

How positive affect moderates job characteristics and lecturer job satisfaction in higher Islamic education?

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how job characteristics dimensions and positive affect influence job satisfaction among lecturers in Faculties of Islamic Economics and Business at State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) in Indonesia. It aims to address the growing concern regarding academic job satisfaction within Islamic higher education institutions facing increasing professional and institutional demands. Despite the strategic role of lecturers in ensuring educational quality, declining job satisfaction remains a persistent issue in Indonesian higher education. Limited empirical evidence exists on how job design and affective dispositions jointly influence lecturer satisfaction in Islamic university contexts. This study contributes to the literature by integrating the Job Characteristics Model and dispositional affect theory through moderation analysis in the context of Islamic higher education. It provides empirical evidence on the interactive effects between job characteristics and positive affect, which remain underexplored in prior studies. This study employed a quantitative explanatory survey design involving 207 lecturers from seven PTKIN institutions in Java. Data were collected using validated instruments and analyzed using moderated regression analysis to examine direct and interaction effects among variables. The results indicate that skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy have significant positive effects on job satisfaction, while feedback does not show a significant influence. Positive affect demonstrates a consistent positive relationship with job satisfaction. Furthermore, positive affect partially moderates the relationships between most job characteristics dimensions and job satisfaction, although the moderation effects are negative. This study confirms the relevance of job design and affective dispositions in shaping lecturer job satisfaction within Islamic higher education. The findings suggest that institutional efforts should integrate job enrichment strategies with psychological well-being programs to enhance academic performance and organizational sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of higher education institutions globally has placed unprecedented demands on academic personnel, particularly those serving in specialized faculties such as Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business within State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) in Indonesia. These institutions face unique challenges in balancing the integration of Islamic values with contemporary business education while simultaneously meeting international academic standards (Sahin, 2018). The phenomenon of declining job satisfaction among university lecturers has emerged as a critical concern affecting institutional performance, teaching quality, and research productivity across Indonesian higher education (Dara & Saparuddin, 2025). Recent studies indicate that lecturer satisfaction levels significantly influence teaching effectiveness, student outcomes, and overall institutional reputation, making this issue paramount for educational policymakers and university administrators (Virgana et al., 2024).

The higher education sector in Indonesia, particularly PTKIN institutions operating under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has experienced substantial structural changes over the past decade. These include the conversion of several institutes (IAIN) to universities (UIN), curriculum reforms emphasizing the integration of religious and general sciences, and increased demands for research publications and community engagement (Marshall, 2025; Sulhan et al., 2018). Faculty members at Islamic economics and business faculties in Java navigate particularly complex professional environments, balancing Islamic finance pedagogy with conventional business education while meeting the tri dharma perguruan tinggi (three pillars of higher education: teaching, research, and community service) requirements. This multifaceted role structure creates distinctive job characteristics that may influence satisfaction levels differently than in conventional university settings.

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976) provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding how work design influences employee outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). This seminal theory identifies five core job dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback that collectively determine the motivating potential of any position (Humphrey et al., 2007). According to this model, these job characteristics create three critical psychological states: experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes, and knowledge of actual results (Fried & Ferris, 1987). Meta-analytic evidence consistently demonstrates that these dimensions are substantially

associated with job satisfaction, with autonomy and feedback showing particularly strong relationships (Wartenberg et al., 2023). The JCM remains highly relevant in contemporary organizational contexts, with recent research confirming its applicability across diverse cultural and institutional settings (Rubenstein et al., 2019).

Parallel to situational determinants, dispositional approaches to job satisfaction have gained substantial empirical support, with positive affect (PA) emerging as a crucial individual difference variable. Positive affect refers to a stable tendency to experience positive emotional states, including enthusiasm, alertness, and energy (Watson et al., 1988). Meta-analytic research has established that PA is positively related to job satisfaction, with individuals high in positive affectivity consistently reporting greater workplace satisfaction across various occupational contexts (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Thoresen et al., 2003). Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory provides theoretical grounding for these relationships, suggesting that positive emotions expand cognitive resources and build psychological capital that enhances work-related outcomes (Fredrickson, 2001). Recent within-person meta-analysis by Aitken et al. (2025) further confirmed that positive affect is associated with higher task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, reinforcing its significance in organizational contexts (Aitken et al., 2025).

Empirical studies examining job characteristics and satisfaction in higher education contexts have yielded substantial findings supporting the applicability of the JCM in academic settings. Research in Bangladeshi private universities demonstrated that job characteristics significantly predict job satisfaction, with organizational commitment serving as a mediating mechanism (Ashraf, 2020). Similarly, studies on Indonesian university lecturers have confirmed the importance of work environment factors, including job design elements, in determining satisfaction levels (Narasuci et al., 2018). The relationship between dispositional affect and work outcomes has also been examined in educational contexts, with findings suggesting that lecturers with positive emotional orientations demonstrate higher engagement and performance (Njotoprajitno et al., 2020). However, the interactive effects between job characteristics and individual dispositions remain underexplored in Islamic higher education settings, representing a significant gap in the literature.

The potential moderating role of positive affect in the job characteristics-satisfaction relationship draws theoretical support from interactionist perspectives in organizational behavior. According to trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) and affect infusion models

(Forgas & George, 2001), individual dispositions can amplify or attenuate the effects of situational factors on attitudes and behaviors. Kaplan et al. (2009) meta-analytically demonstrated that positive and negative affectivity predict various performance dimensions through distinct mechanisms, suggesting dispositional affect shapes how individuals perceive and respond to job characteristics (Kaplan et al., 2009). Wright et al. (2007) found that psychological well-being moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and performance, indicating that positive emotional states enhance the translation of favorable work conditions into positive outcomes. In the context of the JCM, employees high in positive affect may be more likely to perceive enriched job characteristics favorably and derive greater satisfaction from meaningful, autonomous work with clear feedback mechanisms (Wright et al., 2007).

Despite the extensive literature on job characteristics and job satisfaction, several critical gaps persist that this research addresses. First, the moderating role of positive affect in the job characteristics-satisfaction relationship has received limited empirical attention, particularly in non-Western contexts (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). Second, research on academic job satisfaction in Indonesia has predominantly focused on direct effects, neglecting potential interaction mechanisms between personality dispositions and job design features (Hasan et al., 2024). Third, the unique context of PTKIN institutions, which combine Islamic educational values with contemporary academic demands, presents distinct organizational characteristics that existing research has not adequately examined (Sahin, 2018). Fourth, the dimensional approach to examining job characteristics—investigating each dimension separately rather than as a composite allows for more nuanced understanding of which specific work design elements are most consequential in this particular setting, yet such disaggregated analyses remain scarce in the literature.

This research offers several novel contributions to organizational behavior and higher education management literature. The primary novelty lies in examining positive affect as a moderating variable that shapes how job characteristics dimensions influence satisfaction among academic personnel in Islamic higher education institutions. This represents an extension of both the Job Characteristics Model and dispositional approaches by integrating these theoretical perspectives in an underexplored cultural and institutional context. Additionally, the research investigates each job characteristic dimension independently, providing granular insights into which specific aspects of academic work design are most influenced by positive dispositional

traits. The focus on Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business within PTKIN institutions across Java offers contextual novelty, as these faculties represent a unique hybrid of religious education and professional business training that has not been systematically studied from a job design perspective. This research also contributes methodologically by applying moderation analysis to examine boundary conditions of established theoretical relationships.

Understanding the interactive effects between job characteristics and positive affect carries substantial practical implications for PTKIN institutional management. If positive affect strengthens the relationship between enriched job design and satisfaction, institutions may benefit from dual intervention strategies: enhancing job characteristics while also fostering positive emotional climates (Cameron et al., 2011). Conversely, if the moderating effect is negligible, institutional efforts may focus primarily on structural job redesign without necessitating affective interventions. The findings will inform human resource policies regarding job design for academic positions, particularly in balancing the multiple demands of teaching, research, and Islamic scholarship inherent to these faculty roles. Furthermore, results may guide recruitment and selection practices, suggesting the value of considering dispositional characteristics alongside technical qualifications when hiring academic personnel for positions with varying levels of job enrichment.

Based on the theoretical foundations and identified research gaps, this study aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) to examine the direct effects of each job characteristics dimension (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) on job satisfaction among lecturers at Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business in PTKIN institutions across Java; (2) to investigate the direct effect of positive affect on job satisfaction in this academic context; and (3) to analyze the moderating role of positive affect in the relationships between each job characteristics dimension and job satisfaction. These objectives will be achieved through quantitative survey methodology involving lecturers from multiple PTKIN institutions in Java, enabling generalizability across the State Islamic Religious University system while maintaining contextual specificity to the economics and business education domain. The research outcomes are expected to advance theoretical understanding of person-situation interactions in academic job satisfaction while providing actionable insights for Islamic higher education institutional management.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), remains one of the most influential frameworks in organizational psychology for understanding how job design influences employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance. This model posits that five core job dimensions collectively determine the motivating potential of work: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to this theoretical framework, these dimensions generate three critical psychological states—experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of actual results—which subsequently influence personal and work-related outcomes including job satisfaction, internal work motivation, and work effectiveness (Humphrey et al., 2007). Contemporary research continues to validate the explanatory power of the JCM across diverse occupational contexts and cultural settings, demonstrating its enduring relevance in modern organizational environments (Singh et al., 2016)

Meta-analytic evidence has consistently supported the relationships proposed by the JCM. Fried and Ferris (1987) established that the five core job characteristics demonstrate meaningful correlations with job satisfaction, with autonomy and task significance exhibiting particularly robust associations. More recent meta-analyses have extended these findings, demonstrating that jobs enriched with these core dimensions lead to higher intrinsic motivation, enhanced job satisfaction, and superior job performance (Humphrey et al., 2007). In the higher education context specifically, research has documented that faculty members whose positions incorporate diverse skill requirements, clear task boundaries, meaningful work impact, decision-making latitude, and performance feedback report significantly elevated satisfaction levels (Kim & Maijan, 2024).

2.1 Skill Variety and Job Satisfaction

Skill variety refers to the degree to which a job requires employees to utilize a diverse range of skills, abilities, and talents in performing their work activities (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The theoretical rationale underlying the positive relationship between skill variety and job satisfaction centers on the psychological meaningfulness derived from engaging multiple competencies. When employees employ various skills in their work, they experience reduced monotony, enhanced cognitive stimulation, and greater intellectual engagement, all of which

contribute to heightened experienced meaningfulness of work (Kim & Maijan, 2024). Contemporary empirical investigations have consistently demonstrated this positive association across multiple occupational sectors.

Mostafa & Jaafar (2024) conducted a comprehensive bibliometric analysis examining job characteristics and job satisfaction literature from 2000 to 2023, confirming that skill variety consistently emerges as a significant predictor of employee satisfaction across diverse national contexts (Mostafa & Jaafar, 2024). Similarly, Ayodele et al. (2020) investigated job satisfaction among real estate professionals and found that skill variety, alongside organizational culture, ranked among the most influential determinants of employee satisfaction (Ayodele et al., 2020). In the academic sector, research demonstrates that lecturers whose positions require diverse pedagogical, research, and administrative competencies report higher satisfaction levels compared to those with narrowly defined roles (Szromek & Wolniak, 2020). The systematic review by (Düzgün & Çelik, 2023) synthesizing empirical literature on job satisfaction determinants concluded that the nature of work itself, including skill variety, represents the strongest predictor of overall job satisfaction and employee retention. Based on the theoretical framework of the JCM and supporting empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Skill variety positively affects job satisfaction

2.2 Task Identity and Job Satisfaction

Task identity refers to the extent to which a job involves completing a whole, identifiable piece of work from beginning to end with a visible outcome (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). When employees can see tasks through from inception to completion, they develop a sense of ownership, accomplishment, and pride in their work, which substantially contributes to experienced meaningfulness (Albrecht, 2013). The psychological mechanism underlying this relationship involves employees' ability to perceive the tangible results of their efforts and to identify their personal contribution to the overall work product.

Empirical research supports the positive influence of task identity on job satisfaction. (Allan et al., 2018) examined the relationship between task identity, autonomy, and job satisfaction, finding that task identity significantly predicted employee satisfaction through its impact on experienced meaningfulness. Their research demonstrated that employees who complete identifiable work units experience greater psychological ownership of their work outcomes,

which translates into enhanced satisfaction. (Cotič et al., 2025) investigated job characteristics and work engagement in Slovenian and Malaysian organizations, confirming that task identity positively influences employees' psychological states and subsequent work attitudes. In academic settings specifically, research indicates that faculty members who are responsible for complete course delivery from curriculum design through assessment report higher satisfaction than those involved only in fragmented instructional activities (Cheng et al., 2023). Given the theoretical rationale and empirical support, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 2: Task identity positively affects job satisfaction

2.3 Task Significance and Job Satisfaction

Task significance refers to the degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether within or outside the organization (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). This job characteristic is fundamentally linked to employees' perception of their work as meaningful and valuable. When individuals perceive that their work contributes meaningfully to others' well-being or organizational goals, they experience enhanced purpose and fulfillment (Allan et al., 2018). The JCM posits that task significance, together with skill variety and task identity, collectively generates experienced meaningfulness of work, which subsequently influences job satisfaction.

Research has consistently demonstrated the positive relationship between task significance and job satisfaction. Grant (2008) provided compelling evidence that employees who perceive their work as benefiting others exhibit higher motivation and job satisfaction. In the education sector, this relationship is particularly salient given the inherently meaningful nature of teaching and knowledge dissemination. Faculty members who perceive their instructional and research activities as significantly contributing to student development and societal advancement report elevated satisfaction levels (Karorsa & Allen, 2024). The systematic review conducted by the International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (2025) examining job satisfaction determinants across industries confirmed that meaningful work and task significance consistently emerge as critical predictors of employee satisfaction. Furthermore, Astakhova et al. (2024) demonstrated that task significance influences work passion and satisfaction across knowledge work, nonprofit, and managerial sectors. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Task significance positively affects job satisfaction

2.4 Autonomy and Job Satisfaction

Autonomy represents the degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the employee in scheduling work and determining the procedures utilized in carrying it out (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to the JCM, autonomy generates experienced responsibility for work outcomes, whereby employees feel personally accountable for the results of their efforts. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) further elaborates this mechanism, positing that autonomy represents a fundamental psychological need whose satisfaction leads to enhanced intrinsic motivation, well-being, and (Tang et al., 2020).

Meta-analytic evidence provides robust support for the autonomy-satisfaction relationship. (Muecke & Iseke, 2019) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis examining how job autonomy influences job performance, finding that autonomy enhances both work motivation and job satisfaction while reducing mental strain. Their analysis of 319 studies with 151,134 participants demonstrated that autonomy operates through multiple theoretical mechanisms to influence work outcomes positively. (Slemp et al., 2024) meta-analyzed leader autonomy support in workplace contexts, confirming substantial positive associations with employee job satisfaction and work engagement. More recent research by (Juyumaya et al., 2024) established that autonomy positively influences job performance through work engagement, with the relationship remaining significant across different age groups.

In higher education contexts specifically, autonomy holds particular significance given the professional nature of academic work. Research indicates that faculty members value decision-making latitude in course design, research direction, and pedagogical approaches. Lecturers who experience greater autonomy in their professional activities demonstrate higher satisfaction levels, enhanced creativity, and stronger organizational commitment (Mohamed et al., 2024). The conceptual review by Olafsen et al. (2025) further confirmed that autonomous motivation and basic psychological need satisfaction consistently relate to better employee performance and satisfaction across occupational contexts (Olafsen et al., 2025). Based on this theoretical and empirical foundation, the following hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 4: Autonomy positively affects job satisfaction

2.5 Feedback and Job Satisfaction

Feedback refers to the degree to which carrying out work activities results in employees obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of their performance (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to the JCM, feedback from the job itself generates knowledge of actual results, enabling employees to understand how well they are performing and to make necessary adjustments. This critical psychological state serves motivational and informational functions, helping employees calibrate their efforts and experience a sense of competence and accomplishment when performance meets or exceeds expectations.

Empirical research consistently demonstrates the positive influence of feedback on job satisfaction and related outcomes. (Anseel & Lievens, 2007) established that performance feedback significantly enhances job satisfaction by providing employees with clarity regarding their work effectiveness and areas for improvement. The meta-analysis by (Shim et al., 2025) examining performance feedback and organizational citizenship behavior confirmed that feedback-rich work environments foster higher job satisfaction and commitment, which subsequently translate into discretionary effort. In the context of performance appraisal systems, (Cesário et al., 2023) found that constructive feedback mechanisms significantly enhance employee satisfaction and align individual behaviors with organizational objectives. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5: Feedback positively affects job satisfaction

2.6 Positive Affect and Job Satisfaction

Positive affect (PA) refers to the stable tendency to experience positive emotional states such as enthusiasm, energy, alertness, and engagement (Watson et al., 1988). As a dispositional construct, PA reflects individual differences in the propensity to experience pleasant emotional states across situations and over time. The theoretical underpinning for the PA-satisfaction relationship derives from both affective disposition theory and Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory, which posits that positive emotions expand cognitive and behavioral repertoires, enabling individuals to build enduring personal resources and to perceive their environments more favorably.

Meta-analytic evidence strongly supports the positive affect-job satisfaction relationship. Connolly and Viswesvaran (2000) conducted a seminal meta-analysis examining the role of

affectivity in job satisfaction, finding a substantial corrected correlation of 0.49 between positive affectivity and job satisfaction across 15 studies with 3,326 participants. Their analysis indicated that 10-25% of variance in job satisfaction could be attributed to individual differences in affectivity, suggesting a meaningful dispositional component to satisfaction. Thoresen et al. (2003) extended this work, demonstrating that trait positive and negative affect predict job satisfaction across time, supporting the temporal stability of the affectivity-satisfaction relationship. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 6: Positive affect positively affects job satisfaction

2.7 The Moderating Role of Positive Affect on Job Characteristics-Job Satisfaction Relationships

Beyond its direct effects on job satisfaction, positive affect is theorized to moderate the relationships between job characteristics and satisfaction outcomes. This moderating role can be understood through multiple theoretical lenses. First, Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory suggests that individuals high in positive affect possess expanded cognitive and behavioral repertoires, enabling them to perceive and respond to job characteristics more favorably. High-PA individuals are more likely to recognize opportunities for skill utilization, appreciate the significance of their tasks, and constructively interpret performance feedback.

Second, Trait Activation Theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) proposes that personality traits are more strongly expressed when situational cues are relevant to the trait. Job characteristics represent situational features that may differentially activate dispositional tendencies. For individuals high in positive affect, enriched job characteristics may provide stronger activation cues for positive emotional responses, thereby amplifying the beneficial effects of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback on job satisfaction. Conversely, individuals low in positive affect may derive comparatively less satisfaction benefit from enriched job designs due to their dispositional tendency toward less favorable emotional responding.

Empirical research supports the moderating role of dispositional affect in organizational contexts. Wright et al. (2007) demonstrated that psychological well-being—a construct closely related to positive affect—moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance, with performance being highest when employees report high scores on both well-being and satisfaction (Wright et al., 2007). Kaplan et al. (2009) found that positive affectivity moderated job satisfaction relationships, with high-PA individuals showing stronger satisfaction

responses to favorable work conditions. Research examining bank employees in the United Arab Emirates established that positive affectivity interacts with job satisfaction to predict organizational outcomes, supporting the cross-cultural generalizability of affectivity as a moderator (Kluemper et al., 2009).

In the context of the JCM specifically, Rubenstein et al. (2019) proposed that dispositional traits moderate the expression of job characteristics effects on work outcomes. Their theoretical model suggests that employees' personality characteristics influence how they perceive, interpret, and respond to job design features. Similarly, Hackman and Oldham (1976) originally acknowledged individual differences as moderators in the JCM, introducing growth need strength as a boundary condition. Positive affect may function analogously, shaping employees' receptivity to and benefit from enriched job characteristics.

Building upon the theoretical rationale from broaden-and-build theory, trait activation theory, and supporting empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Positive affect moderates the positive relationships between job characteristics dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) and job satisfaction, such that these relationships are stronger for individuals with higher positive affect.

The research model employed in this study is presented in the following figure.

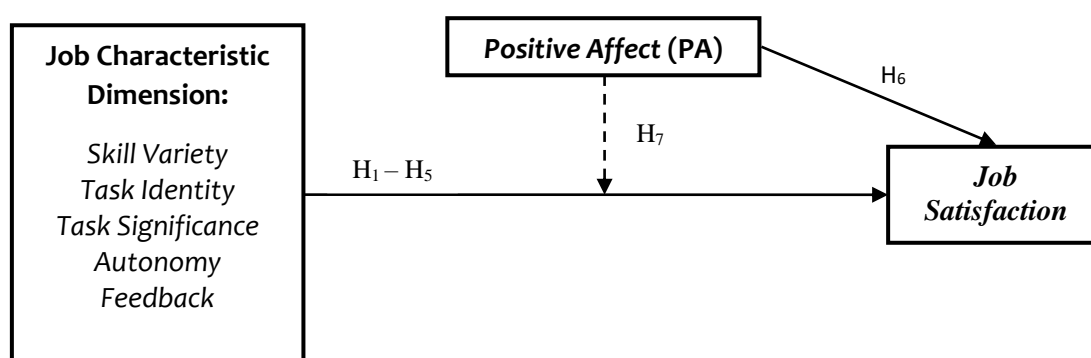


Figure 1. Research Models

Hypotheses 1 until 5 examine the direct effects of the job characteristics dimensions, namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, on job satisfaction. Hypothesis 6 tests the direct effect of positive affect (PA) on job satisfaction. Hypothesis 7 examines the interaction effects between the job characteristics dimensions and positive affect (PA) in explaining individual job satisfaction.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed an explanatory survey design to examine the relationships between job characteristics dimensions, positive affect, and job satisfaction among lecturers in Islamic higher education institutions. The explanatory survey approach was selected as it enables systematic investigation of causal relationships between variables through hypothesis testing while allowing data collection from a geographically dispersed population (Sugiyono, 2012). Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to respondents at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (Fakultas Ekonomi dan Bisnis Islam) across multiple State Islamic Religious Universities (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri/PTKIN) located in Java, Indonesia.

The population of this study comprised all lecturers employed at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business within PTKIN institutions across Java Island. Sample selection utilized non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique, which is appropriate when specific characteristics are required for participants to provide relevant information regarding the phenomena under investigation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The inclusion criteria specified that respondents must be permanent lecturers with a minimum of two years of employment tenure at their respective institutions, ensuring that participants possessed sufficient experience with their job characteristics and had developed stable affective responses to their work environment. The final sample consisted of 207 respondents distributed across seven PTKIN institutions in Java, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Research Sample

No.	Institution	Sample Size
1	UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten	25
2	UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung	55
3	UIN Walisongo Semarang	26
4	UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta	27
5	UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta	24
6	IAIN Kediri	22
7	UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya	28

The research instrument consisted of validated measurement scales adopted from established literature. Job characteristics were measured using the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975), which assesses the five core job dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Positive affect was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) developed by Watson et al. (1988),

specifically the positive affect subscale which captures the extent to which individuals experience enthusiastic, active, and alert emotional states. Job satisfaction was assessed using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form (Weiss et al., 1967), which measures overall satisfaction with various aspects of work. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data analysis proceeded in several stages. Preliminary analyses included assessment of data normality, multicollinearity, and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient with a minimum threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). Validity was examined through confirmatory factor analysis to ensure construct validity of the measurement instruments. Descriptive statistics were computed to characterize the sample and variable distributions. The primary hypotheses were tested using Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 233 questionnaires distributed to FEBI lecturers across seven State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) in Java, 218 were returned, yielding a response rate of 93.6%. After excluding incomplete responses, 207 questionnaires were deemed usable for analysis. The demographic profile of respondents revealed that the majority were aged 41–50 years (42.99%), followed by 31–40 years (35.26%), over 50 years (13.52%), and under 30 years (8.21%). Regarding tenure, most respondents had worked for 11–15 years (38.16%), followed by 6–10 years (32.85%), 16–20 years (14.49%), over 20 years (7.72%), and 2–5 years (6.76%). This distribution indicates a sample dominated by mid-career academics with substantial teaching experience.

Measurement Validity and Reliability

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess construct validity. Items were retained if their factor loadings exceeded .60 on their intended constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Results indicated that most items demonstrated acceptable loadings: skill variety (.696–.737), task identity (.692–.724), task significance (.640–.844), autonomy (.670–.785), and job satisfaction (.663–.788). For positive affect, nine items exhibited satisfactory loadings (.607–.706), while one item ($PA_3 = .309$) was excluded. Similarly, one feedback item ($FB_2 = .399$) failed

to meet the threshold and was removed from subsequent analyses. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. All constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability: skill variety ($\alpha = .67$), task identity ($\alpha = .69$), task significance ($\alpha = .68$), feedback ($\alpha = .64$), autonomy ($\alpha = .64$), positive affect ($\alpha = .82$), and job satisfaction ($\alpha = .81$). These values meet or exceed the .60 threshold recommended for exploratory research (Hair et al., 2019).

Hypothesis Testing

Moderated regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesized relationships. Age and tenure were included as control variables in all models. Table 1 summarizes the direct effects of job characteristics dimensions and positive affect on job satisfaction, while Table 2 presents the interaction effects testing the moderating role of positive affect.

Table 2. Direct Effects of Job Characteristics and Positive Affect on Job Satisfaction

Predictor	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2	Decision
Skill Variety (H1)	0.152	2.912	.004	.052	.040	Supported
Task Identity (H2)	0.279	5.315	<.001	.133	.121	Supported
Task Significance (H3)	0.242	4.592	<.001	.105	.093	Supported
Feedback (H4)	0.078	1.405	.161	.022	.010	Not Supported
Autonomy (H5)	0.264	4.561	<.001	.104	.092	Supported
Positive Affect (H6)	0.320–0.389	3.778–4.437	<.001	.109–.190	.057–.087	Supported

Note. $N = 207$. Control variables: age and tenure. Positive affect range reflects values across five separate regression models.

The results revealed that four of the five job characteristics dimensions significantly predicted job satisfaction. Task identity demonstrated the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.279$, $p < .001$), explaining 12.1% additional variance in job satisfaction beyond control variables. Autonomy ($\beta = 0.264$, $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2 = .092$) and task significance ($\beta = 0.242$, $p < .001$; $\Delta R^2 = .093$) also exhibited substantial positive effects. Skill variety showed a smaller but significant influence ($\beta = 0.152$, $p = .004$; $\Delta R^2 = .040$). However, feedback did not significantly predict job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.078$, $p = .161$), leading to the rejection of H4. Positive affect consistently demonstrated significant positive effects across all models (β ranging from 0.320 to 0.389, all $p < .001$), supporting H6.

Table 3. Moderating Effects of Positive Affect on Job Characteristics–Job Satisfaction Relationships

Interaction Term	β	t	P	ΔR^2	Moderation
SV × Positive Affect (H7a)	-1.287	-2.019	.045	.018	Supported (-)
TI × Positive Affect (H7b)	-0.269	-2.211	.028	.020	Supported (-)
TS × Positive Affect (H7c)	-0.244	-1.986	.048	.015	Supported (-)
FB × Positive Affect (H7d)	-0.217	-1.370	.172	.008	Not Supported
AU × Positive Affect (H7e)	-0.298	-2.124	.035	.018	Supported (-)

Note. $N = 207$. SV = skill variety; TI = task identity; TS = task significance; FB = feedback; AU = autonomy. (–) indicates negative moderation.

Regarding the moderating role of positive affect (H7), the results revealed a pattern of significant negative moderation for four of the five job characteristics dimensions. Positive affect significantly moderated the relationships between skill variety ($\beta = -1.287, p = .045$), task identity ($\beta = -0.269, p = .028$), task significance ($\beta = -0.244, p = .048$), and autonomy ($\beta = -0.298, p = .035$) with job satisfaction. Contrary to the hypothesized direction, all significant interaction effects were negative, suggesting that the positive effects of these job characteristics on job satisfaction were attenuated for individuals with higher levels of positive affect. The interaction between feedback and positive affect was not significant ($\beta = -0.217, p = .172$). The interaction terms collectively contributed modest but significant increments in explained variance, ranging from 1.5% to 2.0% beyond the main effects.

Table 4. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis Statement		Result
H1	Skill variety positively influences job satisfaction	Supported
H2	Task identity positively influences job satisfaction	Supported
H3	Task significance positively influences job satisfaction	Supported
H4	Feedback positively influences job satisfaction	Not Supported
H5	Autonomy positively influences job satisfaction	Supported
H6	Positive affect positively influences job satisfaction	Supported
H7a	Positive affect moderates skill variety–job satisfaction relationship	Partially Supported
H7b	Positive affect moderates task identity–job satisfaction relationship	Partially Supported
H7c	Positive affect moderates task significance–job satisfaction relationship	Partially Supported
H7d	Positive affect moderates feedback–job satisfaction relationship	Not Supported
H7e	Positive affect moderates autonomy–job satisfaction relationship	Partially Supported

Note. H7a–H7e are partially supported because moderation effects were significant but in the opposite (negative) direction than hypothesized.

In summary, the findings provide substantial support for the Job Characteristics Model within the Indonesian Islamic higher education context. Four of five core job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy) demonstrated significant positive effects on job satisfaction among FEBI lecturers. Positive affect emerged as a consistent predictor of job satisfaction across all analytical models. However, the hypothesized strengthening effect of positive affect on job characteristics–satisfaction relationships was not supported; instead, positive affect exhibited a dampening effect on these relationships for four dimensions, with only the feedback–satisfaction relationship showing no significant moderation. These unexpected findings warrant further theoretical consideration in the discussion section.

Discussion

This study examined the relationships between job characteristics dimensions, positive affect, and job satisfaction among FEBI lecturers in Indonesian State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN). The findings provide substantial support for the Job Characteristics Model (JCM; Hackman & Oldham, 1976) while revealing nuanced patterns regarding the moderating role of positive affect. The following discussion interprets these findings within the theoretical frameworks of JCM, dispositional affect theory, and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions.

Direct Effects of Job Characteristics on Job Satisfaction

The results confirmed that four of the five core job characteristics—skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy—positively influence job satisfaction among academic faculty. These findings align with the foundational propositions of the JCM, which posits that enriched job characteristics engender critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results) that subsequently enhance job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The consistency of these findings with prior meta-analytic evidence (Fried & Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007) reinforces the robustness of JCM across occupational contexts, including the understudied domain of Islamic higher education in emerging economies.

Skill variety demonstrated a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.152, p = .004$), supporting Hypothesis 1. This finding indicates that FEBI lecturers who perceive their work as requiring diverse skills and competencies experience greater job satisfaction. Academic work inherently demands multifaceted expertise—lecturers must integrate pedagogical skills, disciplinary knowledge in Islamic finance and economics, research competencies, and administrative capabilities. When such variety is recognized and valued, it contributes to experienced meaningfulness of work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). This result corroborates earlier research demonstrating skill variety's positive association with satisfaction across various professional contexts (Mostafa & Jaafar, 2024).

Task identity emerged as the strongest predictor among job characteristics dimensions ($\beta = 0.279, p < .001$), explaining 12.1% additional variance in job satisfaction. This robust effect suggests that FEBI lecturers derive substantial satisfaction from completing whole, identifiable pieces of

work. In the academic context, task identity manifests when lecturers manage entire courses from curriculum design through delivery to student assessment, or when they conduct research projects from conceptualization to publication. Such holistic engagement enables faculty to perceive their contributions as meaningful and substantive (Cheng et al., 2023). The magnitude of this effect exceeds findings reported in manufacturing and service possibly reflecting the high task identity inherent in professional academic work.

Task significance positively predicted job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.242, p < .001$), confirming Hypothesis 3. FEBI lecturers who perceive their work as having substantial impact on others—students, the Islamic finance industry, and broader society—report greater satisfaction. This finding resonates with Grant's (2008) research on the motivational significance of benefiting others and Allan et al.'s (2019) work on meaningful work. In the specific context of Islamic higher education, task significance may be particularly salient given the religious and societal mission embedded in these institutions.

Autonomy exhibited a strong positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.264, p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 5 and aligning with Self-Determination Theory (Olafsen et al., 2025). The substantial variance explained (9.2%) underscores the importance of professional discretion for academic faculty satisfaction. Muecke and Iseke's (2019) meta-analysis of 319 studies similarly concluded that autonomy enhances intrinsic motivation while reducing psychological strain. For FEBI lecturers, autonomy encompasses freedom in selecting teaching methodologies, determining research priorities, and managing time allocation across multiple responsibilities. Universities that preserve such autonomy are likely to cultivate more satisfied academic personnel (Juyumaya et al., 2024).

Contrary to theoretical expectations and Hypothesis 4, feedback did not significantly predict job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.078, p = .161$). This null finding warrants careful interpretation. According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), feedback encompasses both feedback from the job itself (direct knowledge of performance effectiveness) and feedback from agents (supervisors, colleagues). The non-significant effect may reflect structural characteristics of academic work environments in Indonesian PTKIN institutions. Academic faculty typically receive limited systematic feedback on their performance. Teaching evaluations, when conducted, often lack developmental orientation; peer review of pedagogical practices is uncommon; and research

feedback primarily occurs through journal review processes rather than institutional mechanisms (Cheng et al., 2023)

This finding aligns with previous research reporting null or weak feedback effects in academic contexts. Furthermore, performance appraisal systems in higher education institutions frequently focus on research output metrics rather than holistic faculty development, creating disconnect between evaluation and meaningful feedback. That faculty members often rely on self-assessment as their primary feedback source, which may not trigger the psychological state of “knowledge of actual results” theorized by Hackman and Oldham (1976). Future research should distinguish between feedback from the job itself versus feedback from agents to clarify these relationships in academic settings.

Direct Effect of Positive Affect on Job Satisfaction

Positive affect demonstrated consistent and substantial positive effects on job satisfaction across all analytical models (β ranging from 0.320 to 0.389, all $p < .001$), strongly supporting Hypothesis 6. This finding confirms the dispositional perspective on job satisfaction, which posits that individual differences in affective tendencies significantly influence workplace attitudes (Staw et al., 1986; Judge et al., 1998). The effect sizes observed in this study approximate the meta-analytic correlation ($\rho = .49$) reported by Connolly and Viswesvaran (2000), suggesting that positive affect explains meaningful variance in job satisfaction even after controlling for situational factors.

From a theoretical standpoint, individuals high in positive affect are characterized by enthusiasm, energy, and active engagement with their environment (Watson et al., 1988). These dispositional tendencies predispose individuals to interpret work experiences favorably and to derive satisfaction from diverse job aspects. The Range of Affect Theory (Locke, 1976) further suggests that affective disposition influences how individuals appraise discrepancies between expectations and experiences, with high-PA individuals demonstrating more favorable appraisals.

The Moderating Role of Positive Affect: Unexpected Negative Moderation

Perhaps the most theoretically intriguing finding concerns the moderating effects of positive affect on job characteristics–satisfaction relationships. While Hypothesis 7 predicted that positive affect would strengthen these relationships, the results revealed significant *negative*

moderation for four dimensions: skill variety ($\beta = -1.287, p = .045$), task identity ($\beta = -0.269, p = .028$), task significance ($\beta = -0.244, p = .048$), and autonomy ($\beta = -0.298, p = .035$). These findings indicate that the positive effects of job characteristics on satisfaction are *attenuated* for individuals with higher levels of positive affect.

This counterintuitive pattern can be explained through several complementary theoretical mechanisms. First, we propose a “Baseline Satisfaction Hypothesis.” Individuals high in positive affect maintain elevated baseline levels of job satisfaction attributable to their dispositional tendency to experience positive emotional states (Judge et al., 1998; Thoresen et al., 2003). Consequently, the marginal contribution of favorable job characteristics to satisfaction becomes proportionally smaller. This ceiling-like effect occurs not because high-PA individuals are unresponsive to job characteristics, but because their already-elevated satisfaction leaves less room for situational enhancement. Conversely, individuals low in positive affect possess lower baseline satisfaction, making them more sensitive to and potentially more dependent on job characteristics for satisfaction.

Second, Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory offers an alternative interpretation. This theory posits that positive emotions broaden individuals' momentary thought-action repertoires and build enduring personal resources. High-PA individuals, having accumulated psychological resources such as resilience, optimism, and diverse coping strategies, may derive satisfaction from multiple sources beyond immediate job characteristics. Their broadened cognitive scope enables them to find meaning and satisfaction in aspects of work not captured by traditional JCM dimensions. Consequently, they demonstrate reduced dependence on any single source of job satisfaction, including the five core job characteristics.

Third, a “Resource Substitution” mechanism may operate whereby high-PA individuals possess internal psychological resources that substitute for external situational resources. Their intrinsic capacity to generate positive experiences reduces their reliance on favorable job design for satisfaction. This interpretation aligns with research demonstrating that personal resources can buffer against suboptimal work conditions (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Low-PA individuals, lacking such internal resources, become more dependent on external job characteristics to sustain satisfactory work experiences.

Fourth, the Trait Activation Theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) suggests that trait-relevant situational cues activate dispositional tendencies. For individuals low in positive affect, favorable

job characteristics may serve as external cues that activate positive responses they would not generate spontaneously. High-PA individuals, by contrast, already express their positive disposition regardless of situational cues, diminishing the incremental impact of job characteristics. This interpretation positions job characteristics as compensatory resources more valuable for low-PA individuals.

The non-significant moderation for feedback ($\beta = -0.217$, $p = .172$) is consistent with the null main effect and likely reflects the limited systematic feedback mechanisms in academic work environments rather than a theoretically distinct phenomenon. Collectively, these moderation findings contribute to the interactionist perspective on workplace, demonstrating that dispositional and situational factors interact in complex, sometimes counterintuitive ways.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effects of job characteristics dimensions and positive affect on job satisfaction among lecturers at Faculties of Islamic Economics and Business in PTKIN institutions across Java. The findings indicate that skill variety, task identity, task significance, and autonomy have significant positive effects on job satisfaction, whereas feedback does not show a significant direct influence. Positive affect consistently demonstrates a strong positive relationship with job satisfaction. Moreover, positive affect partially moderates the relationships between most job characteristics dimensions and job satisfaction, except for feedback. These results provide empirical support for the Job Characteristics Model and dispositional affect perspectives in the context of Islamic higher education

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of integrating job design improvement with affective management strategies in higher education institutions. PTKIN administrators are encouraged to enhance job characteristics by providing greater autonomy, diverse academic tasks, and meaningful role structures, while simultaneously fostering positive emotional climates through supportive leadership, professional development, and well-being programs. Recruitment and development policies should also consider affective dispositions alongside academic competencies. Future institutional policies should therefore adopt a holistic approach that combines structural job redesign and psychological resource development to enhance lecturer satisfaction and performance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the use of cross-sectional survey data limits causal inference among the examined variables. Second, the sample was restricted to PTKIN institutions in Java, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or educational contexts. Third, the reliance on self-reported measures may increase the risk of common method bias. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal designs, multi-source data, and broader institutional samples to strengthen causal interpretation and external validity.

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