

# Analyzing the factors that affect an employee's satisfaction in the education sector

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**Abstract:** For any work environment to flourish and succeed, its employees have to be satisfied and content with their work. Satisfaction plays an important role in the performance of companies, both financially and non-financially. This study sought to find out the factors that affect an employee's satisfaction at work and then tried to relate those findings with possible actions that could occur. The researcher found 11 factors that affect an employee's satisfaction.

**Keywords:** work environment, employee's satisfaction, companies.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study:

In every business sector, competition is very high, whether it is in product development, employee retention, and business performance. Many of these are affected by factors that can have significant impact on an organization's performance and sustainability. These factors can be separated into financial and non-financial aspects. One of the most important factor to have been studied in recent years is employer satisfaction. Research shows that satisfaction can have a big effect on an organization's performance (Grigoroudis, Tsitsiridi, & Zopounidis, 2013).

The education sector is no different. As a result, headmasters, deans and principals need to develop instruments that can gauge an institution's performance against employees' satisfaction. This is because managers can then find the impact of this relationship. When designing such instruments, it is important to consider the different department of the university, cultural differences, nationalities of the employees, as well as goals and outcomes of the organisation (Irani, Sharp & Kagioglou, 1997). This is important because what may work in one country or university may not work in another.

### 1.2 Problem Statement:

For a very long time, the relationship between a company's performance and an employee's satisfaction was questioned. One of the early studies to look at this matter was that of Dean & Bowen (1994), who believed that there was a direct relationship between the two.

However, because this was not considered as an important factor, resulting in many organisations neglected its impact on the performance of the organisation (Eskildsen, Kristensen & Westlund, 2003). Johnston, Spinks, & Manning (2010) study indicates that companies can achieve better results if they address the issue of satisfaction (Johnston, Spinks, & Manning 2010). Dockel, Basson & Coetzee (2006) also show that a direct correlation between a worker's satisfaction and that of a customer.

### 1.3 Research Questions:

The research will attempt to answer the following question:

What role does (employee) satisfaction play in the overall performance of a company?

#### **1.4 Research objectives:**

The aim of the study is to find out:

1. What factors make workers happy at work?
2. What possible actions can result from employee being dissatisfied?

The researcher makes the following hypothesis:

- An employee's satisfaction is affected by various factors.
- Dissatisfied employees will affect the performance of the company, both financially and non-financially.

#### **1.5. Significance of the study:**

Finding out what factors affect the satisfaction level of employees is very important as it allows them to know what affects employees and measure this against the performance of employees and the organisation.

#### **1.6. Scope of Study:**

This thesis will focus on identifying the factors that affect an employee's morale in the work place and will attempt to determine its effect on the performance of the company by identifying the actions that may take place as a result of workers not being happy. As previously explained, many business previously linked a company's profit to its operations processes. Whilst this is correct, these researches did not take into account other factors such as employee's satisfaction. Therefore, the main goal of this research is to find out the factors that can influence a worker's satisfaction and the actions that can result from an employee not being satisfied.

#### **1.7. Thesis Structure:**

This dissertation consists of six chapters. In the first chapter, the thesis will provide a background to the study, the problem statement and the rationale for the project. The author will also provide the main research question of this project, project aims and hypothesis.

Chapter 2 looks at the relevant literature. It will review them and analyse them in order to find ways of utilising the research for the benefit of this research. Chapter 3 goes through the design of the project. The author will also provide an insight into the methodology being used for this research, the data collection process and the tools that will be used to analyse them.

Chapter 4 will present the results of the project. It will look at all factors affecting the satisfaction of employees, including financial and non-financial factors. The chapter will also look at the possible consequences of employees not being satisfied.

Chapter 5 is a continuation of chapter 4. This chapter will attempt to provide explanations of the results. Last but not least, chapter 6, which is the final chapter will address whether the research questions have been answered as well as the hypothesis. It will then conclude with the limitations of the study and recommendations future work on the topic.

## **2. LITERATURES REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction:**

In this chapter, a background into the topic is provided by looking at the literature review on employees' satisfaction and the factors that affect their motivation. It will also look at how these factors. Overview of Employees' Satisfaction:

### **2.2. Definition:**

Before going into factors affecting an employee's satisfaction or what it means for an organisation, it is imperative to define job satisfaction first. According to Churchill et al. (1976, p.254), job satisfaction is related to the features of the job and the work environment. For Locke (1976), job satisfaction is the affection a person feels towards his work. When a person has a positive feeling towards his work, it means that he/she is satisfied.

Organ and Near (1985) provide another definition of job satisfaction which is a non-affective definition. It takes the issue of satisfaction from a cognitive angle. In other words, they state that job satisfaction is related to the psychological aspect. This means that an employee will likely be satisfied if they receive recognition or appreciation from their manager. However, this definition excludes the emotional aspect of the human, something which has to be considered as we are all humans and become emotional from time to time.

### 2.3. Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy of Needs:

Abraham Maslow, who introduced the theory of hierarchy of needs, believed that employers have to study the type of needs which are most important for their employees. According to Maslow, people become motivated when their needs are taken care of and addressed. He further states that these factors take priority of salary. As a result, he came up with the following hierarchy of needs:

1. Physiological
2. Safety
3. Social
4. Esteem
5. Self-actualization

According to Maslow (1943, 1954), employees become satisfied with their job when their basic needs are addressed first. This is why he ranked his needs in a particular order. Psychological and safety needs take precedence over the other needs. Once these needs are addressed, employees will seek more. In other words, he/she will look at the next level of what motivates them. This of course does not mean that satisfaction level needs to hit the 100% mark. It is not an 'all or nothing' concept (Maslow, 1987, p. 69).

Once the early stages of the hierarchy are fulfilled, employees will look at the higher aspects of the hierarchy such as self-esteem. This can be achieved in various ways like providing career promotion, appreciation of their work, etc. This is why certain organisations have schemes like 'employee of the month' to foster a sense of recognition.

### 2.4. Satisfaction factors:

In recent years, many researches have been carried out investigating the different factors that affect an employee's satisfaction. These studies have documented that an employee's satisfactions can have an impact on the way an organization performs. When employees are happy with their work, Kotane & Kuzmina (2011) believe that this will benefit not only the worker but also the company. This is because employees will be committed to their work, dependent, and more productive. Furthermore, employees who are satisfied can add value to their work as reported by Bockerman and Ilmakunnas' study (2012) which found that satisfied employees add extra value to their working hours.

Churchill et al. (1976) mention several aspects that may affect an employee's satisfaction. These include a person's manager, the work itself, a person's co-workers, the salary a person receives and career opportunities. Whilst the above list are noteworthy, it does nonetheless exclude other important points like job security and appreciation as previously mentioned in our definition.

Being engaged at work is an important aspect of job satisfaction (Moreland, 2013). According to Moreland (id), employers should try to address the issue of job satisfaction well before the person starts working with them. In other words, they should ask themselves if this person would fit well in the organisation. Moreland further states that if a person is not the ideal employee for this job, this person would lose interest very quickly upon starting the job. Moreland believes that this can even lead to a person leaving the position. This is irrespective of their remuneration, benefits or job title. Therefore, addressing the issue of job fit earlier on would result in better job engagement.

For an organisation, an engaged employee will perform better, resulting in better organisational performance. Towers Watson (2011) conducted a study which found that workers that are engaged can improve a company's performance by 19.2% over a timeframe of one year. Likewise, if an employee is disinterested, it can affect the performance of the company by 32 percent.

As we can see, employees who are not satisfied can have an impact on the financial results of a company. For those with more engaged and satisfied employees, their profit increased by 13.7% the study found. Similarly, when staff are disengaged, the profit went down by 3.8.%. Therefore, these numbers highlight the importance of engaging staff.

Long et al. (2012) carried out a study which looked at the impact of satisfaction on a business. They found that many factors impact on a worker's satisfaction. The study found that factors like management support, the job itself and the level of stress can affect the satisfaction of staff. The study concluded that if these matters are properly addressed (e.g the work continues to be stressful), it will lead to a high turnover.

Another interesting which was carried by Volkwein & Zhou (2003) linked satisfaction with the economical and growth of a country. If a country is performing well, individuals will feel secure. However, if the economical state of the country is bad, employees will look to leave. They will go from job to job, even from country to country to feel safe. This effect is similar to that of a company's stability and size. If people don't feel that the company is not performing well or is very small, they will look to leave in order to find stability or better career prospects.

Mehmood et. al. (2012) also carried out a research which was aimed at finding the main factors affecting a person's satisfaction. The research found that there was a direct link the remuneration package that an employee receives and his/her satisfaction level. It also found the working conditions will also affect an employee's satisfaction. Therefore, if work conditions and the salary being offered are good, employees will perform better and will lead to the organisation performing better.

Goffee and Jones (2013), who conducted a longitudinal study, established 6 factors that keep people happy in their job, thus leading to better performance (see figure). The figure below summarises the six main points. All of these points were extracted by conducting interviews with executives from different companies. The study did however have one weakness though. It did not get the perspective of employees.



Figure 1: Factors affecting job satisfaction (Goffee and Jones 2013)

Hickey & Bennett (2012) found similar points as Goffee and Jones (2013). They noted that career opportunities, collegial work environment, communication, recognition, fairness and adherence to policies all led to employees being satisfied. The study offers new important insights into certain factors that were not previously mentioned. The main weakness of this study however is that it focussed on the private sector. It did not look at the public sector. Satisfaction factors will vary from sector to sector.

Premuzic (2013) reports on a very important point. In his study which was conducted in multiple countries, money was found to be a very important factor. For some employees, money is the most important aspect because it will take care of their basic needs like housing, food, clothing, etc. The study however neglects other factors. What happens when the issue of money is addressed by the company? The study failed to answer this point. When employees are satisfied with their salary, they will start to look for other things. This is something which will eventually need to be addressed by the company when employees become dissatisfied.

Equality (Adam's equity theory) also plays an important role in job satisfaction (Evanschitzky, Wangenheim & Wunderlich, 2007). For example, suppose you have 2 employees in a company doing the same job. Their satisfaction level will depend on how equally they are treated. If the company offers one of them a pay rise but not the other, Adam's equity theory states that the other person is likely to be detached from his work, leading to inconsistency in his performance. This is because they no longer feel equal at work (Evanschitzky, Wangenheim & Wunderlich, 2007).

Another theory worth mentioning in the literature review is Locke's Range of Affect theory (1976). This theory defines satisfaction as the gap between what a person has in his/her job and what he/she is missing (Jauhari, 2001). In other words, this theory defines satisfaction as the level between an employee's current state and the desired level. This means that if a company is able to bridge the gap, employees will be more satisfied. However, if this gap is not closed, it is more likely that employees will become dissatisfied and less productive. However, certain studies have shown that this is not necessarily the case. Having employees who are highly satisfied does not necessarily lead them to becoming more productive (Evanschitzky, Wangenheim & Wunderlich, 2007).

## **2.5. Employee satisfactions and customer service:**

Every business depends on customers. Without customers, there will be no sale, thus no profit. Customers are attracted to business for various reasons such as price, reputation, brand, etc. One factor which has been studied by Evanschitzky, Wangenheim, & Wunderlich (2007) is customer service. They looked at how the level of customer service affected a business performance. In their study, Evanschitzky, Wangenheim, & Wunderlich found that there was a correlation between the satisfaction of workers and the level of customer service they provided.

The study found that employees who are satisfied tended to provide better customer service than those who were not. This means that having satisfied employees generally leads to better organisation performance. This will also enhance the image of the company. Bad customer service has an impact of the length of time it takes to provide a service. In other words, there is a delay in the service provided. If a task can be done in few minutes, dissatisfied employees will drag the task, thus affecting the satisfaction of the customer. This can lead to bad reviews of the company, thus affecting its image.

However, the researchers state that to evaluate the actual impact of employee satisfaction and customer service on a business performance needs time as there will be no immediate impact on an organisation performance. Thus, to determine the financial impact on a business, it would require a longitudinal study. Having said that, Evanschitzky, Wangenheim, & Wunderlich fail to state a period for such study.

The findings of Evanschitzky, Wangenheim, & Wunderlich (2007) is supported by Jauhari (2001) who states employees who are dissatisfied will lack the motivation to support customers.

## **2.6. Summary of literature review:**

Based on the aforementioned literature review, one can see that there are many factors that affect an employee's satisfaction. Furthermore, the literature review shows that there is a link between the satisfaction of a worker and the performance of a company. The research aims to find out which of these factors has more of an effect. It will rank them in order of importance. The figure below lists the factors that will be studied in this research in order to answer the research questions.



**Figure 2: A list of the different factors that affect the satisfaction level of employees**

Once the factors have been studied, the researcher aims to identify the impact these factors will have on the university. Based on the literature review, the following actions have been identified by the researcher.



**Figure 3: Action that can come about as a result of employees not being satisfied**

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction:

This chapter of the research deals with the design of the project and the methodology used in completing the project. It will also discuss how the participants were selected and data was collected during this research. The researcher will also provide details about the pilot study which was conducted to validate the questionnaire.

#### 3.2 Participants:

This research included participants from the different departments within the Preparatory Year Program at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. Individuals comprised of different nationalities and worked in various job roles. This sample was chosen because the researcher works in this section of the university and is able to contact the participants to collect data.

#### 3.3 Data collection method:

The researcher considered a range of possible methods in collecting data. Each method was assessed thoroughly for its advantages and disadvantages before being neglected.

##### 3.3.1 Interviews:

The researcher explored the possibility of using recorded interviews as a means of data collection. Whilst this method is useful to replay interviews and check answers, it was quickly discarded because it was a tiresome task. Furthermore, making arrangement with each participant was found to be difficult.

##### 3.3.2 Questionnaire:

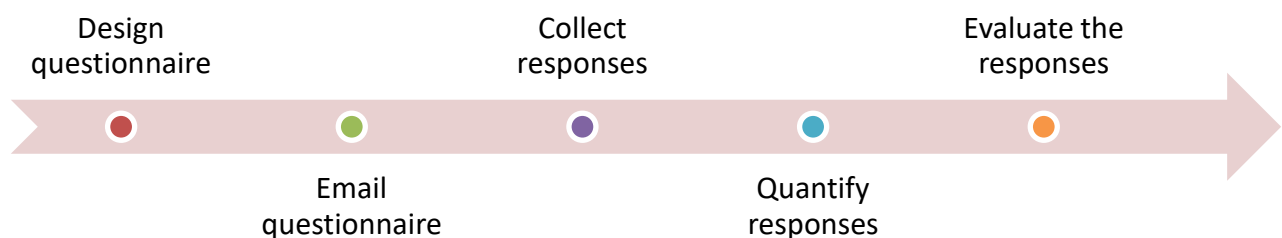
The researcher felt that the best method of data collection was an online questionnaires. This is for several reasons. First, it was easy to disseminate the questionnaires to all employees of the PYP, thus generating a large number of responses. Further, by using questionnaires, the researcher is able to guarantee the participant's confidentiality. All responses in the questionnaire are anonymous, as opposed to interviews.

#### 3.4 Role of the Researcher:

The researcher will not play an active role in this research. The researcher will only be responsible for sending the questionnaire to the participants. Once that is done, all employees who will take part in the research act independently.

#### 3.5 Research Design:

The design of the project follows a meticulous process which has been explained in detail below.

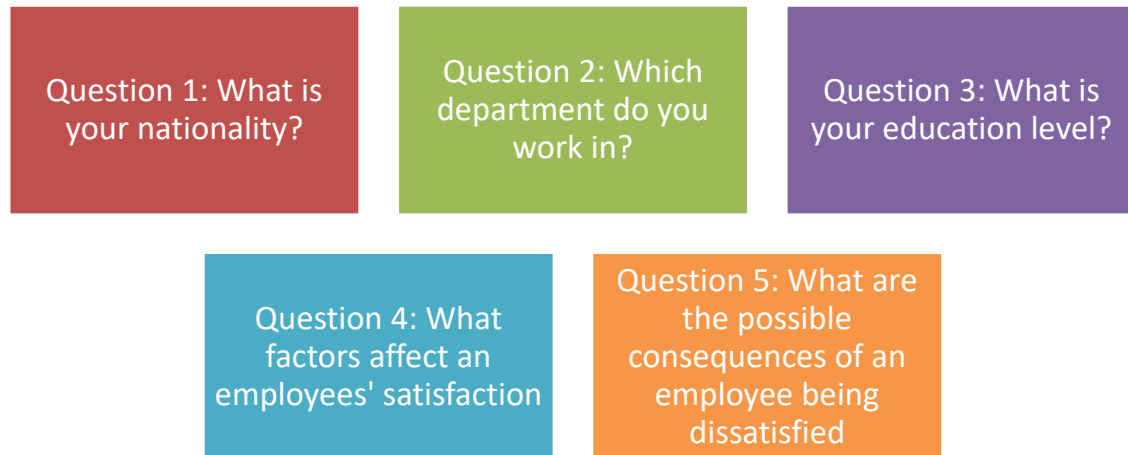


**Figure 4: Project design**

##### 3.5.1. Step 1: Design questionnaire:

This process deals with collecting the actual data of the research. It was therefore the most important step. This is because the answers obtained will help to answer the research questions. Therefore, the researcher put a lot of efforts in ensuring that the questionnaire was well constructed. The questionnaire was designed using an online website and consisted of the five section (see appendix 1).





**Figure 5: Design questionnaire**

### **3.5.2. Step 2: Email questionnaire:**

Once the questionnaire was generated, an email was sent to all participants of the study. The email made it clear that this was a research project and was not a questionnaire sent by the university. Furthermore, the email informed all concerned individuals that participation in this research is completely voluntary and employees may withdraw from the research at any time without prejudice or negative consequences, and do not need to provide a reason. Furthermore, all participants were informed that their confidentiality would be maintained at all times and that their answers were anonymous.

### **3.5.3. Step 3: Collect responses:**

The responses were automatically collected through the online tool used by the researcher. The researcher set an inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results that were only fully completed were included in the research. Those that were partially completed were discarded.

### **3.5.4 Step 4: Quantify responses:**

The responses from the questionnaire were collated and graphs were generated to illustrate the findings of the research. For this, Microsoft Excel was used.

### **3.5.5 Step 5: Evaluating the responses:**

The findings from the questionnaire were evaluated to see if they answer the research questions as well as the hypothesis. The responses were also used to provide a better understanding of the factors that affect an employee's satisfaction at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University.

## **3.6 Participants and sample selection:**

The participants, defined as a part of the study population (Rasinger, 2013), are all employees at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. They all work in the Preparatory Year Program. The fact that all of the employees worked in one section of the university meant that the process of data collection was manageable. The researcher had access to all of their emails. Furthermore, because they all work for one employer and in the same sector (education), this ensured that the data was as homogeneous as possible.

The study sample come from different department of the PYP. This provides the researches with the potential to identify as many factors as possible. In terms of selecting participants, opportunity sampling technique (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996) was used. Emails were sent to all employees and the ones that were willing to participate contributed, ensuring fast responses (Creswell, 2003).



### 3.7 Pilot Study:

In any study, it is important to carry out a pilot study to confirm the effectiveness of the questionnaire used in the research. This acts as a validation process (Yaremko et al, 1982). Furthermore, this can improve the overall quality of the research (Dyer, 1979). The pilot study was conducted with 5 colleagues. This provided the researcher with some ideas regarding the task such as time needed to complete the questionnaire, the validity of the questionnaire and the clarity of the questionnaire.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction:

This upcoming section of the research presents the research data from the questionnaire.

### 4.2 Question 1- What is your nationality?

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the employees at Imam Abdulrahman university are of mixed nationalities. Almost one quarter of the employees that responded were Saudis (24%, n=24). Egyptians were the second largest group (19%, n=19), followed by Jordanians (17%, n=17). Responses from people who are from Asia totaled 11% (n=11). Europeans and Americans came joint fifth, each totalling 11%. Last but not least, the researcher received 5 responses from employees that were from other parts of the world that were not mentioned in the list. The table below shows the results.

**Table 1: Nationality**

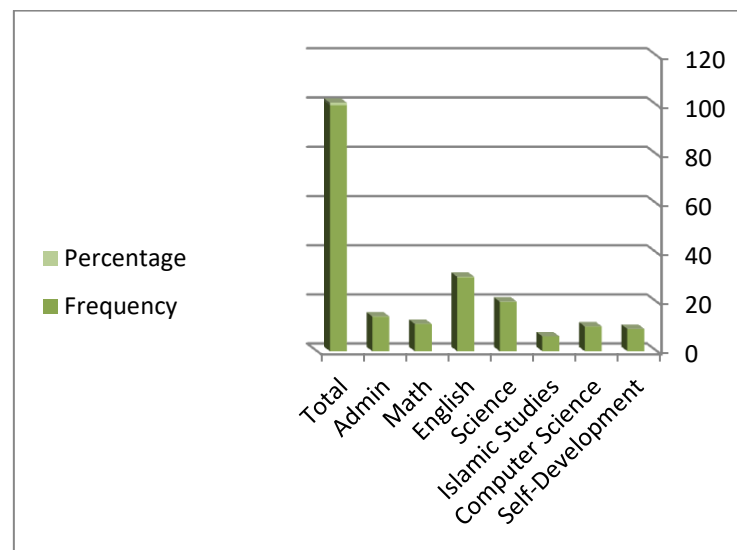
Where are you from	Responses	Percentage
Egypt	19	19%
America	11	11%
Asia	13	13.0%
Europe	11	11%
Jordan	17	17%
Saudi Arabia	24	24%
Other	5	5%
Total	100	100.0%

### 4.3. Question 2– Which department do you work in?

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the employees at Imam Abdulrahman University are from mixed departments. The biggest department is English where employees that responded were 30% (n=30). The science department was the second largest department (20%, n=20), followed by admin (14%, n=14). Math came fifth, (11%, n=11). The researcher received 10 responses from employees who worked in the computer science department. Another 9 responses were received from the self-development department and lastly, Islamic studies responded with 6 employees. The table below shows the results.

**Table 2: Work place**

Department name	Frequency	Percentage
Self-Development	9	9.0%
Computer Science	10	10.0%
Islamic Studies	6	6.0%
Science	20	20.0%
English	30	30.0%
Math	11	11.0%
Admin	14	14.0%
Total	100	100.0%

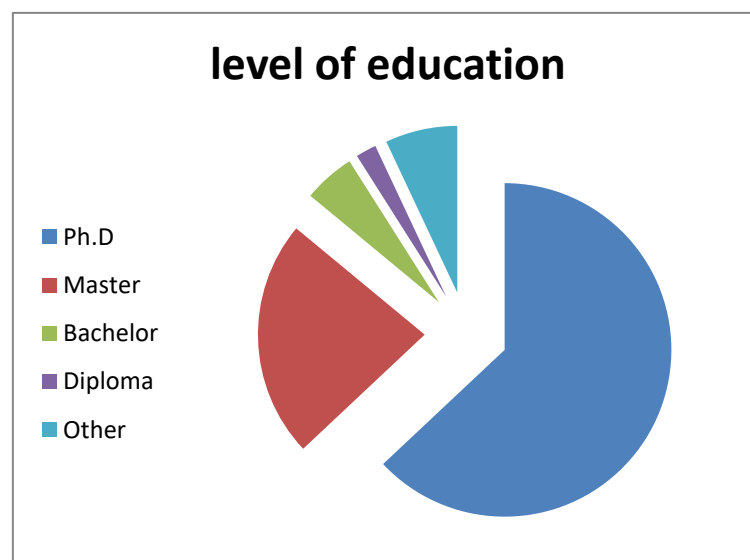


#### 4.4. Question 3 – What is your education level?

As we can see, the results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the majority of participants in this study have a PhD (63%, n=63) followed by employees with master's degree (23%, n=23). The researcher received 5 responses from people who had Bachelor degrees as their highest form of qualification whilst 2 employees had a Diploma. The table below shows the results.

**Table 3: Education level**

level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Ph.D	63	63%
Master	23	23%
Bachelor	5	5%
Diploma	2	2%
Other	7	7%
Total	100	100.0%



#### 4.5. Question 4 – What factors affect an employees' satisfaction?

This question sought to find out the factors which affects the satisfaction level of employees at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. Below is the questionnaire format that was used.

**Table 4: Satisfaction factors**

	least important	somewhat Important	important	very important	highly important
Salary is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work environment is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job security is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working hours are very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management support is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Development Opportunities are very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being motivated is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transparency is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairness & equal opportunity is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

##### 4.5.1. Salary:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that employees at Imam Abdulrahman University consider salary as one the most important factors that affects their satisfaction level. (90%, n=90) of employees responded that the salary is highly important, whilst another 6 employees respond that salary is very important to them. Four participants believed that salary is important for their satisfaction level No employee chose the last two options. The table below shows the results.

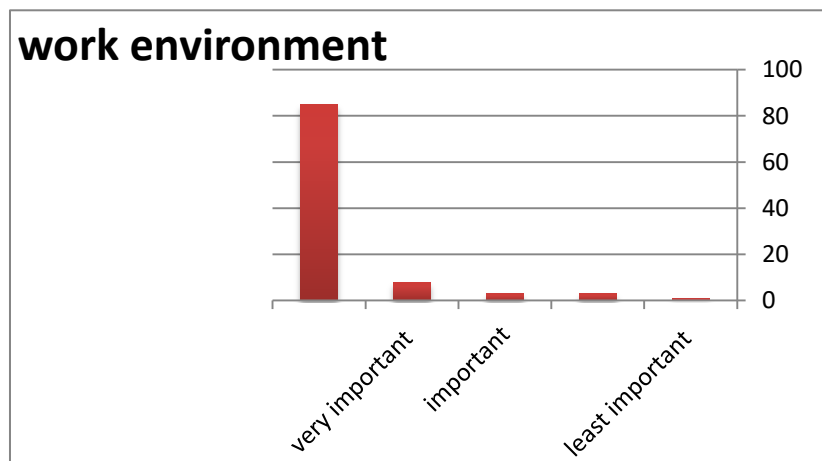
highly important	very important	Important	somewhat Important	least important	Salary
90	6	4	0	0	



#### 4.5.2. Work environment:

A large number of the participants (85%, n=85) at Imam Abdulrahman university responded that work environment is highly important for their satisfaction level, while (8%, n=8) employees responded that work environment is very important. Three employees believed that work environment is very important and 3 participants said that the work environment is somewhat important for their satisfaction level. Finally, one employee chose the last option (least important). The table below shows the results.

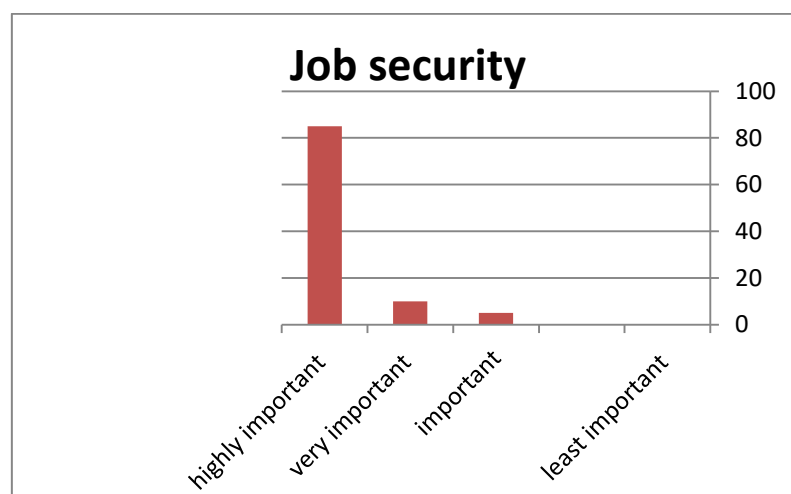
highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	work environment
85	8	3	3	1	



#### 4.5.3. Job Security:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that (85%, n=85) employees believed that job security affects their satisfaction in highly important level, while (10%, n=10) employees thought that having job security is very important for them to be motivated. A very small number of participants (5%, n=5) said that having job security is important. No employees chose the last two options. The table below shows the results.

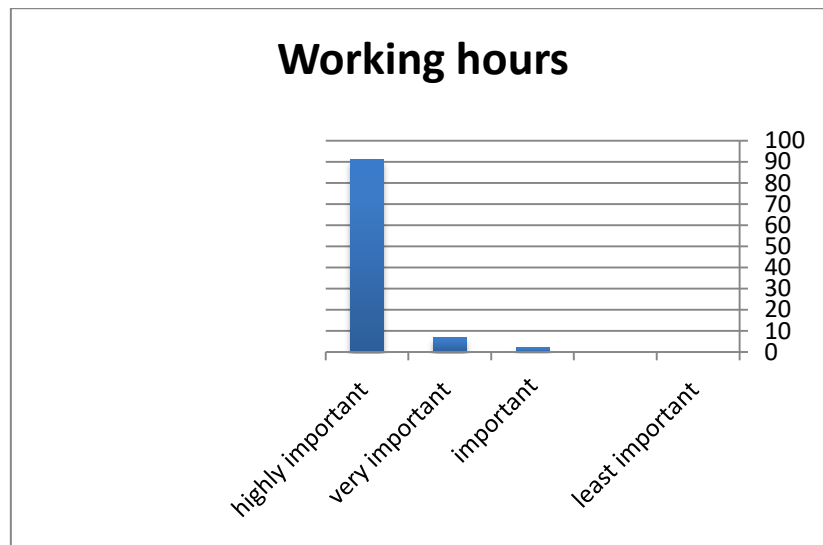
highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Job security
85	10	5	0	0	



**4.5.3. Working hours:**

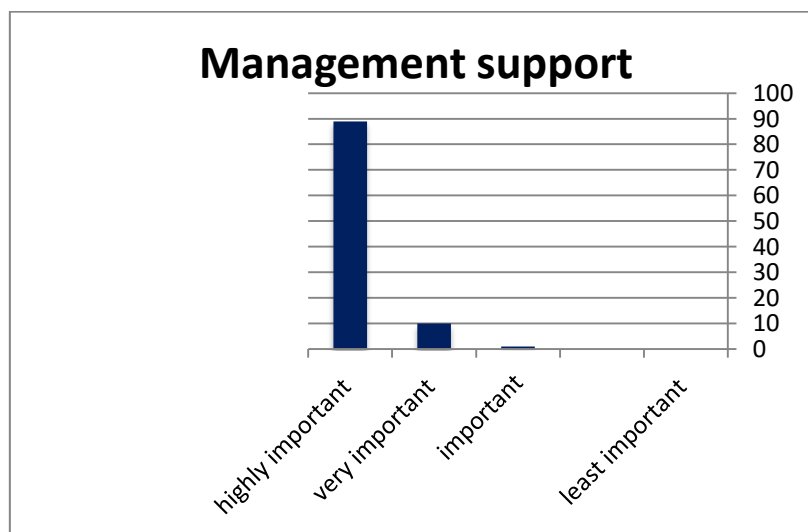
The majority of employees (91%, n=91) believed that working hours to be critical for their happiness, thus responded with highly important. 7% (n=7) of the participants consider working hours as very important factor for their satisfaction. Finally only (2%, n=2) of the participants responded that working hours is important, while no one chose the last two options. The table below shows the results.

highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Working hours
91	7	2	0	0	

**4.5.4. Support of management:**

Logically, employees need the full support of their management to obtain work satisfaction. Based on the results of this research, 89% (n=89) of employees believe that management support is highly important, while 10% (n=10) employees feel that management support is very important. Last but not least, only one participants responded that management support is important factor for their work satisfaction. The table below shows the results.

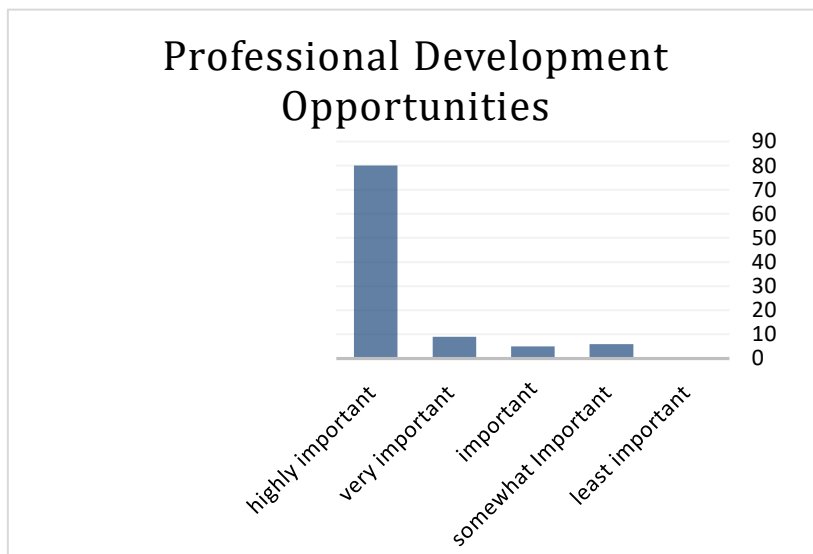
highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Management support
89	10	1	0	0	



#### 4.5.5. Professional Development Opportunities:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the employees at Imam Abdulrahman University share the point of view that the professional development opportunities is important. 80% (n=80) of the employees responded that professional development opportunities are highly important for their satisfaction. 9% (n=9) of employees believed that it was very important, whilst another 5% (n=5) responded by choosing important. Finally, six employees consider professional development opportunities to be somewhat important. The table below shows the results.

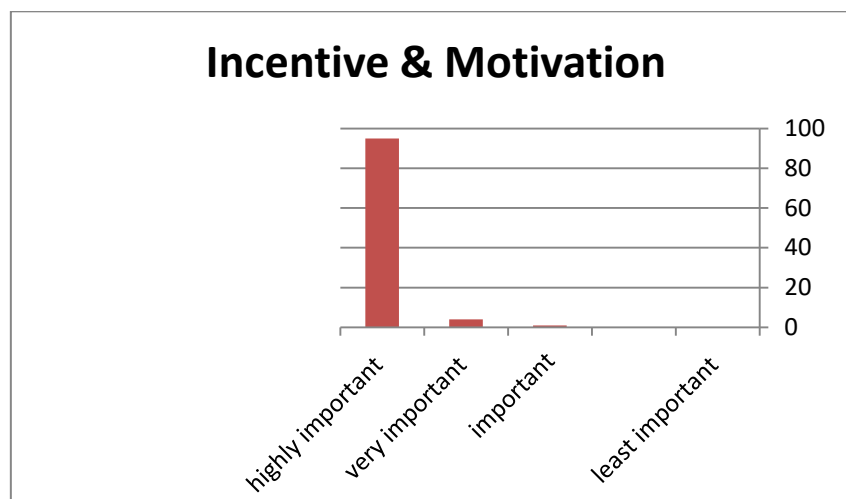
highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Professional Development Opportunities
80	9	5	6	0	



#### 4.5.6. Incentive & Motivation:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the 95% employees at Imam Abdulrahman University consider motivation as highly important for their satisfaction. 4% (n=4) employee's believed it to be very important and only 1 employee responded as important. The table below shows the results.

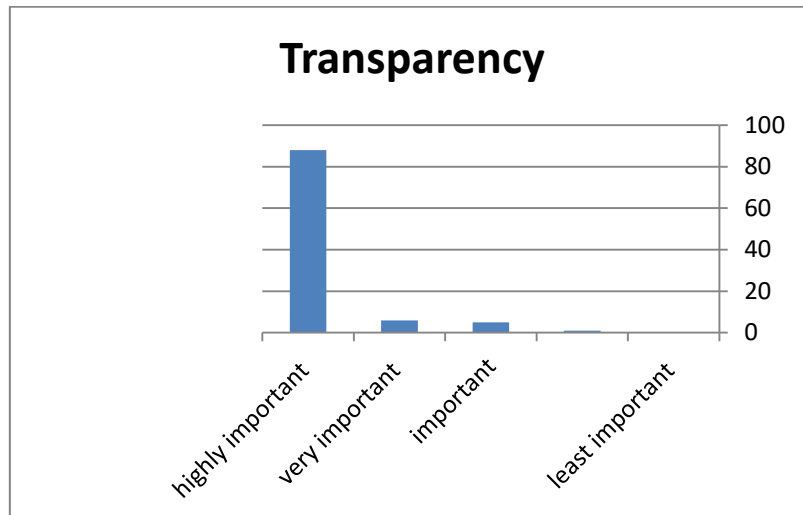
highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Incentive & Motivation
95	4	1	0	0	



**4.5.7. Transparency:**

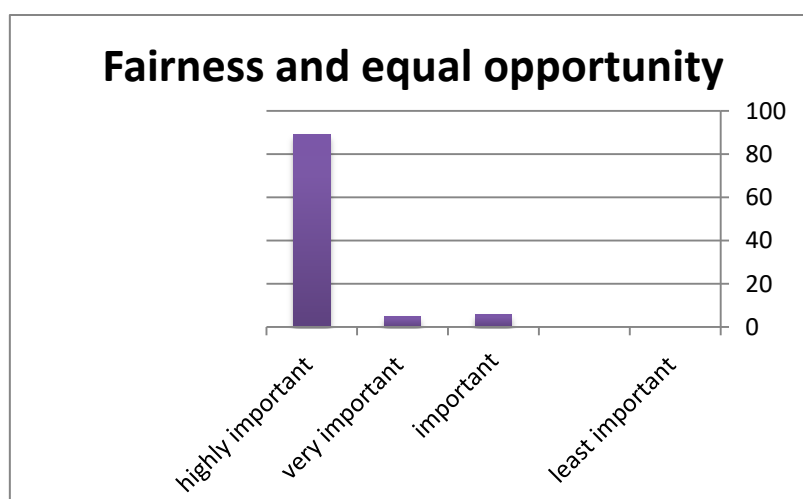
Participants in the study also gave their opinion about transparency. 88% (n=88) employees responded that transparency is highly important for their satisfaction level, 6% (n=6) of employees responded that transparency is very important and 5 people believed that it is important. Finally, transparency was somewhat important for only 1 employee, no employees chosen the last option. Least important. The table below shows the results.

highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Transparency
88	6	5	1	0	

**4.5.8. Fairness and equal opportunity:**

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that 80% (n=80) employees at Imam Abdulrahman university consider Fairness and equal opportunity as highly important and 5% (n=5) employees consider it as very important. Finally 6% (n=6) responses as important. The table below shows the results.

highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Fairness and equal opportunity
89	5	6	0	0	

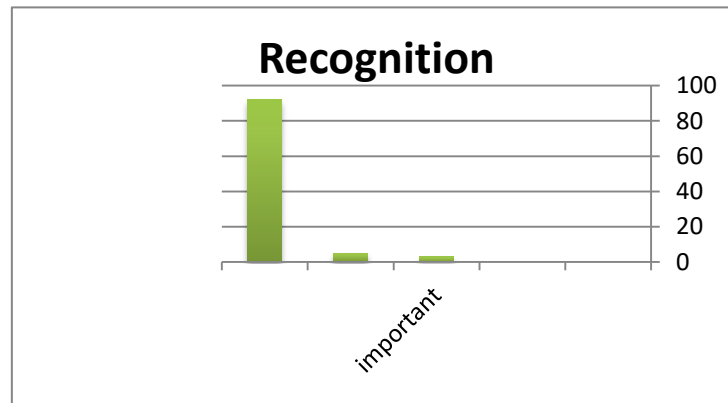




#### 4.5.9. Recognition:

For the majority of employees (92%, n=92), recognition was considered as highly important for their satisfaction level whilst another 5% (n=5) of employees responded that job recognition is very important. The researcher got 3 responses saying that recognition is important. The table below shows the results

highly important	very important	important	somewhat Important	least important	Recognition
92	5	3	0	0	



#### 4.6. Overview of the results: Actions that can result from their dissatisfaction:

From the 8 possible actions that can result from employees being dissatisfied, the research has found that 3 out of the 8 actions had been given a score of 5 by more than 90% of the participants. These were being less productive, looking for another job and not being an effective team player. The fore coming section will discuss the results in detail. The table below provides a summary of the results.

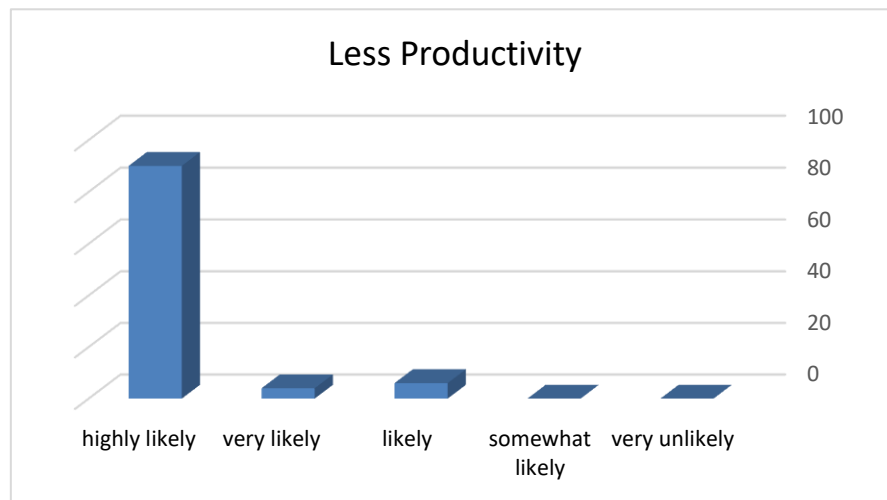
**Table 5: Dissatisfaction actions results**

	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
The employee will be less productive	0	0	6	4	90
The employee will leave his/her work	0	0	0	5	95
The employee will produce poor quality work	0	3	6	2	89
The employee will not care whether his actions affect the image of the organization	50	25	15	8	2
The employee will not be a team player	0	0	1	3	96
The employee will complain excessively, resulting in a negative work environment	0	2	1	11	86
The employee will argue and fight with other employees	66	17	12	5	0
The employee will try to cheat the company by committing fraud	90	10	0	0	0

##### 4.6.1. The employee will be less productive:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that 90% (n=90) of participants at Imam Abdulrahman university believe that being less productive is highly likely when they are not satisfied with their work, while 4% (n=4) of employees responded that it is very likely that if there is no satisfaction at work. The researcher received four responses that said they are likely to be less productive when there is no satisfaction at work. Finally, no one chose the first two options. Very unlikely or somewhat likely. The table below shows the results.

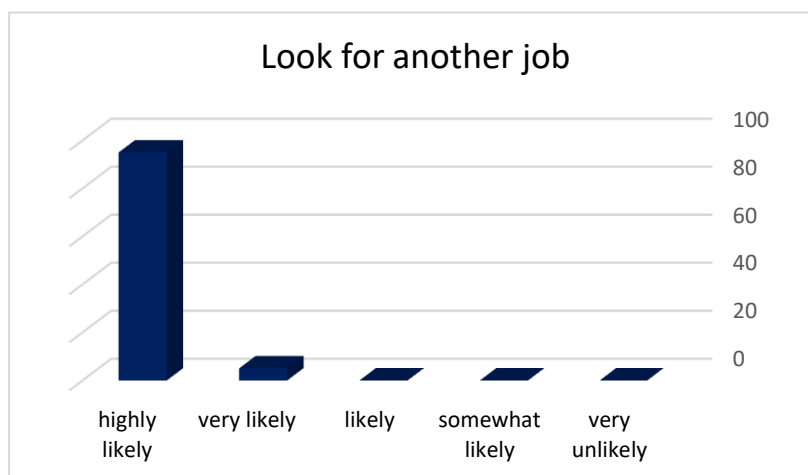
Less Productivity	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
	0	0	6	4	90



#### 4.6.2. The employee will leave his/her work:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the majority of the participants (95%, n=95) t Imam Abdulrahman university consider leaving your job as a highly likely scenario if they are not satisfied. Another 5% participants responded that it is very likely they will start to look for another job. Finally, no employee chose the first three options. Very unlikely, somewhat likely, or likely. The table below shows the results.

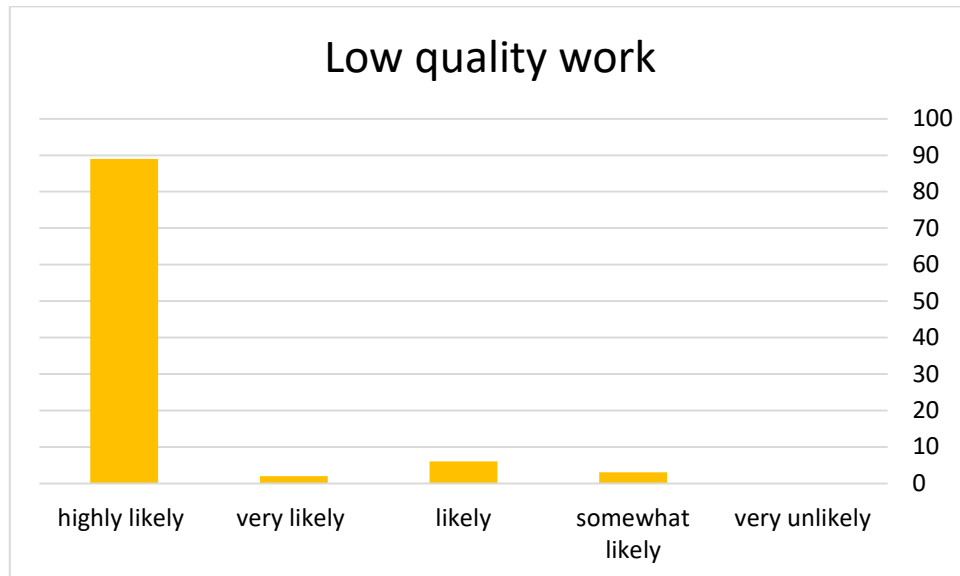
Look for another job	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
	0	0	0	5	95



#### 4.6.3. The employees will produce low quality work:

As we can see from the results obtained from the questionnaire, 89% (n=89) of employees at Imam Abdulrahman university believe that producing low quality work is highly likely when they are not satisfied with their work. Another 2% (n=2) believe that it is very likely that having no satisfaction at work will lead to low quality work. Furthermore, another 6% (n=6) of employees responded it is likely that low quality work will appear when they are not satisfied at work. Last but not least, few participants (3%, n=3) responded saying that it is somewhat likely when there is no satisfaction at work. The table below shows the results.

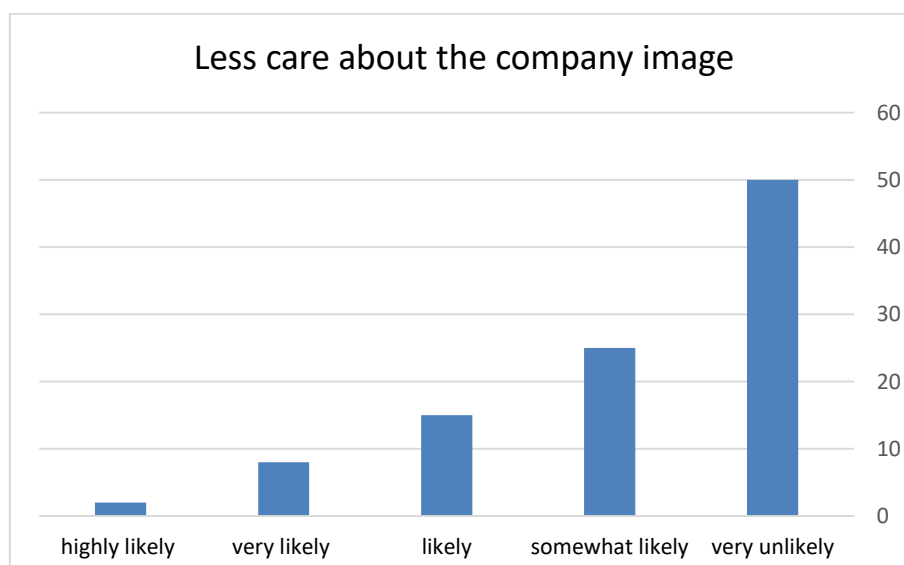
	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Low quality work	0	3	6	2	89



#### 4.6.4. The employee will not care whether his action affect the image of the organization:

The results obtained from the questionnaire show that 50% of the participants (n=50) do not feel that their dissatisfaction will affect the image of the university. They stated that it was very unlikely that this would happen, indicating that regardless of their satisfaction level, they will still show they care about the image of the company. 25% (n=25) employees responded that it is somewhat likely that their dissatisfaction will have an impact on the image of the company. 15% (n=15) employees believed that it was likely that they will care less about the company's image and 8% (n=8) responded that it is very likely. Finally, two people responded saying that it is highly likely that they will not care about the company's image. The table below shows the results.

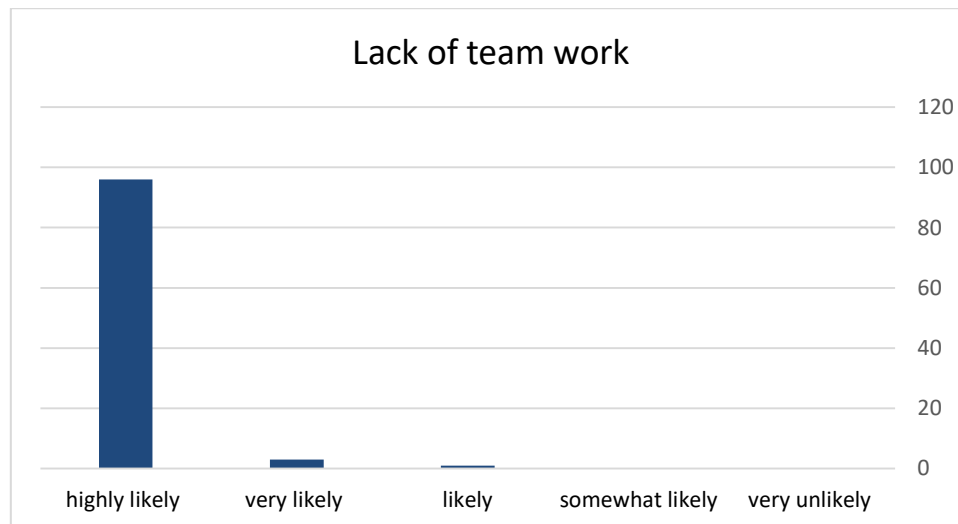
	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Less care about the company image	50	25	15	8	2



**4.6.5. The employee will not be a team player:**

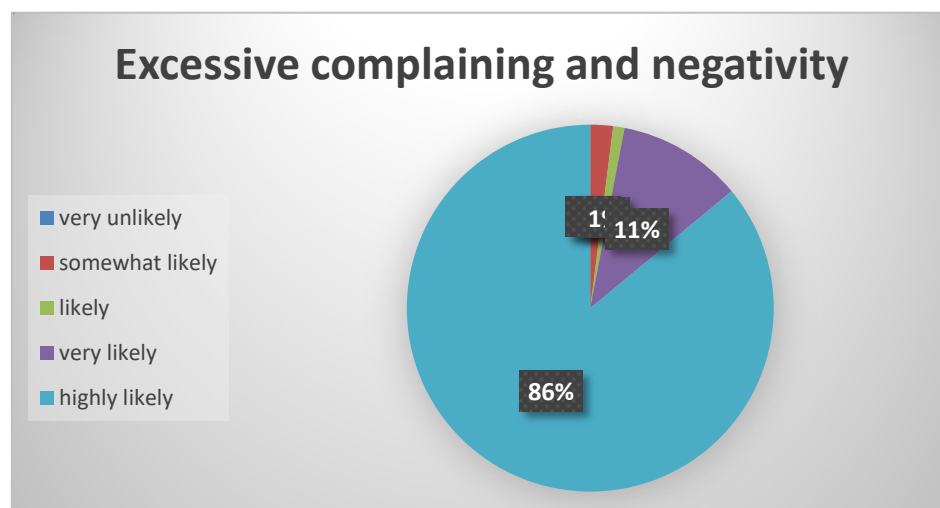
The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that 96% (n=96) of participants at Imam Abdulrahman university believe that not being a team player is a highly likely scenario when people are not satisfied, while 3% (n=3) responded that it is very likely scenario if there is no satisfaction at work. Last but not least, one person believed that this scenario is likely to occur. The table below shows the results.

	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Lack of team work	0	0	1	3	96

**4.6.6. The employee will complain excessively, resulting in a negative work environment:**

As we can see the results from the questionnaire, the majority of participants (86%, n=86) at Imam Abdulrahman university believe that this action occurring is highly likely when people are not satisfied with their work. They will complain excessively, resulting in a negative work atmosphere at work. 11% of the people believed that it is very likely action that can result from low levels of satisfaction at work. Finally, 1% of employee responded it is likely that excessive complaining will occur if people are not satisfied whilst another 2% (n=2) believed that it was somewhat likely that this will occur. The table below shows the results

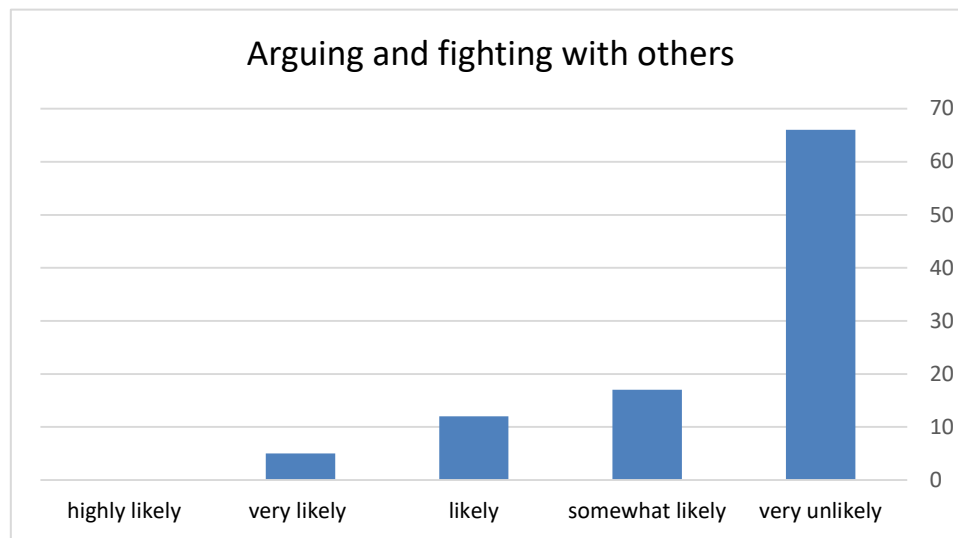
	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Excessive complaining and negativity	0	2	1	11	86



#### 4.6.7. The employee will argue and fight with other employees:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that 66% (n=66) of employees at Imam Abdulrahman university believe that arguing and fighting is very unlikely to happen when they are not satisfied. 17% (n=17) of the participants shared the viewpoint that it is somewhat likely to happen if there is no satisfaction at work. Another 12% (n=12) of the employees believed that it was likely to happen, whilst 5% (n=5) felt that it is very likely to take place. The table below shows the results.

	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Arguing and fighting with others	66	17	12	5	0



#### 4.6.8. The employee will try to cheat the company by committing fraud:

The results obtained from the questionnaire shows that the majority of employees at Imam Abdulrahman university (90%, n=90) believed that this action is very unlikely to occur despite the fact that they will not be satisfied. 10% of the participants however thought that it somewhat likely if there is no satisfaction at work. The table below shows the results.

	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
Lead to fraud	90	10	0	0	0



## 5. DATA ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher analyses the results from the questionnaire and provides possible explanation. Furthermore, the researcher will attempt to relate the findings to the hypotheses of the research

### 5.2 Section 1 – General Information:

#### 5.2.1 Impact of satisfaction on an organisation:

The results of this research highlight the importance of employees being satisfied. Dissatisfied employees affect the work environment and will not be productive, thus affecting the overall performance of the company. This claim is also supported by Yee, Yeung & Cheng (2008), who reported in their study that satisfaction plays an important role on the company's profitability. They linked profitability with the satisfaction of employees. This is because employees will not give their all when dealing with customers, thus affecting the company's relationship with its customers. Therefore, this shows the significance of keeping employees satisfied. In an institution like Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal, reputation is very important to attract students. If faculty members are not happy, this can result in poor teaching or high staff turnover, thus affecting the quality of instruction. This could potentially lead to prospective students being put off from joining the university.

#### 5.3 Overview of the results: Satisfaction is affected by many factors:

One of the aims of the research was to prove or disprove the research hypothesis.

The study had two main hypothesis:

- An employee's satisfaction is affected by various factors.

During the literature review process, 10 different factors that are known to affect an employees' satisfaction were identified. In order to find out which factors affect the satisfaction level of employee's if any, the researcher gave an importance level to each one using a likert scale.

From the 10 factors, the research has found that 4 out of the 10 factors had been given a score of 5 by 90% of the participants. These were salary, working hours, motivation and recognition. These 4 categories show that they share a common belief among employees at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. Employees gave these factors the similar level of importance. Professional development sessions was the least important factor out of the 10 for employees. Only 80% thought it was highly important whereas 6 people thought it was somewhat important.

#### 5.3.1 Salary & Compensation:

The result from the questionnaire show that 90% of the participants thought that the salary is the most important factor and that it keeps an employee satisfied. This finding is not surprising and is supported by Nguyen et al. Their research shows that the remuneration package offered to employees clearly has an influence on the level of input from workers (Nguyen, Taylor & Bradley, 2003). Employees who are paid well will generally work more as they will be motivated more.

#### 5.3.2 Fairness & Equal Opportunity:

The responses from the participants show that 89% of them believed equal opportunity to be one of the most important factor to affect satisfaction level. This result is in line with the findings of Smith (2009). According to Smith, employees who are treated fairly at work will be satisfied with their organization. Employers should provide all employees with equal opportunities in regards to promotion and salary/benefits. When this is followed, the level of employee's satisfaction increases, thus the performance of the organization as a whole. .

#### 5.3.3 Incentive & Motivation:

95% of the people who participated in this research believed that motivation and satisfaction were interlinked. A lack of motivation results in poor performance which will eventually lead to an employee being dissatisfied with his work (Depedri, Tortia & Carpita, 2010). An interesting finding from this research is that motivation ranked the highest among all other factors. This means that regardless of the salary offered to an employee, if he/she is not motivated then no pay

cheque will keep them satisfied with that particular organization. This is even more important in the education sector. This might explain why it ranked so highly as 86% of the people who took part in this research are lecturers. The rest are admin staff. For teachers, how well they prepare for their lesson is linked to how well they are motivated. Teachers and lecturers who are not motivated might not deliver lessons to the best of their capability, thus affecting students. On the other hand, a motivated teacher will go the extra mile when planning his lesson in order to benefit his/her students.

#### **5.3.4 Recognition and appreciation:**

In regards to recognition and appreciation, it ranked as the second most important factor for employees at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. Every employee regardless of their job needs to feel value. It is therefore not surprising that organizations are starting to pay attention to this factor (Roberts, 2005). This is why many companies have programs such as employee of the month. Robert (id) has shown that recognising the work of employees and offering them recognition for their work will keep them motivated.

#### **5.3.5 Work Environment:**

85% of the employees that completed the questionnaire believe that having a good work environment keeps an employee happy in his work place is highly important. A further 8% deemed it very important. Seeing that an employee generally spends a third of his day at work, Mokaya (2013) believes that improving the working environment is vital for a company. Furthermore, this should be an ongoing process. Thus, companies should strive to find ways to have a positive work environment where employees enjoy being there. One way to have such an environment is to implement recognition programs as previously mentioned.

#### **5.3.6 Job Security:**

Whilst job security did not rank in the top 5 among the most important factors, it did nonetheless obtain a decent score of 85%. Having a non-secure job can affect the satisfaction level of employees as they do not know if they will at the organization for a long time. 85% of the participants ranked job security as being highly important According to Probs and Brubaker (2001), offering all employees job security is important. Employees should not be kept on a knife edge. This affects their commitment and work rate. Having said that, certain organization prefer to offer contracts such as zero hour contract, a common practice in countries like UK. This is to stop employees being complacent. However, as Probs and Brubaker (id) mention, uncertainty with employment status will breed poor results as employees do not know if they will last another week.

#### **5.3.7 Management Support:**

A large number of the participants (89%) believed that having the support of the management was vital for employee's satisfaction. Managers have a vital role in keeping their team happy. This can in fact be linked with other factors like recognition, motivation, transparency and fairness. Supervisors and managers need to motivate and encourage their employees. Furthermore, employees need to know that their manager will listen to their concerns and problems. If they feel that their manager is not supportive and dismissive, Bauer (2004) says that a worker may feel detached from his work. On the other hand, a worker will feel more satisfied and part of the team when he/she enjoys the support of the management.

#### **5.3.8 Transparency:**

The transparency results were very similar to the results of management support. It can be said that these two are connected. The sharing of information and transparency is very important for all employees. When information is shared with employees, it means that they are trusted by their employers (Valentine, Greller & Richtermeyer, 2006). Employees feels part of the company as they are kept in the loop with how the company or how the employee is performing.

#### **5.3.9 Professional Development:**

Professional development was the least important factor for employees at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. Only 80% of them thought it was highly important. This might be due to the fact that employees may not attach a materialistic value to professional development sessions in the same way as they may do with the salary for example salary. However, we know from research (Kersley et.al, 2004) that providing training sessions for employees is a way of keeping them satisfied as it means that the company cares about their development and progression in the field.



#### 5.3.10 Working Hours:

The majority of the participants (91%) believed that to keep an employee highly satisfied, employers need to think about working hours as this was considered highly important by the participants of the study. Long working hours is not something that is enjoyed by employees as people get tired. According to Hoogendoorn et al (2002) believes that overworking an employee will result in him/her not only being dissatisfied but also leaving an organization, especially if the hours do not reflect the pay.

#### 5.4 Summary of factors that affect satisfactions:

Having analysed the results from section 1, it can be said that the results prove hypothesis one, that there are various factors that affect an employee's satisfaction. This means that Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University needs to consider all of above factors in order to keep their staff satisfied in the workplace.

#### 5.5 Section 3: Implications due to the lack of the employees' satisfaction:

This section will look at the possible action that can result from an employee's dissatisfaction with his workplace. It will also look to prove or disprove the hypothesis below:

- Dissatisfied employees will affect the performance of the company, both financially and non-financially.

The researcher listed 8 possible actions that happen as a result of workers not being satisfied with their work/workplace. These actions have negative implications for on an organisation, thus affecting their performances.

<b>Potential actions that can result from employees being dissatisfied</b>	The employee will be less productive
	The employee will leave his/her work
	The employee will produce poor quality work
	The employee will not care whether his action affect the image of the organisation
	The employee will not be a team player
	The employee will complain excessively, resulting in a negative work environment
	The employee will argue and fight with with other employees
	The employee will try to cheat the company by committing fraud

Once again, the results were collected using an online questionnaire. The questions were designed using a liker scale similar to the previous questions in the previous section of this research.

##### 5.5.1. The employee will be less productive:

Employees who are not satisfied will tend to be less productive than those who are satisfied with their job. Leaman (1995) believes that for employees to be productive, employers need to provide them with a thriving work environment. It is therefore no surprise when the vast majority of the participants (90%) in this study said that it was highly likely that they will be less productive if they were dissatisfied with their work. This is because they will not be motivated to do their work, thus affecting their output. Whilst this is not easy to measure, companies can use anonymous questionnaires with their employees to attain the level of their satisfaction and perhaps link this to monthly targets. In other words, if sales are down on a particular month, companies may be able to compare it the satisfaction of their employees for that month. Of course, sales are affected by various other factors and not only satisfaction of employees. However, it is imperative that employers find a way of measuring productivity against the satisfaction level of employees.

#### **5.5.2. The employee will leave his/her work:**

The result of this research shows that 95% of the people said that they will leave their job if they were not satisfied. This was the second highest outcome that can occur as a result of employees not being satisfied. High staff turnover is not good for organisations as there will be no continuity. This is even more important in the education sector as classes will be affected and student grades. Employees leaving a company leaves a gap in the organisation. Furthermore, finding a competent employee is not straightforward. Companies will lose money when someone leaves as it means there is a role which is not filled. Furthermore, the new employee will need time to adapt and adjust to his new work. These points are in line with the findings of Mitchell, Holtom and Lee (2001) who state that employers need to find ways of retaining their employees to avoid high staff turnover. They mention things like providing continuous professional development as well as incentives. This will prevent employees from leaving and joining a competitor.

#### **5.5.3. The employee will produce low quality work:**

89% of the participants believe that it is highly likely that the quality of work will decrease if they are not satisfied at work. Lack of quality is an issue in the education sector as it affects the students. Teachers and lecturers will not prepare and deliver quality lesson, thus affecting the performance of students. Hulin (1991) note that this can be a hindrance to the growth and development of a company. Dissatisfied employee is a hindrance to an organization success (Hulin, 1991). This will have an impact on the organisation long term as it will lose appeal.

#### **5.5.4. The employee will not care whether his action affect the image of the organization:**

The result of the study show that many of the participants did not believe this to be a big issue. 75% of them believed that this was very unlikely to happen. The image of an institution is important as it can act as a way of attracting employees as well as students. Therefore, employers need to be careful about their image regardless of whether employees will affect their image or not. They should ensure that their image is always intact.

#### **5.5.5. The employee will not be a team player:**

According to Griffin, Patterson and Michael (2001), a corporation succeeds when everyone is working together to provide effective work. Dissatisfied employees will not be part of the team, thus causing a hindrance to the company. This is the view of most of the participants in the study (96%) who believed that it was highly likely that dissatisfied employees will not be effective team players. Griffin, Patterson and Michael (2001) also share the same view point, pointing out that such employees will not be part of a team and contribute to the efforts of the team.

#### **5.5.6. The employee will complain excessively:**

The researcher had listed too much complaining as one of the actions that can result from being dissatisfied. 86% of the participants believed that it is a highly likely action. This often occurs due to frustration building up. As such, negative vibes build in the work environment. Employers need to find ways of eliminating this by providing employees with motivation and encouragement in order to keep workers happy (Moorman, Niehoff and Organ, 1993).

#### **5.5.7. Employees will cheat or commit fraud:**

According to Hulin (1991), theft and fraud can be an issue with dissatisfied employees. Whilst the majority people did not believe this to be an issue, it is still nonetheless important for organisations to keep an eye on this.

#### **5.6. Summary of actions that results:**

It is clear from the above that the second hypothesis has been proven correct. Dissatisfied employees will affect organisations in a negative due to the actions that result from their dissatisfaction.

#### **5.7. Conclusion:**

This chapter concluded the analysis of the results. It is clear that there are many factors that affect an employee's satisfaction in the education sector. Different employee place different emphasis on different factors. Not all employees were affected by the same factor. Each of these actions can carry negative consequences for the company as previously discussed. This means that both of our hypothesis were proven correct.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1. Conclusion:

The education sector is one of the most important sectors in any country as it forms the backbone of that society. All institutions want to hire the best in their field in order to serve the needs of their students. The success of an institution depends not only the financial aspects of the organisation, but also on non-financial measuring tools like grades of their students. As a result of that, institutions need to adopt effective tools to gauge efficient operation management in the education sector.

The findings in this research show that there is a need for employers to develop a better understanding of how dissatisfied employees can have an impact on the performance of their organisation. This study put the focus on non-financial factors, which is the satisfaction of employees, at the heart of this research. It linked this factor with the performance of employees and other possible actions that result from their dissatisfaction. As previously explained in the former chapter, there are a numerous factors that can have an effect on the satisfaction level of employees. These factors include the salary being offered to the employee, the workload, the motivation level of the employee as well as many other factors. If these factors are not properly addressed, there is a risk that an organisation will be affected in a negative way. Such actions include high staff turnover, employees being less productivity, theft/fraud or even quarrelling and fighting.

Educational institutes can gain benefits from the findings of this research finding innovative ways of improving staff morale and valuing their contribution. Offering employees more money is not always the answer to keeping staff happy as the results of this study have shown. Employees like being appreciated and given recognition for their work. They also like being treated fairly and provided with the same opportunities as their co-workers. Despite all of this, many organisations ignore these non-financial factors as finance is given a greater importance. They see this as the ultimate measuring tool for their success. High staff turnover, lack of team work, poor quality of teaching may not take the same status as the financial aspects of the institution. As long as the financial books are healthy, the rest does not matter. Employers may associate satisfaction with the emotional state of the employee and believe that it has no bearing on their organisation or the way an employee works. However, as shown from the results, being dissatisfied can carry negative consequences for an organisation.

The finding of the research also highlights the importance of communication. Having transparency is vital to developing a good work environment. Employees feel valued and part of the organisation when information is relayed and shared with them Furthermore, having the trust and support of their superior is also important as it means that employees can build a relationship with their employers. This helps to retain workers. When support is withdrawn, employees may lose that feeling of belonging, thus becoming dissatisfied.

### 6.2. Research recommendations:

1. In order to maintain high standards and constantly develop as an organisation, managers need to think about developing non-financial indexes in the improvement to measure the performance of their institution. This research has highlighted some of these factors and how their importance for employees.
2. It is advisable for employers to observe the satisfaction level of employees by developing tools and have procedures in place to rectify dissatisfaction.
3. Organisations should instil a positive culture at work whereby employees feel valued and recognised. Employees should always be motivated and encouraged to express themselves. They should not be seen as a commodity.
4. Finally, companies should align non-financial indexes with their business goals.

### 6.3. Research limitations:

- 1- This study was conducted in the education sector.
- 2- This research was done at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. One hundred people participated.
- 3- The researcher was unable to check the financial performance of the university.

**6.4. Future studies:**

- 1- The findings of this research will have greater weight if supported by data across different institutions and different levels of institutions such as schools, colleges and university.
- 2- The research can also benefit by conducting the same response but with a greater number of participants.

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### APPENDIXES-1

Dear colleagues

I am conducting a research on factors that affect an employees' satisfaction level at work. The aim of this research is to find out the factors that affect the satisfaction of employees in order to give companies a better understanding on such factors. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and anonymous. You can withdraw from the study at any time and are not obliged to complete it.

Many thanks in advance.

**Qatta Ahmed Mohsen AL-Qatta**

1. Where are you from?

- A. Egypt
- B. America
- C. Asia
- D. Europe
- E. Jordan
- F. Saudi Arabia
- G. Other

2. Which department do you work in?

- A. Self-Development
- B. Computer Science
- C. Islamic Studies
- D. Science
- E. English
- F. Math
- G. Admin

3. What is the highest level of education you have?

- A. Ph.D degree
- B. Master degree
- C. Bachelor degree
- D. Diploma certificate
- E. Other

4. Which of the factors below has an effect your satisfaction level the most?

	least important	somewhat Important	important	very important	highly important
Salary is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work environment is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job security is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working hours are very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Management support is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Development Opportunities are very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being motivated is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transparency is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairness & equal opportunity is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition is very important for my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. If an employee is not satisfied, which of these actions do you believe will occur?

	very unlikely	somewhat likely	likely	very likely	highly likely
The employee will be less productive					
The employee will leave his/her work					
The employee will produce poor quality work					
The employee will not care whether his action affect the image of the organisation					
The employee will not be a team player					
The employee will complain excessively, resulting in a negative work environment					
The employee will argue and fight with other employees					
The employee will try to cheat the company by committing fraud					

## APPENDIXES 2: FIGURES

Figure 1: Factors affecting job satisfaction (Goffee and Jones 2013).....	14
Figure 2: A list of the different factors that affect the satisfaction level of employees.....	17
Figure 3: Action that can come about as a result of employees not being satisfied .....	18
Figure 4: Project design.....	20
Figure 5: Design questionnaire.....	21

## APPENDIXES 3: TABLES

Table 1: Nationality.....	24
Table 2: Work place.....	25
Table 3: Education level.....	26
Table 4: Satisfaction factors.....	27
Table 5: Dissatisfaction actions results.....	35