

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Organizational culture and the perception of job satisfaction among university faculty members in Ecuador

ABSTRACT

This paper is part of a longitudinal study conducted on faculty members from Ecuadorian universities. It contributes to the field of Organizational Behavior. It focuses on organizational culture at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador (UPS) and the job satisfaction of its faculty, by means of a study conducted in its three campuses (Cuenca, Quito, and Guayaquil) between April and September 2021. The objective accomplished was to determine the extent to which the institution's organizational culture influences the job satisfaction of its faculty. To this end, two variables were identified: job satisfaction as dependent variable, and the institution's organizational culture as independent variable. The rationale for this research is the fact that organizational culture can strongly influence job satisfaction among faculty members. Its aim was also to identify the fundamental aspects that determine the strengths of this culture that explain its influence in all three campuses. The study used a quantitative, applied method, with a correlational design that led to the description and tabulation of statistical data. A survey was used to collect quantitative data. The results indicate that the organizational culture shows a moderate correlation with job satisfaction among faculty members, as shown by the Spearman's $\rho = 0.812$ and the p-value = 0.000 lower than $\alpha = 0,05$.

Keywords: Organizational culture; job satisfaction; university teaching; organizational climate; sense of belonging.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture constitutes one of the most important strengths of organizations to become successful in the long term, in spite of its difficulties in terms of becoming established or needing to change if required by the circumstances. Therefore, its effect on the behavior of those who are part of the organization, and its implications in terms of corporate identity, commitment and job satisfaction, are of such relevance that it becomes a subject in continuous study.

The impact of organizational culture on the behavior of an organization's employees is such, that it can be evidenced in their ethical behavior and its importance on decision-making, both for managers and its entire staff. "Después, los trabajadores toman sus señales de dicho comportamiento y cultura, y ello influye en lo que hacen. Por lo tanto, es importante que la cultura de la firma envíe señales claras acerca de lo que es comportamiento aceptable" [Then, employees take their hints based on that behavior and culture, which influence whatever they do. Therefore, it is important for the company's culture to send clear signs of what constitutes acceptable behavior]. (Dessler and Varela, 2011, p. 336).

A new approach in organizational development focuses its objectives on creating stability in its formal systems and on transforming its actions into a new behavior of its parts, and also on seeking new strategies to generate value in its processes with a sustainable approach through a culture that values its members' creativity and innovation. (Carro *et al.*, 2017).

Thus, organizational culture reflects the way in which things are done in organizations, or what individuals do when they are not under supervision. For some authors, it reflects a pattern of basic shared assumptions such as beliefs, rituals, customs, symbols and languages that shape it (Vesga *et al.*, 2020, p. 40).

Organizational culture can have a key role in the generation of identity and commitment to the institution among its members. Then, this should be one of the objectives pursued by those in charge of its dissemination and strengthening, that is to say, the human resources

management department. In this regard, one of the challenges for modern organizational culture is precisely the improvement of working life quality "como forma de incrementar su productividad mediante mayores niveles de motivación y satisfacción, menor grado de tensión y menor resistencia al cambio" [as a way to increase its productivity by means of higher motivation and satisfaction levels, a lower tension level, and lower resistance to change]. (Werther and Davis, 2014, p. 309).

The key points for the appropriate development of an organization are: to allow for the creativity, motivation and commitment of those who are part of it to become stronger, based on the high competitiveness levels which required new forms of commitment where results lead to deciding, directing, thinking and feeling; also, to manage human relationships in organizations in a more effective way (Segredo, 2016).

The importance of disseminating institutional culture is, therefore, a task that must be considered from the beginning of the recruiting, hiring, and training processes for new personnel. Similarly, Driskill and Brenton (2005) state that "A un nivel más profundo los miembros de una organización crean y/o son adoctrinados en creencias o suposiciones únicas que forman las bases para actuar en conjunto" [At a deeper level, the members of an organization create and/or are indoctrinated in unique beliefs or assumptions that lay the foundations for acting as a whole]. (p. 5).

Upon examining the chain of positive effects of special agreements on organizational behavior, the moderating role of moral climate reveals its importance to evaluate the reliability of these measures. To this end, structural model tests must be performed to test good job performance (Velasco *et al.*, 2023).

Hee *et al.* (2023) claim that a series of factors affecting organizational culture include motivation, job satisfaction, job environment, inter-relations within the workplace, person-organization fit, and turnover intentions. For this reason, it is crucial to establish formal agreements and procedures to improve mutual consensus and transparent communication among managers.

The impact of diversity management on the organizational commitment and job satisfaction of a hotel industry's employees, and their perceptions of diversity management, have a direct positive and significant impact on job satisfaction with an indirect effect through the employees' organizational commitment. However, it shows a greater level of significance for foreign rather than national employees (García *et al.*, 2020).

Another case is the behavior between employees, such as sellers, which affects customer satisfaction and job performance. Applying strategies and agreements to improve organizational climate improves job satisfaction, relationship between employees, role-related behavior, and performance in companies (Yi *et al.*, 2023).

Research on presenteeism has focused on its prevalence, determining factors, and impact on employee and organization health. Few studies have investigated the effect of presence on the employees' attitudes, motivational responses, and the perceived organizational support as a moderating variable in the relation between commitment and job satisfaction (Côté *et al.*, 2021).

Global offshoring has become a key strategy for the international distribution of human resources. Organizational discontinuity becomes evident by not providing global tools for dynamic, virtual work that helps address external crises (Gibbs *et al.*, 2023).

For Olanrewaju and Fagbola (2023), organizations increasingly face turbulent and competitive times, hence the need for universities to leverage the strength of stimulating job environments that promote the balance between work, family, work motivation, job satisfaction, and overall work commitment, as well as work autonomy, job security, a comfortable work environment and flexible agreements. This will improve employees' work commitment.

Higher education institutions (IES by its Spanish initials), as they are called in Ecuador, are no strangers to the potential complexity of the management and coordination efforts made to reach their objectives or goals, and even more so to maintain a business initiative that

helps them differentiate in the market and become institutionally stronger. Kirzner, as cited by Jones (2013), states: "iniciativa empresarial es el término utilizado para describir el proceso por el cual la gente reconoce oportunidades para satisfacer necesidades y reúne y usa recursos para atender dichas necesidades" [business initiative is the term used to describe the process in which individuals recognize opportunities to meet their needs, and gathers and uses resources to address these needs]. (p.2). These opportunities are meant to address the needs of IES internal and external clients, which can add value to the organization.

In the university context, Ortiz (2018) states that, among others, the function of faculty is to create and transmit knowledge, which turns them into key elements for the accomplishment of the mission of those institutions where they work. For this reason, the treatment given to the creation of motivational mechanisms promoting good work relationships and generate favorable perceptions is of great relevance, as is the importance that should be given to the influence of organizational culture elements on the behavior, efficiency and performance of faculty members, generating institutional identity, a sense of belonging, and job satisfaction (pp. 28-29).

A study conducted in the United States of America on the low levels of faculty retention mentions that, precisely, one of the factors that affects faculty job satisfaction, and is also presented as one of the agents enhancing retention, is the perception of support received from the Institution (Zhang and Zeller, 2016, p. 73).

The dynamism of modern-day university determines that the effectiveness of organizations will be fundamental to achieve success and their objectives, in addition to achieving an efficient and effective interaction between the main actors of education, such as students and faculty, while seeking the integral realization of individuals and whose result, in turn, will be reflected in satisfaction for the students' academic achievements and the faculty members' job satisfaction. One of the key elements that can directly and positively influence the success of IESs is their organizational culture, which –depending on its strength—could determine the

attitudes and behavior of their communities' members.

On the other hand, the dependent variable, "job satisfaction" has perception levels that are due –to a great extent—to the strength or weakness of the organizational culture, even though it is not necessarily the only factor that influences (Pedraza, 2019, p. 15). A published study conducted in Greece in 2018 with public employees from the education sector shows that, despite an evident satisfaction with their jobs, there is evidence of job dissatisfaction in dimensions such as autonomy (71%), limitations to bring out their creativity (71%), their salaries (85%) and lack of growth opportunities (79%) (Karamanis *et al.*, 2019, p. 16).

Job satisfaction is not only determined by benefits and salaries, but is also evidenced by a high level of incidence in factors such as self-control, the possibility of being creative, the working environment and conditions, security and, above all, autonomy. This satisfaction is intrinsically related to quality and productivity, as stated by Santamaría and Serrano (2016).

In addition, a study conducted by university faculty members in China revealed that work and demographic characteristics contribute to generating a perception of satisfaction. However, the perceived organizational support showed a stronger link to job satisfaction. The study results indicate that improving the perceived organizational support may increase the job satisfaction level of university faculty (Pan *et al.*, 2015, p. 12770).

It is evident that there is a shared need of both organizations and individuals to reach their objectives and fulfil their goals, which determines an essential, intrinsic, and interdependent relationship. Hence, organizations will need to invest resources in their employees' growth and training, and in the referential framework to seek organizational development in order to achieve the established aims (Vesga *et al.*, p. 19).

On the basis of this referential framework of previous research, the research problem has been defined as: How are organizational culture and perceived job satisfaction related? To this end, the objective of this research is established

as: to determine the influence of organizational culture on university faculty members' job satisfaction. The general hypothesis is: organizational culture significantly influences faculty members' job satisfaction.

The fact that no research has been conducted locally to measure the strength of the organizational culture of higher education institutions and its relationship with job satisfaction, which is a major factor in increasing efficiency and productivity, determines the value and importance of the information presented in this paper.

METHOD

The study was conducted nationwide in the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador, and applied in its three campuses: Cuenca, Quito, and Guayaquil. The sample was taken from the number of faculty members working for this institution, whether full-time, part-time or occasionally.

This research is applied due to the search for new knowledge for scientific enrichment. This study is intended to contribute, through various sources, theories and investigations, to meeting the objectives for the development of organizational culture. Its scope was based on the description of the study subject importance by UPS faculty members, to determine the extent to which the institution's organizational culture influences job satisfaction.

The study uses a quantitative focus where a hypothesis is presented based on the data collection. By means of numerical measurement, the statistical data are contrasted in order to reach a definition of behavior models and a verification of theories (Hernández *et al.*, 2014, p. 37). This research paper, considering the period in which the data were collected, is cross-sectional in nature because the data were gathered at a single point in time from the study target population, in this case the IES faculty. Regarding the research design, it is non-experimental because the variables were studied in their normal status, with no interference or manipulation by the researcher (Hinojosa, 2017, p. 23).

During the research process, two variables were identified: the independent variable is or-

ganizational culture, with dimensions mission, consistency, involvement, and adaptability. The dependent variable is faculty members' job satisfaction, with its indicators: teaching itself, research, interpersonal relationships, social and labor conditions, and extension.

The population of faculty members to analyze was taken from Universidad Politécnica Salesiana (UPS) 2021 Report in figures, indicating that this organization has 1003 faculty members (100%), as detailed in Figure 1. With this information, a simple, random probabilistic sample was obtained through the finite sampling formula, resulting in $n = 168$ faculty members from the campuses in Guayaquil, Quito, and the main campus in Cuenca.

The measurement instrument used was a 52-item questionnaire under a Likert scale, divided by indicators consistent with the formulation of the research problem, in order to verify the relationships with each of the dimensions and variables studied. This will explain their behavior and lead to an effective response to the previously formulated hypotheses. The questionnaire was applied in 2021.

To measure the organizational culture variable, an adaptation of the questionnaire first

proposed by Denison (2016) was created. To measure the faculty members' job satisfaction variable, the survey provided in the SALDU Faculty Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was adapted. This adapted instrument was also validated by expert judgment before being applied.

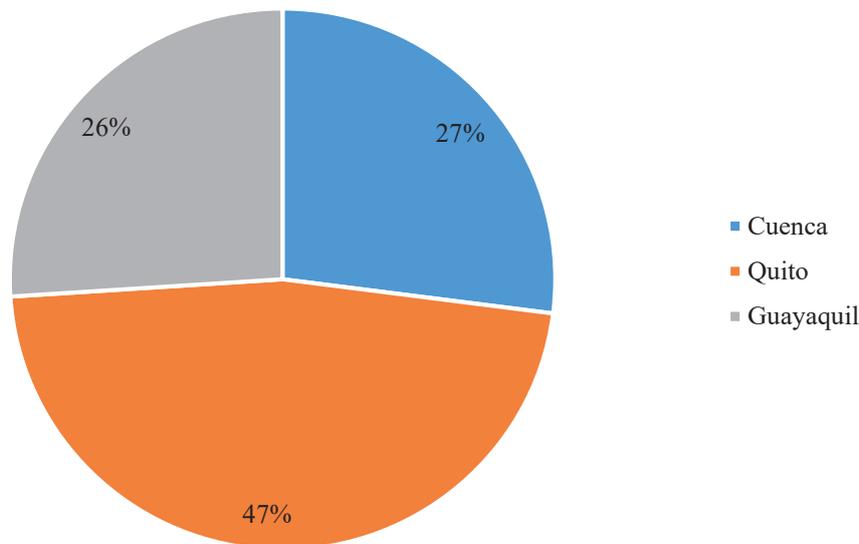
The tool used for data collection was Google Forms. The questionnaire was randomly sent to faculty members from the three UPS campuses to ensure the largest number of responses possible. For the descriptive contrast of each question and statistical analysis, SPSS Statistics was used, resulting in suitable data tabulation for obtaining the results.

RESULTS

Descriptive analysis of variable organizational culture (X)

Table 1 and Figure 2 show that, from 100% (168) of survey respondents on organizational culture level, 6.0% (10) answered Poor, 29.2% (49) answered Fair, and 64.9% (109) answered Good. It can therefore be said that most answers reflect a Good level because the faculty members are involved in an adequate organizational culture for performing their duties. Through persistence and adaptability, they have adequately learned

Figure 1
Distribution of faculty members per campus



Note. Adapted from UPS, 2022, p. 6.

Table 1

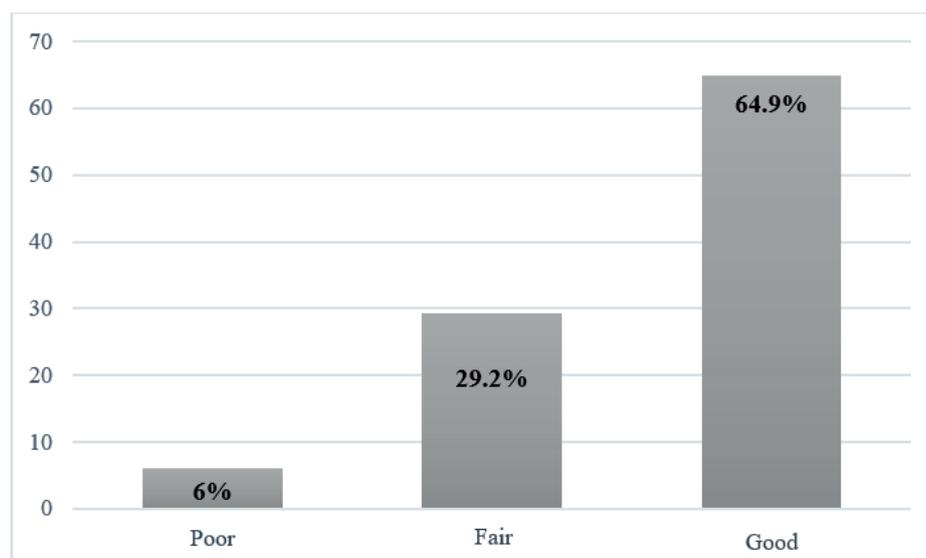
Level of variable Organizational Culture

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Poor	10	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Fair	49	29.2	29.2	35.1
	Good	109	64.9	64.9	100.0
Total		168	100.0	100.0	

Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

Figure 2

Level of variable Organizational Culture



Note. Prepared by the author, 2023..

to improve the constant attention among the participants, comply with the mission and vision of the institution based on the goals and objectives defined, to give way to organization and planning as part of the organizational culture of Universidad Politécnica Salesiana’s faculty members.

Descriptive analysis of variable Job Satisfaction (Y)

Table 2 and Figure 3 show that, from 100% (168) of survey respondents on the level of job satisfaction, 0.6% (1) is very satisfied, 2.4% (4) are dissatisfied, 20.2% (34) are neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 48.2% (81) are satisfied, and 28.6% (48) are very satisfied. It can be concluded that most respondents are located in the “satisfied” level, because the faculty members

are satisfied with interpersonal relationships, and that the institution’s management meet adequate social and labor conditions. This influences the generation of an adequate working environment for the faculty members of Universidad Politécnica Salesiana.

Analysis of correlation between variables

Figure 4 shows that the cloud points are grouped and show a trend. The result of correlation through the Spearman’s R statistic is equal to = 0.812, with p-value = 0.000, lower than significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, which determines that the study hypothesis is accepted. Variable Organizational Culture significantly influences the job satisfaction of faculty members from Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador.

Table 2

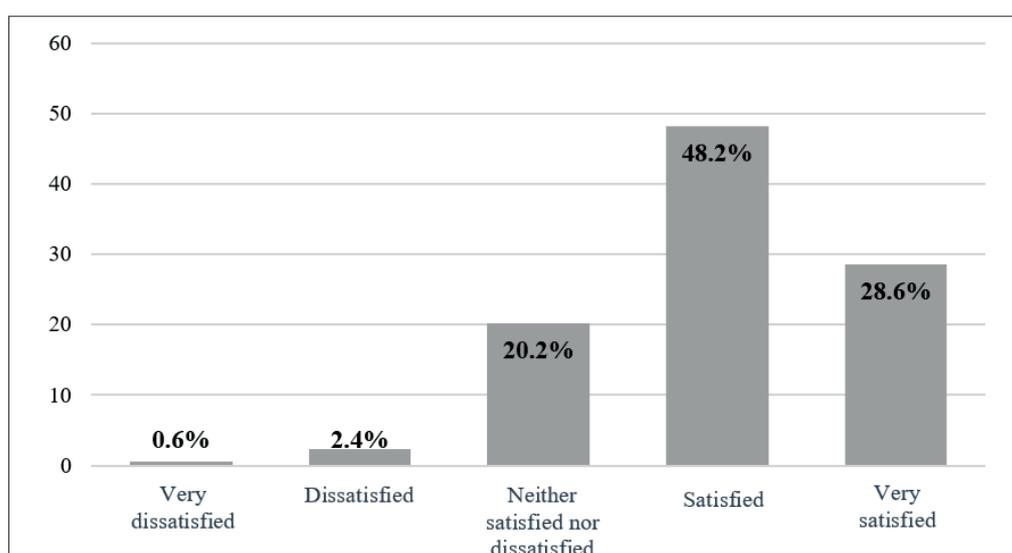
Level of variable Job Satisfaction

		Freq.	%	% val.	% cum.
Valid	Very dissatisfied	1	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Dissatisfied	4	2.4	2.4	3.0
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	34	20.2	20.2	23.2
	Satisfied	81	48.2	48.2	71.4
	Very satisfied	48	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total		168	100.0	100.0	

Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

Figure 3

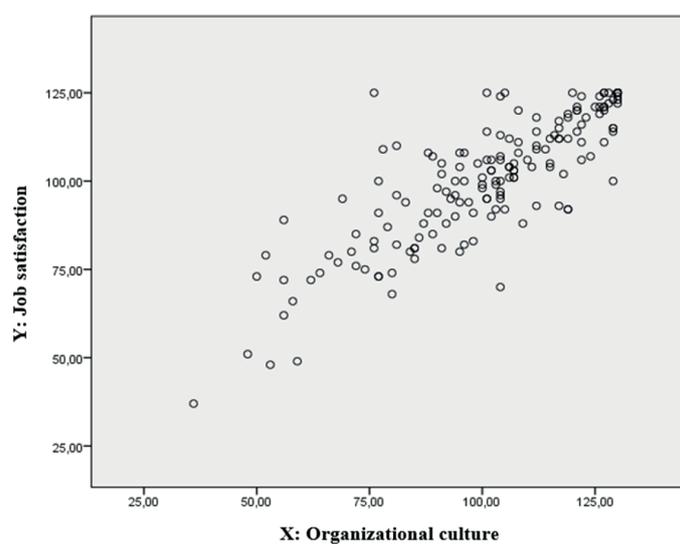
Level of variable Job Satisfaction



Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

Figure 4

Correlation between variables Organizational Culture and Faculty Member's Job Satisfaction.



Note. Prepared by the author, 2023.

DISCUSSION

Upon administering the data collection instrument to the 168 faculty members working at the three campuses of Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador, it was identified that the theoretical and empirical parts of this study have made it possible to contrast the data resulting from the questionnaire and, through descriptive tabulation, confirms the correlation between organizational culture and faculty members' job satisfaction at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador.

Considering the objective of this research, which is to determine the influence of organizational culture on the faculty members' job satisfaction, from the theoretical results of authors such as Almirante and Kittelsen (2023), it is considered that job demands and resources can have a crucial impact on the ability of an educational institution to retain its faculty. The data analysis showed that the organizational climate and various work-related demands and resources were significantly correlated with faculty members' satisfactions and work-related demands. As described by Ortiz (2018), faculty members are responsible for creating and transmitting knowledge. For this reason, good relationships at work should be promoted, as well as the influence of organizational culture elements on faculty behavior, efficiency, and performance. The influence of organizational culture is directly related to job satisfaction. Both Ortiz and Almirante and Kittelsen reinforce its importance as a contribution to this study.

Velazco *et al.* (2023) state that there is a high correlation between variables satisfaction and job environment so that employees achieve their objectives while showing efficiency and productivity. Burcu (2020) endorses the findings that show the importance of the relationship between organizational ethics and job satisfaction, and its implications for individuals and organizations. Both authors reflect how important it is for this study to demonstrate the degree of influence of social and labor conditions in the job environment, employee performance and adaptability, whether they are university faculty members or employees in various institutions or companies.

A study by Kaur and Singh (2021) examined the simultaneous effects of person-organization (PO) and person-job (PJ) fit. The results showed that job satisfaction had a consistent and perceived relationship with PO and PJ, differential effects on the results of orientation at work. The combination of roles and skills of the participants has a significant impact on their perception of the workload and job satisfaction (Inegbedion *et al.*, 2020). This indicates that the variables proposed for this study relate to each other from the theoretical aspect to the practical.

Meng and Burgerb (2019), in their study, show results of the strong impact of culture and organizational performance have on work commitment, trust, and professionals' job satisfaction. For Tran (2021), providing an adequate environment helps control activities and provide a sense of stability. This control helps improve the employees' results depending on their positions and duties. When a supportive organizational culture is achieved, employees show commitment, trust, and an excellent job performance.

The surveys administered and analyzed show that faculty members strongly agree with their commitment to the mission, vision and organizational strategies of the IES where they work, provided that they are given legal benefits for an adequate environment based on the social and labor conditions.

From the point of view of job satisfaction during pandemic times, the paper by Lee *et al.* (2022) addresses the way in which a healthy environment, both in psychosocial and physical terms, are significantly correlated with job satisfaction; therefore, they influence compliance with duties. In relation to the results of the proposed variables, faculty members are satisfied with the working conditions, such as control and adaptability, and have experienced adequate learning to improve the constant attention among the participants.

The results show a significance level of 0.812 obtained through Spearman's rho. Therefore, organizational culture is considered to significantly influence job satisfaction among faculty members from Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador due to the high correlation

between the variables. The correlation noted among the variables can be explained following authors such as Robbins and Judge (2013), who claim that job satisfaction is directly related to the strength of organizational culture (p. 513). It is also crucial to highlight that organizational citizenship behavior is directly related to the motivational dimensions of job satisfaction and institutional commitment (Luthans *et al.*, 2015, p. 127).

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion is that, according to the study results, the existing organizational culture aspects at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana greatly influence its faculty members' job satisfaction, considering the results obtained through the survey based on Denison's model related to the institution's organizational effectiveness (Denison, 2016, p. 56).

It can also be established that there are aspects related to organizational culture which may, without being of critical importance, be aspects to improve. This is due to the levels perceived in the survey which became apparent in more than one indicator.

It was determined that the involvement and commitment evidenced in the institution's faculty members constitutes a great strength for its organizational culture, which suggests that communication is quite effective. In addition, the aspect of adaptability, which shows the highest acceptance percentage, determines the dynamism of changes and the faculty members' positive response to face these changes.

As previously stated, the lowest points in this context were consistency and mission. This is no minor detail because it is related to the institution's philosophy itself, and the level of consistence between the community's behavior and this philosophy. Denison (2016), precisely, mentions that the mission is one of the most important elements of organizational culture, because it reflects to a great extent how the organization's members respond to strategic management and the objectives it proposes.

Meanwhile, the survey on faculty members' job satisfaction resulted in a clear perception of job satisfaction, especially in relation to

their teaching duties and the interpersonal relationships with peers and students. It is therefore necessary to continue the efforts toward helping the research and identification become equally conducive to job satisfaction among faculty members (Fuentes, 2006, p. 102).

To comply with the strengthening of these particular areas, it is important to work on management and strategic objectives that seek to respond to such needs, to be reflected on a nationwide plan to implement a proposal that can meet this objective.

The possibility remains open for this research to become an analysis model for other studies. The methods and results validate this type of research which can be used in other IESs to correlate each organization's own culture characteristics and aspects such as job satisfaction, classroom management, and even managerial performance.

As a product of this research, a new project is intended for development, based on each institution's identity according to its organizational culture and the results that, through this culture, may be obtained in classroom management. This new project is intended for nationwide execution, including various IESs.

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Conflicts of interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

Author contributions

Hugo Fernando Iñiguez Magallanes (lead author): research, writing (original draft, reviewing, and editing).