



## Unpacking the Influence of Job Satisfaction on Lecturers' Performance: Evidence Among Private Higher Educational Sector

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This research defines lecturers' perception of job satisfaction and explores the influence of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance in the private higher educational sector in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

**Methodology:** The researcher applied descriptive statistics (M, S.D.) to assess lecturers' perceptions of their job satisfaction levels. At the same time, multiple linear regression was employed to explore the influence of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance. Furthermore, the researcher used the questionnaire of 36 items to survey lecturers physically in four private higher educational sector. A total of 304 lecturers teaching during the 2024–2025 academic year participated in this survey.

**Main Findings:** The study revealed a moderate positive relationship between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance ( $R = 0.67$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.445$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ,  $N = 304$ ). These findings align with previous research, indicating that job satisfaction plays a vital role in enhancing lecturers' performance. Furthermore, the results displayed that extrinsic job satisfaction factors, such as negotiable salaries and proper working conditions, were found to have a more significant impact on performance compared to intrinsic job satisfaction.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study makes a significant contribution by expanding on previous research that highlights the critical role of job satisfaction in enhancing lecturers' performance. It uniquely identifies the impact of extrinsic job satisfaction factors—such as salary, working conditions, and interpersonal relationships—as key drivers of higher lecturers' performance. The research also suggests that future studies explore additional influences, such as leadership styles and external factors, in promoting lecturers' performance.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher educational sector of Cambodia, lecturers' performance plays a pivotal role in ensuring institutional success and academic excellence [1], [2]. Lecturers' performance refers to the extent to which educators effectively fulfill their professional duties, responsibilities, and tasks within an educational institution. It encompasses various aspects, including teaching effectiveness, which involves delivering course content in a clear, engaging, and organized manner to help students achieve learning objectives and experiences, and shape the institutional reputation [3]. Additionally, it includes classroom management, where lecturers maintain an environment conducive to learning by effectively handling discipline, resources, and time [2]. Usually, lecturers with high performance can have a chance to be promoted and have better professional development opportunities than others with low performance [4], [5]. They can achieve in carrying out their day-

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to-day duties and responsibilities within the institutions to attain the set goals, and they can grow students' outcomes [6], [7]. However, the rapid growth of the private higher educational sector, particularly in Phnom Penh, Cambodia has raised concerns about educational quality and lecturers' performance. Issues such as low salaries, heavy workloads, and limited professional support have been identified as key factors affecting their performance [8], [9].

Among the various factors influencing lecturers' performance, job satisfaction has garnered significant attention in both academic and professional contexts [10], [11]. Defined as a psychological state that reflects an individual's contentment with their job, job satisfaction encompasses various factors such as salary, working conditions, and interpersonal relationships within the organization [12], [13]. Research shows that job satisfaction significantly influences how individuals perceive and respond to their level of work performance [14]. For instance, lecturers who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to respond positively to their task performance, demonstrating higher engagement, motivation, and innovation in their work. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in 1959 further supports this idea, suggesting that job satisfaction, driven by motivators such as recognition and personal achievement, is essential for maintaining high performance and morale in the workplace [15]-[17]. Furthermore, previous research also signified the effect of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance, which is a critical factor in achieving organizational goals, as it directly influences productivity, efficiency, and overall success [18].

Additionally, job satisfaction significantly impacts lecturers' performance, serving as a key motivator for delivering high-quality teaching, engaging in research, and contributing to institutional development [19]. Precisely, lecturers' performance is the core driver of the organization to reach its goals, and job satisfaction is a vital aspect for enhancing performance [20], [21]. Improving lecturers' performance in private higher education is crucial for maintaining competitiveness, ensuring positive student learning outcomes, and fostering institutional growth. Unlike public higher education, private institutions rely heavily on tuition fees and reputation to attract students, making teaching quality a key differentiator [22]. Effective lecturers not only enhance student learning outcomes but also contribute to retention rates, academic excellence, and institutional credibility [23]. Furthermore, in a rapidly evolving educational landscape—where technological advancements and industry demands are constantly shifting—lecturers must continuously develop their skills to provide relevant, engaging, and high-quality instruction [24].

By investing in lecturers' performance through training, leadership development, and supportive work environments, private higher educational sector can create a sustainable model of excellence that benefits students, faculty, and the institution as a whole [25]. When lecturers feel valued, supported, and fairly compensated, they are more likely to exhibit dedication, creativity, and resilience in their roles [26]. Moreover, satisfied lecturers are more motivated, productive, and committed, whereas dissatisfaction leads to poor performance and high turnover rates, ultimately affecting students' outcomes and the institution's performance [16]. Globally, private higher educational sector faces unique challenges, such as resource limitations and market competition, which affect lecturers' performance [27].

While existing studies have explored the bond between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance in general educational contexts, research specifically focusing on Cambodia's private higher educational sector remains limited. private higher educational sector faces challenges such as financial instability, faculty retention issues, and the need to stay competitive. This research fills that gap by investigating lecturers' perceptions of job satisfaction and its influence on lecturers' performance within private higher educational sector in Phnom Penh. By addressing this understudied area, the study provides critical insights for institutional leaders, policymakers, and educators on fostering a work environment that enhances lecturer satisfaction, improves performance, and ultimately strengthens Cambodia's private higher educational sector education quality.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a context that has received little scholarly attention, despite the growing importance of private higher education in Cambodia. Additionally, it uniquely identifies the impact of extrinsic job satisfaction factors—such as salary, working conditions, and interpersonal relationships—as key drivers of higher lecturers' performance. As the demand for quality education rises, understanding how job satisfaction influences lecturers' performance becomes critical for institutional effectiveness and student outcomes. Moreover, with increasing competition among private universities, ensuring lecturer retention and motivation through job satisfaction is more urgent than ever. Without addressing this issue, institutions may struggle to maintain high teaching standards, ultimately affecting the overall quality of education. Therefore, it is essential to explore this relationship in depth to provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and university administrators.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory for Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the degree to which individuals feel positively about their work and the workplace environment. It is often defined as the emotional response of employees to their job roles, tasks, and

conditions [28], [29]. In the context of education, job satisfaction is vital for lecturers as it directly influences their teaching effectiveness, creativity, and commitment to institutional goals [30]. Moreover, job satisfaction is characterized by factors such as fulfillment of professional aspirations, recognition for achievements, and alignment with personal values [31]. It encompasses intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic job satisfaction arises from the nature of the job itself, such as opportunities for intellectual growth and autonomy. Extrinsic job satisfaction is linked to external factors, including salary, working conditions, and relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Together, these elements contribute to an individual's overall sense of well-being in the workplace [32], [33]. Hence, intrinsic factors aligned with Maslow's higher-level needs of esteem and self-actualization, including items related to recognition and intellectual growth. Additionally, extrinsic job satisfaction factors, such as salary, which refers to a fixed payment made by the institution monthly [34]; working conditions, which include factors such as the arrangement of work and tasks, opportunities for training and skill development, health, safety, and overall well-being, as well as considerations related to working hours and maintaining a work-life balance [35]; and interpersonal relationships, which highlight the professional interactions and connections among faculty, staff, and administrators that foster collaboration, communication, and a positive working environment [36].

Research indicates that both intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction factors significantly impact lecturers' performance [32]. Intrinsic factors—such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the nature of the work—are linked to higher job satisfaction and motivation, leading to improved performance. Moreover, extrinsic factors—like salary, job security, and working conditions, and positive relationship within the institution—function as hygiene factors; their absence can cause dissatisfaction, because their presence are necessarily enhance positive performance [37]. Furthermore, Bhagwande's findings showed that the leaders should focus on extrinsic job satisfaction factors such as compensation, working condition, and positive relationship within the institution. These extrinsic job satisfaction factors can therefore foster opportunity to grow and institutin success more effectively comparing to intrinsic job satisfaction [37].

## 2.2. Personality Theory on Lecturers' Performance

Personality theory provides valuable insights into how individual traits influence lecturers' performance in higher education. Personality theory refers to the strategies a person has developed to get along, get ahead, and find meaning; it is defined in terms of a person's identity; and it is implemented to clarify a person's performance. In addition, this theory is equal to an individual's reputation; it is outlined in terms of traits and is used to predict an individual's performance [38]. Moreover, this theory consists of five traits such as conscientiousness, openness to experience, and extraversion can significantly impact teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and adaptability to institutional changes [24]. Conscientious lecturers tend to be well-organized, disciplined, and goal-oriented, leading to effective lesson planning and classroom management. Openness to experience fosters creativity and innovation in teaching methods, enhancing students' learning experiences. Additionally, extraverted lecturers often exhibit strong communication skills and enthusiasm, positively influencing student motivation and participation. Understanding personality traits allows university administrators and rectors to provide tailored professional development programs that align with lecturers' strengts, ultimately improving overall performance and institutional outcomes [24], [39].

## 2.3. The Link of Job Satisfaction to Lecturers' Performance

There were numerous empirical studies have corroborated the positive link between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance. For instance, a study by Khan and other researchers about university educators found that job satisfaction significantly predicted teaching quality and student engagement. Hence, job satisfaction acts as a key indicator in improving lecturers' performance in higher education [25]. Similarly, Szromek and Wolniak demonstrated that satisfied lecturers tend to show greater productivity, creativity, and resilience when faced with institutional challenges. These findings suggest that satisfaction not only enhances individual performance but also fosters an environment conducive to collective institutional success [40]. Furthermore, Siburian showed that job satisfaction, leadership style ( $\beta = 0.244$ ,  $t = 3.11$ ), work motivation, and work environment had a significant impact on lecturers' performance. Moreover, the effect of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance was found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.761$ ,  $t = 26.872$ ) [18]. Similarly, a study by Sancoko which surveyed 66 lecturers in Universitas Indonesia clarified that salary, a dimension of job satisfaction influenced lecturers' performance significantly. They further suggested future studies to discover other dimensions of job satisfaction that may have a significant effect on performance [41]. Additionally, Lubis surveyed 250 lecturers from various universities in Indonesia to explore the mediating role of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance. The finding showed that job satisfaction positively influenced lecturers' performance ( $p < 0.001$ ). Lubis also suggested that future studies should focus on the work environment since it is also vital for improving lecturers' performance. Hence, job satisfaction plays a crucial role in promoting lecturers' performance [2]. In addition, Kumar and Vasudevan research found that salary, appreciation, recognition, promotion, and job satisfaction have a positive and significant relationship with the performance of employees in Melaka, Malaysia. Therefore, focusing on strategies to improve job satisfaction can be a transformative approach to boosting lecturers' performance [16]. Furthermore, lokaninda used job satisfaction as a mediator to investigate the influence of leadership on lecturers' performance at the Faculty of Dentistry by

surveying 60 lecturers. The results showed that job satisfaction had a significant impact on lecturers' performance and also mediated the influence of leadership on lecturers' performance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, job satisfaction not only plays a crucial role in enhancing lecturers' performance but also mediates the relationship between leadership and lecturers' performance [10]. Similarly, Angriani and other researchers also applied job satisfaction as a mediating variable to examine the influence of leadership on lecturers' performance. Their quantitative study included 38 participants. The findings indicated that job satisfaction not only mediated the influence of leadership on performance but also directly enhanced lecturers' performance effectively ( $p < 0.05$ ) [42]. Additionally, Jamali and other researchers stated that lecturers' performance in higher education depends on various factors, such as organizational culture, leadership, and job satisfaction. The researchers clarified that each factor is essential in improving lecturers' performance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Future studies should consider increasing the sample size for more comprehensive insights [19].

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1. Research Design

Simple random sampling was selected for its simplicity and convenience, and it is one of the sampling techniques in the quantitative design. The author selected this sampling technique since it is the most straightforward, and convenience. The author simply gave numbers to each participant, and randomly selected the desired samples by using the manual lucky draw method. By doing this, all population had equal chances to be participated in the research questionnaire. Furthermore, the author applied quantitative design since it allows for the systematic investigation of the influence between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance using measurable data. In addition, this design provides the ability to test hypotheses objectively, ensuring the reliability of the findings. Furthermore, quantitative research enables the collection of large-scale data through standardized instruments, such as surveys [43]. Moreover, this design facilitates statistical analysis, offering insights into the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Additionally, this design minimizes researcher bias, ensuring that the conclusions are based on data rather than subjective interpretations [44]. Overall, this method is well-suited for identifying trends, patterns, and causal relationships, making it a robust choice for addressing the research objectives.

#### 3.2. Research Population and Samples

The researcher surveyed four private higher educational sector in Phnom Penh since it is the capital city of Cambodia, and it has many higher education institutions. The total population is 388 because there are 95 lecturers in university A, 86 lecturers in university B, 126 lecturers in university C, and 81 lecturers in university D. The sample sizes are selected based on Krejcie and Morgan sampling technique [45]. Hence, there are 304 samples from 388 populations. There are 76 samples selected from university A, 70 samples selected from university B, 92 samples selected from university C, and 66 samples selected from university D.

#### 3.3. Research Instruments and Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the research's instrument, the author applied the research instruments from well-known scholars, and adapted each instrument according to private higher educational sector in Cambodian context. Part I of the questionnaire is Lecturers' Demographic Characteristics: 5 items; Part II, Lecturers' Perception of job satisfaction: 20 items, is adapted from Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Part III, job satisfaction on lecturers' performance: 16 items, is adapted from Borman and Motowidlo [46], [47]. Subsequently, the questionnaire instrument underwent an initial pilot testing phase with 40 respondents to evaluate the reliability of its contents [48]. Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was employed in the study to assess the questionnaires' reliability. To be considered reliable, a coefficient of 0.70 or higher is required [44]. Based on the reliability analysis from SPSS, it is shown that the  $\alpha$  of the IV (job satisfaction) is 0.819, which is in a good category. Furthermore, the  $\alpha$  of the DV (lecturers' performance) is 0.955, which is in an excellent classification. Based on these points, all instruments'  $\alpha$  value is higher than 0.7. This result shows the high internal consistency reliability of research instruments.

Table 1. Research's Instrument

Construct	Theory	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Scale (Likert 1-5)
Lecturers' Perception of Job Satisfaction (IV)	Maslow's hierarchy of needs	20	0.819	1: never; 2: rarely; 3: sometimes; 4: frequently; 5: always
Job Satisfaction and Lecturers' Performance (DV)	Personality theory	16	0.955	1: never; 2: rarely; 3: sometimes; 4: frequently; 5: always

### 3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire contains three sections (demographic characteristics, lecturers' perception of job satisfaction, and job satisfaction and lecturers' performance) which were delivered to respondents who are teaching at the target university in the academic year 2024-2025. The researcher carefully provided the questionnaire to the respondents, clearly instructed, and monitored them. Furthermore, the questionnaires were collected, and the data was entered into the SPSS (version 26) for calculating the results. Additionally, descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) are used to define the level of lecturers' perception of job satisfaction, and multiple linear regression is used to explore the influence of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance among private higher educational sector in Phnom Penh.

### 3.5. Research Procedure

To confirm that the data collection process went smoothly, the researcher followed three main steps which is mentioned in the following figure.

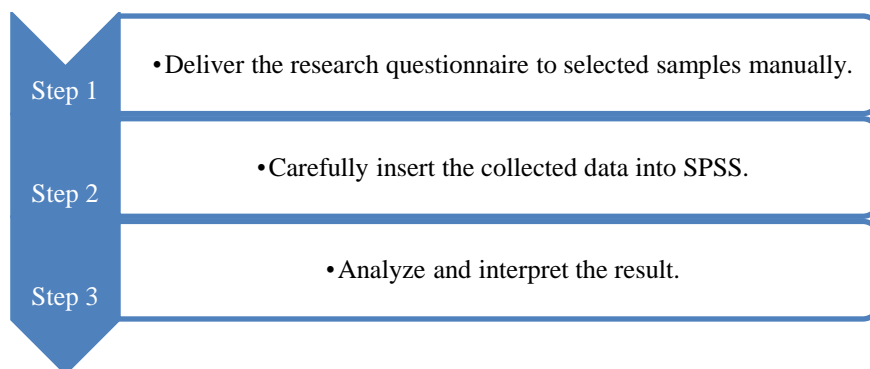


Figure 1. Research Procedure

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Findings

After undergoing a thorough process of data insertion and analysis, the researcher discovered fruitful findings which are exhibited in the following points. Firstly, the researcher shows the descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation). Then, the researcher displays the inferential statistic (Multiple Linear Regression).

#### 4.1.1. Lecturers' perception on Job Satisfaction and Lecturers' Performance

To reach this research objective, the researcher applied descriptive statistic such as Mean and Standard Deviation (SD).

Table 2. Lecturers' perception on intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction, job satisfaction and lecturers' performance

Lecturers' perception	M	S.D.	Meaning
Intrinsic job satisfaction	4.11	0.16	High
Extrinsic job satisfaction	4.11	0.28	High
Job satisfaction	4.11	0.18	High
Lecturers' performance	4.03	0.26	High

Based on Table 2, lecturers had a high and positive perception toward job satisfaction ( $M = 4.11$ ). The results showed that lecturers were intrinsically satisfied and motivated for their current job ( $M = 4.11$ ). In addition, extrinsic job satisfaction such as salary, working condition, and interpersonal relationship are also critical factors in showing a positive lecturers' performance ( $M = 4.11$ ). Furthermore, this table also displayed the perception of lecturers toward lecturers' performance, which is in a high mean ( $M = 4.03$ ).

#### 4.1.2. The influence of job satisfaction on lecturers' performance among private higher educational sector in Phnom Penh

To achieve this research objective, the researcher applied Multiple Linear Regression.

Table 3. Job satisfaction and lecturers' performance (N = 304)

Dimension	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	p-value
Job satisfaction and lecturers' performance	0.67	0.446	0.445	0.000
<i>Dependent variable: lecturers' performance</i>				
<i>Predictors: job satisfaction</i>				

According to Table 3, there was a significant relationship between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance since  $p = 0.000$ . the value of  $r = 0.67$  expressed a positive moderate correlation between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance. Also, the adjusted  $r^2 = 0.445$  explained that lecturers' performance is affected by job satisfaction by 44.50 %. There might be other external factors (55.50 %) that were not included in the study, also affected lecturers' performance.

In addition, the researcher also analyzed the influence of intrinsic job satisfaction on lecturers' performance and extrinsic job satisfaction on lecturers' performance.

Table 4. intrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance (N = 304)

Dimension	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	p-value
Intrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance	0.16	0.024	0.021	0.000
<i>Dependent variable: lecturers' performance</i>				
<i>Predictors: intrinsic job satisfaction</i>				

The data from Table 4 showed a slight positive relationship ( $R = 0.16$ ) between intrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance. the adjusted  $r^2 = 0.021$  signified that lecturers' performance is determined by intrinsic job satisfaction only 2.10 %. Hence, intrinsic job satisfaction is not a significant variable influencing lecturers' performance.

Table 5. Extrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance (N = 304)

Dimension	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	p-value
Extrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance	0.76	0.576	0.576	0.000
<i>Dependent variable: lecturers' performance</i>				
<i>Predictors: extrinsic job satisfaction</i>				

According to Table 5, the value of  $R = 0.76$  exposed a high positive connection between extrinsic job satisfaction and lecturers' performance. The adjusted  $r^2 = 0.575$  illustrated that lecturers' performance is predicted by extrinsic job satisfaction at 57.50 %. This result exhibited that extrinsic factors such as salary, working condition and interpersonal relationship are vital catalysts in promoting lecturers' performance effectively.

#### 4.2. Discussion

The research's result revealed that there is a moderate positive influence between job satisfaction and lecturers' performance ( $R = 0.67$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.445$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ,  $N = 304$ ). This result supported the evidence from previous researchers that job satisfaction plays a vital role in enhancing lecturers' performance [2], [18], [25]. Hence, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction significantly influence lecturers' performance to perform their tasks functionally and effectively. When lecturers are intrinsically satisfied with their jobs, they can develop their knowledge professionally and intellectually. Furthermore, they can apply their skills and expertise effectively in lecturing students with a sense of accomplishment and pride. Additionally, lecturers will feel valued and recognized when the institution they are working for provides them with sufficient teaching material and research resources. It can be generalized that educational institutions, especially higher education institutions, should incorporate professional training and development for lecturers, provide recognition, and ensure the availability of comprehensive teaching materials and research resources as part of their institutional policies.

Moreover, the finding is also supported by previous research results which found that salary and working conditions significantly influence lecturers' performance [2], [16], [41]. In terms of salary factor, lecturers' performance will be increased when the institution ensures fair and transparent salary or compensation policies for all lecturers based on their good performance, educational level, skill, knowledge, attitude, and experience.

Furthermore, the financial rewards, bonuses, and recognition also help promote lecturers' performance to a high level. All private higher educational sector in this study have implemented this framework into their educational policies, and the outcomes show that lecturers' performance has increased due to positive perspectives on job satisfaction. Another essential factor in influencing lecturers' performance is a good working condition. Lecturers' performance will be increased when the institution ensures a safe and comfortable working environment, provides adequate resources and facilities, assigns fair and efficient distribution of workloads, promotes training and workshops for professional development, and guides clear and consistent institutional policies to all lecturers. Moreover, the interpersonal relationship with the management team in the institution also plays a crucial role in affecting lecturers' performance positively. Based on the findings, the management team in the educational institution should communicate with lecturers closely by listening to their concerns for personal well-being and professional growth, providing appreciation and recognition to lecturers for their enthusiastic participation, promoting team-building and collaboration among lecturers, and valuing lecturers' opinion during decision-making processes. Thus, all the factors mentioned above, the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction such as salary, good working conditions, and interpersonal relationship with the management team influence lecturers' performance positively. Moreover, these factors contribute significantly to education policy, suggesting that the education sector should integrate job recognition, fair salary and compensation, good working conditions, a secure environment, and positive relationships within the institution.

However, this study showed that lecturers' performance is influenced by job satisfaction by only 44.50%. Therefore, other factors (55.50%) besides job satisfaction, which were not mentioned in the study, also influence lecturers' performance. This result might be due to the location of the study's sample, as the author selected only four private higher educational sector in phnom penh, where economic constraints and competitive advantages among private institutions exist. Hence, it is vital for future researchers to address the study's limitations by identifying additional factors beyond job satisfaction that influence lecturers' performance. Previous researchers also stated that leadership is another influential factor positively impacting lecturers' performance [18], [19]. Consequently, other researchers may also apply job satisfaction as a mediating variable between different leadership styles and lecturers' performance.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of job satisfaction in enhancing lecturers' performance, emphasizing a moderately positive relationship between the two. Specifically, extrinsic job satisfaction factors, such as negotiable salary and proper working conditions, have a more pronounced impact on performance compared to intrinsic factors. This highlights the need for educational leaders, rectors, and institutional owners to prioritize these external motivators to foster a productive and motivated workforce. By addressing these factors, institutions can not only improve lecturers' performance but also ensure the achievement of institutional goals and the delivery of high-quality education. Furthermore, fostering a positive interpersonal relationship within the organization is equally vital. Healthy relationships among faculty and administration promote a collaborative and supportive work environment, enabling lecturers to perform their duties more effectively. These findings suggest that leadership strategies should incorporate both practical and relational approaches, focusing on creating an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and motivated. Ultimately, such efforts contribute to the sustainable growth and success of higher education institutions. Since this study has some limitations, as stated above, the author suggests that future researchers investigate the influence of other independent variables, such as leadership styles, on lecturers' performance using different statistical methods. Furthermore, future studies should be conducted in other provinces besides Phnom Penh and with a larger sample size to generate more generalizable findings.

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