

Occupational stress, compensation fairness and job burnout among teachers in public universities in Hefei City

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Abstract

With the advancement of economic globalization and the deepening of reform, China's higher education is transitioning from elitism to popularization. While various universities are expanding their enrollment, the demand for a stable and high-quality teaching staff is also increasing. In the changing times, university teachers have a more arduous mission and responsibility, bearing enormous pressure in teaching, scientific research, and other work. At the same time, the group of university teachers is also troubled by the issue of fairness compensation. As a traditional helping industry, university teachers are a group prone to job burnout. Some studies have shown that compensation unfairness, and high occupational pressure is important influencing factors of job burnout. Based on this situation, this study combed the past literature, investigated the public university teachers in Hefei through questionnaires, and investigated the compensation fairness, occupational pressure, and job burnout of university teachers. The research shows that teachers in public universities in Hefei have high internal salary fairness, low external salary fairness, high occupational pressure and job burnout; There is a significant negative correlation between salary fairness and job burnout, while there is a significant positive correlation between occupational stress and job burnout. Based on the results of data analysis, the study proposed the faculty well-being program.

Keywords: occupational stress, compensation fairness, job burnout, academic performance, educational management

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1. Introduction

With the development and change of the global economy, the quantity and quality of human resources are factors that must be considered in the economic development of each country. However, an important factor affecting the quality of human resources is a country's education level. In China, with the growing demand for education and the requirements of economic development, major colleges and universities have been expanding their enrollment in the past two decades. While the number of students increases, the development and construction of the teaching team is also crucial in order to ensure the teaching effect. The implementer of the education system, the teacher, is called "the most glorious profession under the sun" and occupies a very important position in the national development and economic construction. However, due to the reform wave in China in the past two decades, college teachers are faced with problems such as long working hours, high requirements, complex objects, and great pressure. Under the long-term occupational pressure, college teachers are in a state of physical and mental exhaustion caused by lack of coping resources and coping abilities, which brings about problems in physiology, emotion, cognition and behavior, and even leads to serious physical and mental illness of teachers, which induces disgust and the loss of teachers. In 2018, "Guangming Daily" published the article "Job Burnout Affects the Achievement of Educational Purposes, Teachers Should Be 'Empowered'", pointing out that job burnout has become "the last mile problem hindering school reform".

However, under the background of high work pressure, salary as the price performance of human capital competition is an important means to attract and build a teaching team. Salary is also the guarantee of economic compensation and social status of college teachers. Remuneration to a certain extent represents the affirmation of qualifications, abilities, and dedication. However, although the salary level of college teachers in China has increased slightly, they are still in the lower middle position in various industries. As a member of the traditional helping industry, college teachers belong to the group prone to job burnout.

The "match-mismatch" theoretical model proposed by Maslach and Leiter believes that when there is a mismatch between employees and organizations in six aspects, such as workload, remuneration, and fairness, employee burnout may occur or aggravate. This theoretical model is research The effect of job stress and pay equity on job burnout provides a theoretical basis. Therefore, under the above realistic and theoretical background, this paper will investigate the work pressure, pay equity and job burnout status of college teachers, and study the impact of college teachers' work pressure and pay equity on job burnout. This paper puts forward policy suggestions to enhance the sense of fairness in college teachers' compensation and reduce the level of college teachers' job burnout.

Objectives of the Study - This study aims to determine the occupational stress, compensation fairness and job burnout among teachers in Public Universities in Hefei City. More specifically to assessed the occupation stress of public college teachers in Hefei City in terms of workload, interpersonal relationship, career development, management appointment, role conflict; determined the compensation fairness in terms of external equity, internal equity, personal equity, procedural equity; identified the job burnout in terms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment; tested the significant relationship of occupational stress and compensation fairness to job burnout; proposed a faculty well-being program to improve the working condition.

2. Methods

Research Design - Descriptive research methods are adopted in this study to determine the occupational

stress, compensation fairness and job burnout among teachers in Public Universities in Hefei City. Data obtained from special investigations are used to analyze the research results fully and accurately. This research mainly conducted a survey on college teachers in Hefei City, Anhui Province by means of a questionnaire survey, collected the data and information required for the research, and then used SPSS software to conduct statistical analysis on the survey data to provide support for the research conclusions and scientific countermeasures. in accordance with. In the process of analysis, descriptive statistical analysis will be used to understand the situation of work pressure, salary fairness and job burnout of teachers in colleges and universities in Hefei. And use correlation, regression analysis and mediation model to study the role of job stress and pay equity perception in the formation of job burnout.

Participants of the Study - Because the object of this research is college teachers in Hefei City, Anhui Province, the survey object is all college teachers in Hefei City, Anhui Province. Considering the large number of colleges and universities in Hefei and the large number of teachers, it is difficult to conduct a comprehensive survey, so this study intends to use a sample survey. According to the types and grades of colleges and universities in Hefei City, representative colleges and universities are selected for the survey, and the sample is guaranteed to be reasonable in terms of demographic variables (such as gender, professional title, position) and other aspects.

Data Gathering Instrument - To collect the data for this research, three modified and adopted research instruments were used using a four-point rating scale. A research instrument is a tool used to gather, measure, and analyze information used in the study. The instruments used are modified questionnaires. Work stress measures the current situation of college teachers' work stress from five dimensions: job compliance, interpersonal relationship, career development, management appointment, and occupational conflict. The questionnaire of pay equity measures the sense of pay equity of college teachers from four dimensions: internal fairness, external fairness, personal fairness, and degree of fairness. The job burnout questionnaire measures the job burnout status of college teachers from three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal low sense of achievement.

Data Gathering Procedure - After confirming that this research can be implemented through the defense, it firstly applied to the major universities in Hefei for research qualifications, and after obtaining the consent of the research, the questionnaires were distributed by means of electronic questionnaires. The commonly used electronic questionnaire platform in China is "Questionnaire Star". This topic will distribute questionnaires on this platform, and at the same time, the questionnaires will also be made public on the Internet.

Reliability Results

Variables	No. of Items	Alpha value	Interpretation
Occupational Stress			
Work Load	5	0.892	Good
Interpersonal relationship	5	0.814	Good
Career Development	5	0.883	Good
Role conflict	5	0.810	Good
Overall	20	0.919	Excellent
Compensation Fairness			
External equity	5	0.902	Excellent
Internal equity	5	0.907	Excellent
Personal Equity	5	0.940	Excellent
Procedural Equity	5	0.919	Excellent
Overall	20	0.956	Excellent
Job Burnout			
Emotional Exhaustion	5	0.907	Excellent
Depersonalization	5	0.834	Good
Personal Accomplishment	5	0.918	Excellent
Overall	15	0.874	Good

Legend >0.9= Excellent >0.8=Good; >0.7=Acceptable; >0.6=Questionable; >0.5=Poor; <0.5=Unacceptable

After the preliminary design of the questionnaire was completed, we distributed 20 questionnaires to the

survey subjects and collected these data for questionnaire validity analysis. Experts were invited to pretest the questionnaire, further improving its structure and language expression. Pretesting. The questionnaire displays the Cronbach values for each variable α and CR value both are above 0.8. Reliability results showed that the Cronbach's alpha for occupational stress (0.9190), compensation fairness (0.956), and job burnout (0.874) suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency, which indicating that the scale has good reliability. After the survey questionnaire was confirmed, and the researchers prepared a letter of intent as Researchers require data to be collected from respondents.

Ethical Considerations - Ethical considerations will be practiced in the conduct of the research work to warrant that every information that was gathered are used for research purposes only to maintain the quality and integrity of the research. The researcher will also seek the consent of the respondent through letter and communication to make sure that the target respondents will be prepared to answer necessary questions involved in the research. It also ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents by not seeking their names as they were answering the questionnaires. The researcher will also ensure that the respondents voluntarily answer the questionnaires according to their will. Lastly, it will also ensure that none of the respondents of the study will be hurt or harmed, and their safety and security is of top priority.

Data Analysis - This study used SPSS for statistical analysis of the collected data. SPSS for Windows is a combined software package that integrates data entry, organization, and analysis functions. The basic functions of SPSS include data management, statistical analysis, chart analysis, output management and so on. SPSS statistical analysis process includes descriptive statistics, mean comparison, general linear model, correlation analysis, regression analysis, log-linear model, cluster analysis, data simplification, survival analysis, time series analysis, multiple response and so on. There are several statistical processes in the regression analysis, such as linear regression analysis, curve estimation, Logistic regression, Probit regression, weighted estimation, two-stage least squares, nonlinear regression and other statistical processes. It also allows the user to select different methods and parameters. SPSS also has a special drawing system that can draw various graphs based on data.

The statistical analysis methods used in the study are:

Descriptive statistical analysis: Descriptive statistical analysis is the most commonly used method in quantitative research. The characteristics of all aspects of the population can be understood through frequency analysis, central tendency analysis, and degree of dispersion analysis in descriptive statistical analysis. Frequency analysis can analyze the variables of population characteristics to understand whether the distribution of samples in terms of population characteristics is reasonable. Frequency analysis can also analyze categorical variables. Central tendency analysis is a measure of the average level of the overall general level. This method can be used to measure the average level of salary fairness, work pressure, and job burnout among college teachers in Hefei City. The degree of dispersion analysis is to measure the degree of dispersion in general - to understand the difference level among teachers' pay equity, work pressure, and job burnout in Hefei's colleges and universities.

Variable relationship analysis: After understanding the basic characteristics of the research object of this subject, the relationship between variables is studied by methods such as correlation analysis, variance analysis, and regression analysis. Correlation regression analysis can study the relationship between variables - the relationship between pay equity, job stress and job burnout, and whether a regression model can be constructed. Analysis of variance and T test can be used to analyze the impact of demographic variables on pay equity, job pressure, and job burnout.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the brand Occupational Stress a composite mean of 2.80 verbally interpreted as agree. Among the cited indicators, "Role conflict" obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.04, followed by "Career

Occupational stress, compensation fairness and job burnout among teachers in public universities in Hefei City development” (2.99), “Workload” (2.87), “Interpersonal relationship” (2.28), were verbally interpreted as agree.

The investigation and analysis of the five variables under the occupational pressure shows that the occupational pressure of teachers in public colleges and universities in Hefei is generally high. Role conflict and career development have the greatest impact, while interpersonal relationships have little impact. From a comprehensive perspective, the professional pressure of teachers in public colleges and universities in Hefei comes from social factors. In the context of socio-economic development, teachers have high social requirements, including income, social status, professional ability, and other aspects (Zhang Fuxian, 2018).

Table 1

Summary Table on Occupational Stress

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Workload	2.87	Agree	3
Interpersonal Relationship	2.28	Disagree	4
Career Development	2.99	Agree	2
Role Conflict	3.04	Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	2.80	Agree	

Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

Female teachers also have requirements for family responsibilities. With the development of parenting concepts, male teachers also face the requirement of taking care of their families (Feng XU, 2020). Especially young and middle-aged university teachers face economic pressure from housing, cars, loans, and other aspects. Economic pressure will turn into problems such as Role conflict and career development contradiction (Kang Xiuyun). Table 2 shows the brand Compensation Fairness with a composite mean of 2.52 verbally interpreted as agree. Among the cited indicators, “Internal equity” obtained the highest weighted mean of 2.72, followed by “Personal equity” (2.51), “When I have questions about the income distribution process, standards or results, the superior leaders or relevant departments will give reasonable explanations in a timely manner.” (2.43), “Procedural equity” (2.42), “External equity.” (2.43) were verbally interpreted as agree.

Table 2

Summary Table on Compensation Fairness

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
External Equity	2.43	Disagree	3
Internal Equity	2.72	Agree	1
Personal Equity	2.51	Agree	2
Procedural Equity	2.42	Disagree	4
Grand Composite Mean	2.52	Agree	

Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

For employees in enterprises, compensation can not only achieve their economic goals, but also promote their personal development and achieve self-improvement. Salary is distributed based on the contribution of employees to the work of the enterprise, reflecting their personal value. Based on their contributions to the organization, employees can receive corresponding income (Li Tao, 2021). In addition, as the initial distribution, salary is the distribution of value created by employees through labor, and the compensation income obtained by employees through their contributions to the work of the enterprise and the organization. The increase in employee compensation to a certain extent means the growth of enterprise efficiency, representing the common progress of employees and the enterprise, and is very important for promoting the growth and development of the enterprise.

A reasonable salary gap can promote employees to see the shortcomings in their work, increase work engagement or efficiency, optimize and improve personal work skills, and motivate work. By paying more labor in the workplace, employees can pursue corresponding labor rewards. However, if the salary gap is too large, not only will it fail to motivate employees to work, but also because of the large salary gap, the salary cannot accurately and reasonably reflect the value of employees' contributions to the enterprise organization, resulting in employees losing work enthusiasm, feeling unfair treatment, and forming a dissatisfied attitude towards salary

(Pan Ming, 2018). The emergence of salary fairness stems from employees' psychological reactions to the phenomenon of whether their own salary can be fairly distributed. Sun Jing (2016) points out that it not only includes employees' perception of whether the company's salary system is fair, but also their perception of whether the management process is fair. Therefore, salary fairness mainly manifests as internal fairness and external fairness.

Later, Zhang Jin (2014) further improved the content of salary fairness and found that salary fairness also includes personal fairness. The internal fairness of salary is based on a vertical comparison of the internal salary system of the enterprise, which means that the scope of salary payment should comprehensively include the work content and operational technical requirements of employees, and the contribution of various positions to the overall goal realization of the enterprise in the process of achieving the overall work goals. Usually, internal fairness in compensation requires consideration of the external environment and workload of employees, and achieving internal fairness in compensation can effectively motivate employees to work. The external fairness of compensation is a horizontal comparison between the salary of a company and the salary prices of organizations in the same industry in the labor market, that is, a comparison of the competitiveness of a company's salary level (Song Yangjun, 2021).

The difference in salary levels between enterprises and external factors directly affects the issue of talent turnover and has a direct impact on employee turnover behavior. The personal fairness of employees is reflected in whether their rewards and benefits in the same organization match the value created for the enterprise and their contributions to the enterprise. That is, whether the rewards received by employees working in the same position in the same enterprise are fair when compared is a balance between effort and reward. In the actual process of salary distribution, employees not only pay great attention to the fairness of salary distribution, but also emphasize the fairness of the process and procedures of salary distribution, that is, the attention to the fairness of distribution procedures and distribution systems.

Table 3

Summary Table on Job Burnout

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Emotional Exhaustion	2.72	Agree	2
Depersonalization	2.62	Agree	3
Personal Accomplishment	2.99	Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	2.78	Agree	

Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the brand job burnout a composite mean of 2.78 verbally interpreted as agree. Among the cited indicators, "Personal Accomplishment" obtained the highest weighted mean of 2.99, followed by "Emotional Exhaustion" (2.72), "Depersonalization" (2.62), were verbally interpreted as agree.

In recent years, young university teachers have experienced a decline in their initial interest in work and a phenomenon of forced passion towards academic willingness, resulting in a significant decrease in their sense of professional value, happiness, and belonging. Teachers' job burnout is the result of the imbalance between teachers' job involvement, job satisfaction and productivity. It is also a state in which individuals are unable to control the work situation, which leads to burnout, which may be accompanied by emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, and reduced personal sense of achievement (Wang yin, 2022). However, suitable methods cannot be used to alleviate these work and life pressures, and long-term accumulation of these negative emotions can have a negative impact on university teachers themselves. Unable to alleviate and release emotions, which can have a certain impact on work and daily life (Wang Xiaojing, 2021). The theory of occupational burnout includes three key dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low sense of self achievement. These three important dimensions represent different meanings and perspectives. There are the following reasons for the high level of job burnout of public higher education teachers in Hefei.

Firstly, in terms of job roles, on the one hand, they undertake a large amount of basic teaching work. Due to

the varying levels of students they face, teaching work has a serious impact on emotional exhaustion (Wang Xiuzhi, 2021). The teaching tasks of undergraduate students not only require timely classes, but also require university teachers to grade relevant assignments after class. The requirements for teaching quality are also quite high, not only to ensure the passing rate of students of all grades, but also to ensure that students have gained something. This also helps to solve some problems in students' lives, occupying the vast majority of the emotional value of teachers. On the other hand, university teachers are also the backbone of scientific research forces. The application of scientific research projects, determination of scientific research objectives, and arrangement of scientific research tasks all consume a lot of energy from university teachers. Scientific research tasks are complex and varied, and if not completed on time, it will directly affect the sense of achievement of university teachers (Guo Bolin, 2020). Teachers, especially married university teachers, also need to bear family and social responsibilities. Coaching, educating, and caring for their children has become a part of the teacher's role (Huang Xiaolin, 2021). Finally, facing increasing teaching and research pressures, university teachers have to constantly learn, strengthen their skills and quality levels, both as teachers and learners, and practice them in teaching and research tasks, continuously improving oneself indirectly leads to job burnout.

With so many roles concentrated on university teachers at the same time, university teachers not only need to play each role, it's even more important to quickly and accurately switch between different roles, and the difficulty it brings can be imagined. What to do at different ages and job levels during different time periods gives teachers higher requirements for their own positioning. If one cannot clearly recognize their role positioning, it is possible to be exhausted and have a reduced sense of achievement (Li shujing, 2020). As a learner, one should not only maintain sensitivity to the subject being taught during working hours, but also appreciate the charm of different disciplines from the perspective of the learner, leverage the influence of university teachers, engage in active self-regulation, and achieve a perfect transformation of multiple roles. Through decades of continuous work, one should maintain passion and continuously bring value output

Secondly, starting from Maslow's Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, as a teacher in colleges and universities, physiological and safety needs can be generally met, while relatively high-level emotional needs need to be given by family and society in the process of role transformation (Gan luojia, 2022). Being respected is a spiritual requirement that university teachers can easily obtain. University teachers not only have higher educational qualifications, but also have higher quality, a decent working environment, and are respected by all sectors of society. Among the spiritual needs, the need for self-realization is the main challenge faced by university teachers. Cultivating a variety of talents can promote teachers' self-realization, as well as achieve certain research results, which can also achieve the goal of self-realization. In contrast, the lack of understanding and recognition of scientific research pressure from various sectors of society has increased the difficulty of self-realization, reducing to some extent the self-efficacy of university teachers. The success of publishing experimental results cannot be achieved overnight, and university teachers' self-realization also needs to be slowly achieved in their daily work. This requires university teachers to endure loneliness, improve their level of needs, and overcome difficulties such as job burnout.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

There is moderate level of occupational stress of college teachers in Hefei, China. The overall fairness of college teachers' salary is high, mainly reflected in a strong sense of internal fairness, while a weak sense of external fairness. The Hefei college teachers had moderate level of job burnout. There is a significant positive correlation between occupational stress and job burnout, while there is a significant negative correlation between salary fairness and job burnout, and there is no significant relationship between occupational stress and salary fairness. The faculty well-being program was prepared to improve the working condition.

Universities may establish and improve relevant systems and mechanisms to alleviate the work pressure of young teachers and may improve a reasonable promotion system for teachers to reduce job burnout among university teachers. The government may increase financial investment to enhance the external fairness of

teacher salaries and may establish flexible salary adjustment mechanisms, broaden democratic participation paths, and enhance the sense of procedural fairness in salary. The government and the may establish effective social support networks for teachers to reduce job burnout. the faculty well-being program may be reviewed and adopted. Future researchers may conduct similar studies and may add other variables like mental health to come with more specific programs to reduce stress in the workplace.

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