

JOB SATISFACTION, ROLE OVERLOAD AND GENDER IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction is widely studied in academic literature but there are still limited studies about the relationship between job satisfaction with the role overload in Turkey, especially in the context of gender.

Working women's lives in contemporary Turkey are divided between home and work.

Women are faced with a wide range of competing demands like being in paid employment, familial duties as wives and mothers, and other gendered roles and tasks more broadly within the community.

The industrial manufacturing sector is expanding very quickly in Turkey which is associated with increased levels of women's participation in the labour market. At the same time, Turkish society continues to be structured so that men are over-represented in management and leadership positions in the workforce even in professionalised areas requiring university degrees.

This study investigated the levels of job satisfaction and role overload among professional women in Turkey and hypotheses that because of gender role stereotyping women have less job satisfaction and more role overload than men have. In addition, we assumed that role overload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction in this study.

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The data was drawn from the "University Education and Employment Survey" which was conducted by authors.

Key Words: *Job Satisfaction, Role Overload, Gender.*

Introduction

In Turkey, like many other countries in the region (Karimi 2009) the place of women is rapidly changing and more and more educated women entering the ranks of paid employment. Despite claims about the levels of continuing male domination in modern Turkey, (Muftuler-Bac, 1999), there is widespread agreement that there has been a transformation in the roles and expectations of Turkish women due to the total modification of the legal system under the reforms introduced by Ataturk. These reforms provided the legal and institutional structures for the termination of sex segregation and unequal treatment of women under the law (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1986).

Notwithstanding the importance of having these rights enshrined in law, for many Turkish women (Muftuler-Bac, 1999) there still exist serious obstacles such as wage discrimination and occupational gender segregation, and cultural and traditional stereotypes amongst employers. Too often women's wages are seen as a supplementary to men's wages and therefore their lower pay and lower position in the labor market is not seen as problematic by society. Women are still considered as homemakers and mothers rather than breadwinners. Only a minority of women is able to control their own economic lives (Palaz, 2002).

The literature regarding employment and Turkish women identifies university education as an important mechanism for diminishing gender discrimination (Palaz, 2002) in both market and non-market areas.

In this paper, we examine the relations and levels job satisfaction and role overload among Turkish women and men who have university degrees. Both role overload and job satisfaction are key indicators of the quality of work life because they highlight whether people's expectations are being met by their jobs (Loscocco, K., Bose, C.R., 1998).

Job Satisfaction

The definition of job satisfaction is not easy, due to a range of conceptualizations of the construct in the literature (Cass, et al., 2003) *Job satisfaction* is one's response to the various aspects of a job. Job satisfaction refers to internal cognitive and affective states accessible by means of verbal— or other behavioral— and emotional responses (Hulin et al., 2003).

Job satisfaction plays a central role in the study of human behaviour at work. The studies of job satisfaction can be traced back to the 1920s and 1930s testing of the significance of personal differences in job satisfaction to justify a humanization of the workplace (Brewer et al., 2008). Thus job satisfaction is one of the best-researched concepts in organizational behaviours (Dormann et al., 2001).

Recent evidence suggests that job satisfaction is meaningfully related to job performance (Hulin et al., 2003). The relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has been studied organizational scholars for decades (Vroom, 1962, Pincus, 1986, Fisher, 2003). Traditionally it was believed that a “happy worker was a productive worker.” But the study of the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has a controversial history. Most of the earlier reviews of the literature suggested a weak and somewhat inconsistent relationship between job satisfaction and performance (Saari et al., 2004).

Also previous research demonstrated a strong positive relationship between job and life satisfaction. Traditionally, this relationship has been explained in terms of a spillover model, wherein job experiences spill over onto life, and vice versa. (Heller, Judge & Watson, 2002) Yıldırım and Aycan (2008) found that job satisfaction is positively correlated with life satisfaction and negatively correlated with work overload among the Turkish nurses.

Moreover the researchers studied different aspects of job satisfaction such as the relationship between job satisfaction and leadership behaviors (Tengilimoglu, 2005) age (Gibson et al., 1970; Hickson et al., 1999, Clark et al. 1996; Brewer et al., 2008), turnover (Hellman, 1997; Reed et al. 1994) length of service (Oshagbemi, 2003), absenteeism (Sagie, 1998; Waters, et al. 2006).

Numerous researchers have investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and gender which has been inconsistent in literature. Some researchers report no gender differences in overall satisfaction, while others

report relationships between job satisfaction and gender (Dantzer, et al., 1998, Keser, 2005, Celen, et al., 2004; Brewer et al., 2008; Avşaroğlu, 2005; *Gencay, 2007*, Lacy, et al., 1997; Bilge, 2007;).

Regarding gender, most studies have found no relationship between gender and job satisfaction (Cullen et al., 1985, 1989; Blau et al., 1986; Jurik & Halemba, 1984; Jurik & Musheno, 1986; Jurik & Winn, 1987; Van Voorhis et al., 1991; Grossi & Berg, 1991; Saylor & Wright, 1992; Walters, 1992; Hepburn & Knepper, 1993; Britton, 1995; Lambert et al., 2004). Although there have been a few studies that have found higher job satisfaction among female (Britton, 1997; Camp & Steiger, 1995), the majority of the research findings indicate no significant differences in gender. In addition, Griffin (2001) found a positive relationship between age and job satisfaction but only for females. Other studies have investigated the relationship between correctional experience and job satisfaction, rather than age, and found a positive correlation (Grossi & Berg, 1991; Grossi et al., 1996).

Because of the position of women, which was mentioned in above, in Turkish labour market we have hypothesized that *woman has less job satisfaction than men* (H1).

Role Overload

Role overload is a kind of incompatibility between work demands and the time available to fulfill those demands. Bacharach et al., (1990) conceptualized role overload in terms of the workers' perceptions that he or she is unable to complete assigned tasks effectively due to time limitations (ie., the conflict between time and organizational demands concerning the quantity of work to be done), a construct independent of role conflict. Thus, role overload and role conflict tend to be used interchangeably in the literature when, in fact, they are related but distinct concepts (Coverman, 1989; Hecht, 2001).

Role overload occurs when an employee finds it difficult to perform professional responsibilities that are excessive or cannot possibly be finished in the time available. Role overload also has been operationally defined as occurring when an individual is able to complete all obligations but not at the level of competence that would be achieved if other duties were not present (Brumels & Beach, 2008; Goldstein & Rockart, 1984).

Role overload is associated with stress (Peterson, 1995); when overload is evident in multiple domains, spillover effects often occur. Small and Riley,

(1990) indicate that when work spillover occurs in male executives, it is diffuse, affecting every domain of their personal life equally. For example, overload at work can lead to spillover effects at home, or home demands can spill over into paid work. Thus, spillover is one aspect of role overload and a particularly salient aspect for dual-income spouses because of their heavy involvement in both paid work and family domains (Paden and Buehler, 1995).

Coverman (1989) found that the role overload scores of women were higher than men. But men have higher overall job satisfaction than women. Role overload is one of the reasons of women's psychological distress. Because women, either in caring for children per se or in combining children with employment, sufferer from a greater level of demands than men. Although employed women do somewhat less household work than housewives, men on average do not increase the amount of household tasks when their wives are employed. Thus women who are employed have the primary responsibility for housework and children in addition to their job demands. Combining the work of jobs and families, employed women average 15 hours more work per week and one-half hour less sleep per night than housewives (Rosenfield, 1989).

Since society perceives women as the primary care-givers, it is probable that women experience greater role overload and inter-role conflict than do men Reed (1994). Because of the dual family and professional responsibilities of women we hypothesized that '*The role overload of women is higher than men*' (H2).

Job Satisfaction and Role Overload

Bacharach et al., (1991) found that the role overload has an unexpectedly strong positive effect on job satisfaction for engineers, and an insignificant negative effect on job satisfaction for nurses. The findings of Pearson (2008) were that role overload was negatively correlated with psychological health, job satisfaction, and leisure satisfaction. Stepwise regression analyses indicated that role overload was the strongest predictor of psychological health and that role overload was statistically related to job satisfaction.

Many researchers in this specific area (Van De Vliert & Van Yperen, 1996; Curry et al., 1986) found a strong association between job satisfaction and role overload which is one of the important determinants of job satisfaction.

Our final hypothesis is that '*The role overload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction*' (H3).

Furthermore It will be examined the relationship of job satisfaction and role overload with the demographic factors such as age, length of service, number of children, income etc.. in this paper.

Method

Subjects and Procedure

The data was drawn from ‘University Education and Employment Survey’ which was adopted to Turkish system and carried out by authors. Data were collected using an anonymous questionnaire, filled in voluntarily by respondents. In the pilot phase of this study, the first draft of the questionnaire was distributed to 30 participants. The results of the pilot study and feedback from participants enabled the questionnaire to be revised and made clearer.

The participants of the study were 392 male and 310 female employees.

The overall job satisfaction and role overload scales were added to the survey. All subjects (N = 705) were graduates who received a bachelor’s degree from the different departments of Turkish Universities between 1982 and 2007.

We used university archive records, alumni associations and the internet for carrying out the questionnaires. University archive records weren’t very useful for older alumni, most of them changed their addresses and telephone numbers but the alumni groups in Face book were very helpful in finding the email addresses of graduates.

85 percent of the sample were from three faculties; Economics and Administrative Sciences, Engineering and Architects, Sciences and Literature. Only 15 percent were from other faculties.

Women accounted for 44.2 percent (n=310) of the sample and men for 55.8 percent (n=392). The sample was selected randomly but we eliminated some of the questionnaires because of problems associated with age differences later. This removal was to ensure that the sample corresponded with the age and numbers of women in the Turkish labour market which is proportionally is less and younger than men.

The age distribution of subjects is between the age of 24 and 49 who they are actively working. Most of the women in Turkey leave the employment market before the 50 years old because of the early retirement rights for women.

Instruments

A questionnaire, as described below, was used to collect the data. A five-point Likert type questions were used for all the scales, with the anchors of 1,

“strongly disagree,” and 5, “strongly agree.” Thus, a higher score indicated a greater strength of the variable.

‘*Overall Job Satisfaction Scale*’ was developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1983) as a part of their Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. This is a global indication of job satisfaction. The Chronbach alpha values ranged from .67 to .95 (Fields, 2002).

‘*Role Overload Scale*’ was developed by Bacharach, Bamberger, and Conley (1990). It is also three items; one of them is reverse question. The Chronbach alpha values ranged from .60 to .64 and (Fields, 2002).

The questionnaire was translated using back-back translation method in cross-cultural studies (Brislin, 1986). Thus, the questionnaire first was translated into Turkish and then the answers were back-translated into English. Finally, the questionnaire was back-translated to Turkish. The translation was carried out by three bilingual (Turkish–English) university lecturers who were specialists in English as a second language. The questionnaire was assessed in terms of its reliability and validity and showed an acceptable level of reliability and construct-content validity.

The second set of independent variables is concerned with demographic factors (age, gender, faculty, weekly working hours and income), and the domestic situation (marital status and number children). Age is simply the respondent's age in years. According to the literature, these characteristics were selected to control their potential effects on the results

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using *t-test* and *correlation analysis* to examine the gender differences in the job satisfaction and role overload. To predict the relationship between predictor variables (i.e., work hours, have a child) and criterion variables (job satisfaction and role overload), multiple regression by SPSS was used.

Results

A summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants (e.g., marital status, age, level of education, and working hours per week) is presented in Table 1.

The table 1 show that the means of age are young which it is 29.5 for women, 30.7 for men in this sample. Also monthly net income of women (1565 TL) is lower than men (1971 TL). 46.7 percent of women and 48.6 percent of men in this sample are married, others are single.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations ($N = 705$)

	Women		Men	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Age (Year)	29,5	4,77	30,7	5,86
2. Length of service (Year)	6,5	5,09	7,8	6,56
3. Weekly working hours	45,36	8,20	48,00	9,30
4. Income (Turkish Lira)	1565	1022,33	1971	1603,59
5. Number of children	1,29	0,56	1,40	0,54
6. Job satisfaction	3,85	0,99	4,01	0,88
7. Role overload	3,24	0,92	3,05	0,96

25. 8 percent of women and 32. 1 percent of men have children. Most of the sample (68.3 percent) had only one child, 28. 4 percent had two children and only 3.4 percent had three children. There was no respondent with more than three children. There was a significant difference between women and men in terms of hours worked per week $t(670) = -3.84, p < 0.00$.

Men earned more money and have more job satisfaction than women. Independent T test endorsed our first hypothesis (H1) which *women have less job satisfaction than men*.

Table 2: Pearson Intercorrelation Among Variables ($N = 705$)

	Gender 1 Women 2 Men	Job satisfaction	Role overload	Age	Length of service	Weekly working hours	Monthly income	Intend to leave
Job satisfaction	,082(*)	(0,89)						
Role overload	-,097(*)	-,078(*)	(0,65)					
Age	,112(**)	,116(**)	-,051	1				
Length of service	,110(**)	,133(**)	-,045	,896(**)	1			
Yearly working hours	,147(**)	,105(**)	,129(**)	,043	,050	1		
Monthly income TL	,146(**)	,126(**)	,013	,347(**)	,340(**)	,147(**)	1	
Intend to leave	-,034	-,263(**)	,063	-,152(**)	-,138(**)	-,025	-,028	1
0 No 1 Yes								
Marital status	,009	,158(**)	-,040	,523(**)	,487(**)	,058	,214(**)	,072
1 Single 2 Married								

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2; show that *intent to leave* is negatively correlated with job satisfaction, age and *length of service*. But there is no correlations with the role overload.

The role overload scores of women are higher than men as it was hypothesized in H2. $t(682) = 2.54382$, $p < 0,011$. Moreover Table 1 shows that there is a negative correlation between job satisfaction and role overload which is endorsed H3.

Table 3 presents the result of a multiple regression analysis was undertaken for showing the indicators job satisfaction. Satisfaction from university education was the most important indicator of job satisfaction. Also monthly income level, weekly working hours and role overload were demonstrated as significant in multiple regression analyses. But gender is not significant. The model is significant but adjusted R Square is 0.091 which blurred the model. Also the influence of gender on job satisfaction disappeared in this model.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Job Satisfaction

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Un standardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.232	,387		5,768	,000
Role overload	-,104	,042	-,104	-2,460	,014
Gender	,806	,081	,045	1,355	,291
Age	,010	,008	,057	1,285	,199
Monthly income?	663E-005	,000	,94	2,075	,038
Satisfaction from University Education	,290	,048	,250	6,001	,000
Weekly Working hours	010	004	,094	2,179	,030
Adjusted R Square	,091				

a Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

Also role overload was analyzed using multiple regression analysis with three variables such as gender, age, weekly working hours and having children.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Role overloads

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2,922	,286		10,227	,000
Gender (1:Women, 2:Men)	-,240	,074	-,126	-3,248	,001
Weekly working hours	,015	,004	,146	3,769	,000
Number of children	-,129	,106	-,062	-1,217	,224
Age	,001	,009	,006	,111	,912
Adjusted R Square	0,032				

a Dependent Variable: Role overload

Table 4 shows the results of a multiple regression analysis with the dependent variable (e.g., role overload). It outlines the beta coefficients for each variable along with *R* values and indicates the level of statistical significance. The results from the analyses reveal that for female employees has more significant and negative effects on their perceived role overload, at the same time for female employees weekly working hours have more significant and effects on their role overload.

Discussion

This paper has been about job satisfaction, the differences between men and women with respect to it, and the conditions that give rise to it. Clear differences between men and women in job satisfaction were first observed.

The independent effects of a number of work-related and demographic and domestic related variables on job satisfaction were then examined.

The results show that in Turkey, university education is not enough for eliminating the gender inequalities. Both women and men in this research had a bachelors degree from the different departments of Turkish Universities. But **women** still *earned less than men with low job satisfaction and had high role overload*.

In Turkey, owing to high cost of living and an increase in women's educational attainment, women participate in most professions and disciplines and levels of education. Today, there are a large number of female lawyers, doctors, academics, engineers and other professionals. As a result, the traditional family, in which the man was the only breadwinner, has slowly been replaced by the dual-career family.

Turkish women continue to be primarily responsible for domestic tasks also. Although the status of women at home depends on their social class, the majority of Turkish women are responsible for housekeeping, child care, and all the other aspects of running a home. Thus, employed women must bear a lot of pressure from home and work responsibilities. Turkish cultural stereotypes have labeled women as homemakers. Working women's roles are divided between work and home and there is still common belief that if family and work responsibilities conflict, then women prefer home rather than work. This observation regarding the impact that these dual expectations have on women's levels of job satisfaction parallel recent work on the impact of work-family interference on women's levels of life satisfaction with one of Turkey's neighbors, Iran. Karimi (2009) concluded that reduced levels of women's life satisfaction are best explained by the intensity of workload and role pressures.

Surprisingly, having children did not create statistically significant impact over the role overload for women in paid employment ($r=-0.077$). This may be because Turkish women have access to childcare support within extended family settings in a way which is not usual in Northern Europe and North America (Palaz, 2002).

This finding was inconsistent with some previous studies that supported either the rational model or role expectation theory (e.g., Duxbury et al., 1994; Greenhaus et al., 1987; Gutek et al., 1991; Youngblood, 1982).

As mentioned in literature review, many of the findings of from previous studies in this area are at odds with each other. Our three hypotheses were supported in this research, but because of the range of findings from these earlier studies it would be risky to make an over-generalizations on the basis of this study. The results might be different if we carry out this survey in different groups.

While men had more job satisfaction than women in t-test analysis, the influence of gender disappeared in multiple regression analysis when the monthly income added the model. Income was significant indicator of job satisfaction in this model.

Finally, although the present study has several strengths, it is not without limitations. One of the limitations is that the sample was a small group of Turkish male and female participants, which limits the generalizability of the results. Conducting the study on a bigger sample and on a wider range of professions and in different cultural contexts would improve the generalizability of the results.

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