants included 39 Arabs and 64 who identified themselves as ‘other.’

Measures

Teaching Satisfaction - Of the number of measures available to assess teaching satisfaction (BRJSS; Brayfield and Rothe, 1951; TJSQ; Lester, 1982; TJS; Zak, 1975), this study chose the ‘Teaching Satisfaction Scale’ (TSS) by Ho & Au (2006), due to its sound theoretical base which presupposes complementarity with the concept of ‘Life Satisfaction’, its suitability to the given sample and research context/objective and its proven reliability as a measure of teaching satisfaction. TSS claims to provide a reflection of teachers’ judgments on the extent to which their work is satisfying and meeting their needs. The value of the measure may well be ascertained from the authors’ description that “TSS assesses an overall impression that teachers have about
their work. It takes into consideration both the discrepancy between teacher’s real and ideal job states and the hypothetical behavioral responses of choosing teaching as a job…. It allows teachers to arrive at a subjective judgment on job satisfaction from a variety of psychological and situational appraisals”. Akin to Diener et al’s (1985) ‘Life Satisfaction Scale’, TSS consists of five items asking teachers how they feel about their job satisfaction in different ways. For each item, teachers are to respond on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Of importance to mention is TSS’s fairly high degree of reliability and validity. The scale was found to be of reasonable internal consistency with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.77; the test-retest reliability score (after a period of two weeks) was found to be 0.76. With the present study also yielding a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.69 for the scale, the reliability of the scale seems to be well established. The measure is also reported to have a high degree of convergent and criterion related validity (Ho & Au, 2006).

Life Satisfaction - Life satisfaction of the respondents was measured using the five item ‘Satisfaction with Life Scale’ (SWLS) developed by Diener et al (1985). The SWLS measures global life satisfaction and consists of 5 items, to which respondents are asked to indicate their degree of agreement on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The total SWLS scores range from 5 (low life satisfaction) to 35 (high life satisfaction). The SWLS has been repeatedly examined for both reliability and validity. A series of studies by Diener et al (1985) to validate the measure have demonstrated the scale to be of a single factor, multi-item measure of global satisfaction showing good internal consistency and reliability and with content appropriate for a wide range of age groups (Pavot & Diener, 1991). The present study yields a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.71 for the scale.

Demographic information Form - This self-complied questionnaire was used to collect socio demographic information of the respondents such as age, gender, affiliation, length of service, academic rank, average teaching load.

Procedure
Once the research protocol and study measures were approved by the UAE University Research Ethics Committee, potential participants’ names and their contact details were randomly selected from the university database. A list was prepared and the faculty members, were then contacted by email/phone, with an invitation to participate in the study. Those who responded affirmatively were met in person and were given the set of three questionnaires (SWLS, TSS and demographic information form) stapled together with a cover letter and an informed consent sheet. The cover letter served the purpose of giving faculty members a brief introduction to the aims and objectives of the study as well as an assurance regarding the confidential treatment of their responses. They were also requested to sign the informed consent sheet to signify their willingness to participate in the study. In order to maximize response rates, a reminder email was sent to the participants, and the completed questionnaires were collected back by the researcher within a period of one week after the initial contact with the participant. Nonetheless, out of the 150 participants contacted, only 134 agreed to participate and of the same, only 103 usable and completed data sets were returned to
the researcher. Data collection was completed over a 3-month period (between September and November of 2009).

**Data Analysis**

Once done with data collection, the completed surveys were numerically coded and socio demographic variables were coded into a common format so as to facilitate comparison. The compiled data entered into SPSS 11.5 was then subjected to different descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. While t-test was carried out to determine differences and similarities among groups, the relationship between ‘Teaching Satisfaction’ and ‘Life Satisfaction’ was ascertained using Pearson product moment correlation. The results, ensuing data analyses are presented in the following section.

**Findings & Discussion**

**Satisfaction with Life and Teaching**

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for each item, as well as the total score of SWLS. As can be seen, the scores indicate faculty members’ high satisfaction with their lives, and this is further substantiated by the higher than average mean score of 29.04. Indeed, the respondents seem to like their lives and feel that things are generally going fine. This range of scores, as interpreted by Diener (2006), does not necessarily mean that the respondents’ lives are perfect, but suggests that, by and large, life is mostly good. Furthermore, this sense of satisfaction may not mean they are complacent; it may rather be attributed to the growth and challenge and motivation drawn from the areas of dissatisfaction in their lives. In general, this range of scores indicates life as enjoyable, with the major domains of life-work, family, friends, leisure, and personal development, going well (Diener, 2006).

Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations for each item, as well as the total score of TSS. In much the same way as the results in Table 1, the scores indicate faculty members’ high satisfaction with their teaching, and this is further substantiated by the higher than average mean score of 29.21. Indeed, this result seems to suggest respondents’ high level of fulfillment with teaching or the great extent to which they believe teaching is satisfying and meeting their needs. The near similar results on the two measures, LSS and TSS will not seem to be quite atypical if one bears in mind the fact that the authors of TSS, in its development, had drawn upon LSS as its blueprint. In effect, the results seem to support the authors’ assumption of a positive relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The consistency of the scores is also a validation of TSS as a global measure of teaching satisfaction, incorporating both cognitive judgment and affective feeling of respondents’ teaching satisfaction. Diener’s (2006) interpretation of a high score on LSS may then be applied to TSS as well, in that an above average score on TSS does not necessarily mean that respondents derive ‘absolute’ contentment from teaching but is rather suggestive of the overall impression teachers have about their work.

A closer look at the two tables, and the reader will not miss a certain odd finding, common to both LSS and TSS. Item no. 5 of both the scales seems to be considerably different from the other items in the scale, with a comparatively higher standard.
deviation score and a correspondingly lower mean score. Apparently, this item, on both
the scales, functions differently from the other items in the scales and elicits divergent
and greatly varied responses from a sample. Perhaps, this item in both the scales
alludes to broader and deeper aspects of life/teaching satisfaction confounding the
participants and evoking mixed and greatly divergent responses from a homogenous
sample.

This discussion on respondents’ sense of satisfaction with life and teaching, cannot
conclude without a note of caution about the interpretation of the considerably higher
satisfaction scores reported above. LSS and TSS are scales designed to yield scores
that denote simplified, general or global satisfaction; the scores obtained, thus, may not
be truly representative of a real and fair picture of respondents’ contentment with life
and teaching. To explain this point, a person’s response in the affirmative to a general
question on satisfaction with life, may take a negative turn if the same question were to
be broken down to explore the specific domains or facets of one’s life. Thus, the
findings mentioned here, may not necessarily be the same, if the respondents were to
be assessed on their satisfaction pertaining to different and specified domains of life
and teaching. The aggregated satisfaction score thus obtained is bound to be different
from the satisfaction scores derived from global measures, such as LSS and TSS.

Differences in Life Satisfaction & Teaching Satisfaction among Various
Demographic Cohorts

Table 3 presents the t-test results for the between-group mean differences on Life
Satisfaction and Teaching Satisfaction for the different demographic cohorts,
categorized on the basis of age, gender, experience and area of primary interest. As
illustrated in the table, Life Satisfaction was not found to be significantly different
between groups based on any of the demographic variables considered in the study,
i.e., gender, age, experience or area of primary interest. Apparently these variables:
age, gender, years of experience or one’s primary interest in either teaching or
research, do not make any difference to the experience of ‘Life Satisfaction.’ The results
are almost the same for ‘Teaching Satisfaction,’ with the exception of significant
differences observed between groups categorized on one of the demographic variables:
‘area of primary interest’. As can be seen from the table, teaching satisfaction is
significantly different for university faculty with a primary interest in teaching and those
with a primary interest in research (t67= 2.371, p<.05). As one may expect, the score is
significantly higher for university faculty whose primary interest is teaching, as
compared to their peers whose predominant interest lies in research. Indeed, university
teachers’ preference for teaching or research, may not make a difference to their life
satisfaction, but definitely makes a difference to their teaching satisfaction. This finding
is only a confirmation of our insight that teaching satisfaction is more an experience for
university faculty for whom teaching is not only a job or a third component
complementing research and service, but is a calling that is very rewarding and central
to the expression of self. In this context, it is important to note that the term ‘teaching
satisfaction,’ as the concept exemplifies, may not be as relevant to post-secondary
faculty, as it is, to primary and secondary educators. This view has been echoed in a
number of previous papers that have highlighted the plausible discord between the
teaching and research roles taken up by university faculty, affecting complex inter-role
dynamics that complicate their ‘job satisfaction’ and cause an impediment to fulfillment in their teaching experience.

**Relationship between Teaching Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction**

Table 4 presents Pearson product-moment correlations between TSS and LSS for the total sample, as well as for the various demographic cohorts in the study. The findings in this context answer the central research question and hence call for a thorough discussion. As seen from the table, the Pearson correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction was found to be a weak, 0.32 (p<.01), which is a markedly low score compared to the 0.64 (p<.001), found in the earlier study, by Sorcinelli and Near (1989), that examined the job satisfaction - life satisfaction relationship among university faculty. Even so, compare the findings with that for the job satisfaction - life satisfaction relationship in the general population and there seems to be some reason for reassurance, for the finding matches the average correlation of 0.31 found in a comprehensive review of empirical research on the general job satisfaction-life satisfaction relationship [Rice, Near and Hunt, 1980]. Thus, while the present finding does not critically contest or negate the established positive relationship between general job satisfaction and life satisfaction, it does call for a rethinking of our assumption that the relationship between work and life satisfaction may be greater for teachers than for general population. Indeed, work, i.e., teaching for university faculty, is not more important or central to their lives than it is for the broader population. Clearly, then, life satisfaction is an experience that is determined by a whole lot of other determinants and cannot be presumed to be predominantly associated with teaching satisfaction.

A comparison of the teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction correlation results between the two genders does lead one to certain thought-provoking observations and discussions. While the correlation results were not significantly high for both the groups, there was a noticeable difference in the $r$ for males and females. With an $r$ of 0.50 (p<0.01), the teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction relationship, seemed to be stronger for females, than it was for males ($r=.20$, p<0.01). The finding substantiates the hypothesis in this regard and is also consistent with the results from the study by Sorcinelli and Near (1989), which reported a higher job satisfaction-life satisfaction correlation for female university faculty than for their male counterparts. Clearly, fulfillment from teaching, and thus their jobs, does play a significant role in female faculty members’ sense of wellbeing and life satisfaction, more than it does for the male faculty members. Perhaps, teaching is an experience that is more inherently rewarding for females than it is for males, owing to their instinctual and innate skills and capacities that match the essence of teaching, thus explaining the link between fulfillment derived from teaching and their sense of well-being. On a rather broader note, the finding, whilst bringing us to the inference that work is more central to female faculty members’ life satisfaction than it is for male faculty members, also calls for a rethinking of two general stereotypes we have about the work-gender relationship. If anything, it challenges the common misconception that work, whether teaching or another job, is of lesser importance to a woman’s life, when weighed against family, relationships and personal commitments. Indeed, work satisfaction may be of central importance to a woman’s life, due to the sense of empowerment that she derives from it, and this affects her
experience of life fulfillment. In a similar vein, it also challenges the stereotype of males' archetypal investment in work that marginalizes family relationships and other emotional commitments. Certainly, there are more factors contributing to males' sense of well-being than work, be it teaching or any other.

A comparison of the teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction correlation between the two age groups (45 years & less and above 45 years), also calls for some serious thought. Just as in the case of the comparison of the life satisfaction-teaching satisfaction relationship between the two genders, even as the correlations were not significantly high for both the groups, the relationship between the variables seemed to be stronger for the younger faculty members. The results in the table show an r of 0.44 (p<0.01) for younger faculty members as compared to an r of 0.22 (p<0.01) for senior faculty members. This invalidates the hypothesis in this regard and brings us to the inference that fulfillment from teaching and thus work is more central to the wellbeing and life satisfaction for younger faculty members than it is for senior faculty members. This is possibly due to the fact that the devotion, zeal and involvement with which younger faculty members take on teaching, together with their often illusive conviction about teaching having a noble purpose of bringing about change, renders the ensuing fulfillment they derive from it and makes it central to the purpose of their life and thus their life fulfillment and well-being. As faculty members age, they burn out, and the realization or rather realistic understanding of the essence of ‘teaching’, causes teaching satisfaction to take a back seat as a lot of other factors emerge as determinants of life fulfillment and well-being.

The teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction correlations were not markedly different between the two groups of faculty members categorized on the basis of experience. With an r of 0.330 (p< 0.01) for faculty members with an experience of 10 years & lesser and an r of 0.321 (p<0.01) for faculty members with more than 10 years of experience, there seemed to be not much support for the hypothesis that the teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction may be stronger for faculty members with longer experience.

With results invalidating the central hypothesis on the teaching satisfaction - life satisfaction relationship, and confirming only one of the three related sub hypothesis on the same, there seems to be only one conclusion that can plausibly be arrived at. Indeed, the relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction may be one that is confounded by a lot of mediating variables, and it may be an oversimplification to have a generalized supposition that teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction is related.

Limitations & Recommendations for Further Research

This study, of course, is not without its share of limitations. Issues of importance to be discussed, include its small and non-representative sample, exclusive reliance on quantitative data, and the limited focus of the study in terms of the number of variables studied.

It has to be noted that the sample in the study was limited to faculty members from a single university in UAE. Given the multicultural context in UAE University, this may not imply a non-representative sample. But the fact that universities have unique and distinct organizational cultures and philosophies that impact the lives and perspectives
of their faculty members is reason enough to speculate the ungeneralizability of the findings to a general population of university faculty. The findings, then, are more representative of faculty members in UAE University than of a general population of university teachers. On a positive note, however, this limitation helps make the findings more useful to the administrators and faculty of UAE University. Another crucial drawback relates to the insufficient sample size, which has limited the possibility of comparing differences between and among sub groups. All too obviously, this study lacks findings related to the psychosocial variable, 'marital status,' which is, nevertheless, important in the context of subjective well-being and life satisfaction. Indeed, a larger, heterogeneous and more representative sample may have rendered more reliable, generalizable and valid results.

With regard to methodology, it is important to note that the study is solely based on quantitative data obtained from two global self-report measures: SWLS and TSS. ‘Subjective Wellbeing’ and ‘Teaching Satisfation’, are concepts that call for in depth and profound subjective approaches; results would have been considerably different with a mixed method approach, incorporating interviews or narrative approaches to capture subjects responses on life satisfaction. Also, the value in the apparent simplicity and clarity with which the study examines the relationship between a mere two variables is diminished when considered in the light of studies that establish the relevance of a score of variables related to Subjective Wellbeing and life Satisfaction. For these reasons, generalizations of the study results should be treated with extreme caution.

Future studies attempting to explore the relationship between teaching satisfaction and subjective wellbeing may benefit from expanding the study to include a score of other mediating and context variables such as the spillover of professional and personal lives of university teachers, burnout, intrinsic motivation and orientations to teaching, teacher morale and personality factors. It may also be more insightful to examine the relation between teaching satisfaction and subjective wellbeing in various educational settings such as K-12 schools, community colleges, vocational institutes, training centres. Expansion on the present study in this way would allow for greater understanding and insight regarding the relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction. Drawing attention to the particular limitations of this study, a larger, more representative and diverse sample may be helpful in establishing and generalizing the results.

Conclusion

In summary, the results of the study indicate that the participants, university faculty members, are highly satisfied with both teaching as well as life in general. Even so, the findings failed to establish a relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction. The teaching satisfaction-life satisfaction correlation seemed to be stronger among females than males and among younger faculty members than senior faculty members. Variables, such as age, gender, years of experience or one’s primary interest in either teaching or research did not seem to make any difference to the experience of ‘Life Satisfaction.’ The same seemed to be true for 'Teaching Satisfaction,' with the exception of significant differences observed in the same, between groups categorized on 'area of primary interest.'
Based on these results, it may be concluded that the study did not find much support for the central hypothesis (H1), which stated that there will be a significant positive correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction among university faculty. The results also failed to confirm hypotheses (H4), which stated that the correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for faculty with longer teaching experience than those with shorter teaching experience and (H5) which stated that the correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for senior faculty members than for younger faculty members. Of the five hypotheses, the only one that seemed to be well substantiated was (H3), which stated that the correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction will be significantly higher for female faculty than for male faculty. The hypothesis (H2), which stated that life satisfaction and teaching satisfaction scores will significantly vary among university faculty belonging to different psychosocial variables found partial support owing to the one demographic variable, which rendered significant differences in teaching satisfaction.

The implications of these findings are important for faculty members as well as for the management and governing bodies of the university. Regardless of the very positive and reassuring findings that ascertain faculty members’ high levels of teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction, the absence of a strong correlation between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction is one that cannot be ignored. If anything, it tells us that teaching satisfaction, by itself, does not render the experience of well-being and fulfillment to university teachers. It is important for universities to realize that faculty members’ dissatisfaction or discontent with their lives is not mere personal experiences that can be ignored or considered extraneous to its interests or functions. Rather, these are experiences that negatively impact the spirit of learning and education, in any educational organization. Hence, it is important for universities to assume a role in helping faculty members to value and appreciate the other facets that contribute to their sense of well-being, and this can be, by way of supportive environments and appropriate faculty assistance programs such as formal counseling services, opportunities to promote their creative talents, occasions for socialization and interpersonal relationships.

Considering this is a preliminary study that draws attention to the experience of subjective well-being and life fulfillment among university faculty members in UAE, there is a need to look into this field further in order to expand our knowledge about the different factors and dynamics that impact the experience. Such research could be very beneficial to universities and educational organizations in the region.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Dr. Hamza Dodeen, FHSS, for his kind support and guidance in the statistical analysis of the data, Dr. Shyam S. Kurup, FFA, for his assistance in data collection and Ms. Fadwa Baraba, FHSS, for being a great help with data entry. Thanks are also due to the many faculty members of UAE University, who kindly gave of their time to participate in this study.
### Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of SWLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1 (In most ways my life is close to my ideal)</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2 (In general, the conditions of my life are excellent)</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3 (I’m satisfied with my life)</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4 (So far I’ve gotten the important things I want in life)</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5 (If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing)</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Scale</td>
<td>29.04</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of TSS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 1 (In most ways being a teacher is close to my ideal)</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2 (In general, my conditions of being a teacher are excellent)</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3 (I’m satisfied with being a teacher)</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4 (So far I’ve got the important things I want from being a teacher)</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5 (If I could choose my career over, I would change almost nothing)</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Scale</td>
<td>29.21</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 - Differences between Various Demographic Cohorts, on Life Satisfaction and Teaching Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Satisfaction</th>
<th>Demographic Variables</th>
<th>45 &amp; Less</th>
<th>Above 45</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>45 &amp; Less</td>
<td>28.82 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>29.26 (N=50)</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>29.0 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>29.02 (N=40)</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>28.97 (N=31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29.31 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>29.11 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29.70 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>29.81 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>10 yrs &amp; Less</td>
<td>29.97 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>29.11 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Above 10 yrs</td>
<td>29.70 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>29.81 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AREA OF PRIMARY INTEREST</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>29.31 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>29.11 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>29.70 (N=49)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>29.81 (N=52)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>29.31 (N=67)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>28.98 (N=42)</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (p<.05)

Table 4- Correlation between Life Satisfaction and Teaching Satisfaction for the Total Sample as well as the Various Demographic Cohorts in the Sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation between Life Satisfaction &amp; Teaching Satisfaction</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>45 &amp; less</td>
<td>Above 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>&amp; lesser</td>
<td>above 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>0.324**</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.496**</td>
<td>0.444**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>0.321**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** - Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

REFERENCES


Zak, I. (1975). Job satisfaction: A causal model. School of Education, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv (Hebrew).