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Satisfaction of IT Academics with Transnational Education (TNE)

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Abstract

TNE has become an important part of Australian universities' IT learning and teaching landscape. This paper presents the preliminary results of an investigation into IT academic job satisfaction and TNE; in particular, how both the nature and frequency of the interaction the academic has with TNE students and teaching staff, and the level of control an academic has over the offering of "their" course, impacts on satisfaction with TNE. The results of the study suggest that academics are more satisfied with TNE when they have more contact with the students, in particular when that contact involves some face-to-face component. The paper identifies several factors that require further investigation and discusses the implications of the research for universities in the ongoing management of their TNE activities. It recommends that some face-to-face contact between academics and TNE students should be considered as an important part of any IT TNE programme.

Keywords

TNE, academic job satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Australian universities are increasingly seeking sources of funding other than that provided by the Federal Government (Access Economics 2010). As a part of this funding mix, TNE has been growing rapidly, with many Australian universities now having a significant presence in TNE. In 2010, 37 of the 39 Australian universities had some TNE presence (Lang 2011). Information Technology (IT) and Engineering-related courses represent some 20% of the TNE courses offered by Australian universities (AEI 2011).

TNE is broadly defined as education occurring where the student is located in a different country to the provider institution (e.g., Smith 2009). Various benefits to universities from involvement in TNE, other than as an alternative source of funding, have been described, including internationalisation of the curriculum (Mahmud et al. 2010), and an increased international profile (McBurnie and Pollock 2000).

There are various ways in which TNE can be delivered. These can range from simple materials licensing agreements, to regular teaching visits to the TNE location by academics (Smith 2009) or establishment of offshore branded campuses staffed by home academics (Dunn and Wallace 2006). Each of these various approaches to TNE will differ in terms of the participation required of the individual academic.

Bollinger and Wasilik (2009) suggest that job satisfaction for academics is an important aspect of teaching quality, particularly in online or distance courses. It has also been suggested that academic job satisfaction arises from activities such as teaching, scholarly achievements and creativity (Lacy and Sheehan 1997). Determination of institutional approaches to TNE that can result in increased academic satisfaction may lead to improved outcomes for academic staff and students involved in TNE and ultimately for the university. Therefore, research into factors that influence satisfaction is required. This is particularly the case for IT academics because of the heavy reliance of many IT schools on international offerings to compensate for the reduction in domestic student numbers over the last decade (Ogunbona et al. 2013).

This paper presents the results of a study conducted into the relationship between how TNE is operationalised from the perspective of course delivery, and IT academics' satisfaction with TNE. It examines two elements thought to be important in satisfaction; interaction with TNE students and teaching colleagues, and control over the delivery of TNE courses. More specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

- *Does the degree of interaction academics have with TNE students and teaching colleagues impact on the satisfaction the academic gains from participating in TNE?*
- *Does the degree of control an academic has over a TNE course impact on the satisfaction the academic gains from participating in TNE?*

The paper presents a brief review of relevant literature, the research methodology adopted and the results of that research, and discusses the implications of the findings.

BACKGROUND

DEST (2005), in defining TNE in an Australian context, suggests the following:

- TNE programmes are those that are delivered or assessed by an accredited, approved or recognised Australian provider in another country
- The delivery of the TNE programme includes a face-to-face component, where there is a physical presence of teaching staff who may be from the Australian provider or from a local organisation on the basis of a formal agreement with a local provider, and
- The TNE programmes may lead to an Australian qualification or be not-for-award courses.

In the context of IT and related disciplines, an investigation of Australian universities' and overseas regulatory authorities' web sites, revealed that at least 16 Australian universities offered IT-related courses transnationally. These courses were offered in Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa, Vietnam and China. Most were at undergraduate level and included degrees such as Information Systems, Computer Science, Information Technology and Software Engineering. Several offered Masters level courses, including Information Technology, Business Information Systems, and Digital Forensics.

TNE has been addressed thoroughly in previous research in areas such as quality assurance and management of partnerships and contracts and student perceptions of the effectiveness of TNE have been investigated (Miliszewska and Sztendur 2011). There is also a significant body of literature addressing academic job satisfaction, particularly with respect to the "traditional" teaching/research academic role. Literature relevant to the role of the academic in TNE has focussed on the formation and management of the teaching team, quality assurance, and preparation for teaching in a TNE context when the academic is required to travel.

TNE Delivery Modes

A number of different terms have been used in varying contexts to categorise approaches to TNE (e.g., Hoare 2012). Smith (2009), for example, uses categories including franchise, locally and remotely supported distance learning and TNE/Branch campus. Naidoo (2009) refers to the common TNE "modalities" as including franchising, twinning, programme articulations, branch campus, virtual/distance learning and corporate. The way in which a TNE contract is established and managed varies widely between universities and will have an important impact on the way in which TNE is delivered (McBurnie and Ziguras 2007). Doorbar and Bateman (2008) suggest that these differences arise because there is "*no one size fits all*" (p.17), and that factors such as the mission of the university, the consumer country, financial reasons and the "*perceived acceptability of models in relation to quality*" (p.17), all impact on the model of delivery chosen. Regardless of how TNE operates in a given situation, it will impact on individual academics in two key areas: firstly, the nature and degree of control they have over the delivery of the courses for which they are responsible; and secondly, the type and nature of interaction they have with the students and TNE teaching colleagues.

Academics' Control over Course Delivery

The Office of Learning and Teaching report on TNE (Mazzolini and Yeo 2012) categorises different TNE delivery modes by highlighting the contractual determination of responsibility for learning and teaching focussed elements of the relationship, such as:

1. Curriculum selection and design
2. Choice of learning and teaching activities
3. Choice of assessment methods and items, and
4. Grading of student performance.

They identified that the allocation of these responsibilities ranges from responsibility resting completely with home-campus staff through to limited local or full contextualisation as appropriate, to resting completely with the TNE campus staff.

Academics' Interaction with TNE Students and Teaching Colleagues

The "normal" or "traditional" model of University teaching involves some degree of face-to-face interaction with on-campus students and colleagues (Schulz 2013). It is characterised by immediate feedback between students and academics, and interaction between staff in the same courses or disciplines; these being seen as key factors in academic job satisfaction (Houston et al. 2006). However, variations in TNE contractual and operational arrangements will impact on how the individual academic will interact with TNE students and teaching colleagues. For example, when there is some degree of "fly-in-fly-out" teaching, there will be an element of physical interaction between the academic and the students. If the course was to be delivered without any presence of the home academic, as might be found in a "franchising" type of TNE arrangement, interaction between the academic and the students may be non-existent or limited to contact via email, discussion fora, or virtual classrooms. Similarly, the relationship between the home and offshore academics is impacted by the method of delivery in that in a more traditional, on-campus setting, the Course Coordinator will have closer contact with the rest of the teaching team than would be expected in a fly-in-fly-out model.

Academic Job Satisfaction

Bolliger and Wasilik (2009) suggest that job satisfaction for academics is an important aspect of teaching quality, particularly in online or distance courses. The relationship between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in general has been studied at length since Herzberg described the two-factor theory in the 1950's (Pearson and Seiler 1983). Factors intrinsic (also known as content factors) to a job such as achievement, recognition, challenge of the work itself, responsibility and prospect of advancement are seen to be causes of job satisfaction. Two-factor theory suggests that their presence will increase satisfaction and that their absence will lead to less satisfaction, rather than to dissatisfaction. Extrinsic or context factors, such as supervision, work conditions, job security and salary, are seen to be factors that can cause dissatisfaction.

In an academic context, Lacy and Sheehan (1997) suggest that job satisfaction for academics arises from activities that increase a sense of "community-acknowledgement" and participation in decision making. Pearson and Seiler (1983) state that content factors specific to academics include "...*the process of teaching, guiding, and molding minds, along with the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge*" (p.37). Martin (2011) suggests that "happiness" for academics comes from several sources based around performing tasks that use their advanced skills to the limit of their ability (e.g., research), creation and maintenance of relationships with colleagues and students, and helping others (e.g., students) to learn through teaching, service and research.

A factor that has been identified in the literature as influencing academics' job satisfaction is the control they have over their work (Bellamy et al. 2003). "Locus of control" refers to a "*self-appraisal of the degree to which an individual views him/herself as having a causal role in determining specific events*" (McIntyre 1984). Further, they suggest that a decreased locus of control has an impact on an individual's capacity to cope with stressors and decreased "*feelings of personal accomplishment*". In the context of teaching, the primary way in which academics exert control is in course design, management and delivery.

METHOD

In order to answer the research questions an online survey of IT academics involved in TNE was conducted. Australian IT academics identified as teaching in TNE were contacted by email and asked to complete an online survey to identify the degree and nature of their participation in TNE and how satisfied they are with this aspect of their work.

Recruitment of Participants

Recruitment of participants occurred in several ways. Initially Australian universities that offer IT and related-field programmes in TNE mode were identified from sources such as AusLIST¹, in-country registers of TNE operations (e.g., CPE² in Singapore), and university websites. Fourteen Australian universities were identified as currently offering IT and related courses. Academics in Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching (or equivalent) positions at these universities were then identified using the ARNEIA³ listing and contacted via email. They were invited to participate and to pass the invitation on to colleagues who were also involved in TNE. Following this, the web sites of the Universities identified above were also searched to find academics who were, or who

¹ AusLIST is a listing of Australian education providers offering courses overseas <http://www.auslist.deewr.gov.au/Misc/ImportantInfo.aspx>

² <http://www.cpe.gov.sg>

³ Academic Resource Network for Engineering and ICT in Australia (<http://arneia.edu.au/report/adtl-ict>)

may have been, involved in TNE. Emails were sent to a total of 202 academics. Reminder emails were sent one month after the initial invitation.

The Questionnaire

All items were developed specifically for this study. The questionnaire was intended to take no longer than 30 minutes to complete and responses were anonymous. The first section of the questionnaire collected background information regarding the individual academic and their history of involvement in TNE: how long they had been involved in TNE, how many courses they had been responsible for in the last year, and the countries in which they had had TNE responsibilities.

The second section aimed to determine the role of the individual academic in the provision of TNE in order to identify the degree of interaction they have with TNE teaching colleagues and students, and the degree of control they have over course content. The following three questions were used to measure aspects of interaction with respect to the respondent's most recent TNE teaching period:

- What involvement do you have with the physical delivery (i.e. face-to-face contact with the students) of the unit/course content? (options were: 'none' (0), 'lectures' (1), 'tutorial/laboratory sessions' (1), both 'lectures', and 'tutorial/laboratory sessions' (2))
- Typically, how often would you have some interaction with individual transnational students during a typical teaching period? (measured on a 6 point scale labelled from 0 'None at all' to 5 'Daily')
- Typically, how often would you have some interaction with individual teaching staff at the transnational location during a typical teaching period? (measured on a 6 point scale labelled from 0 'None at all' to 6 'Daily')

The following 3 questions were asked to measure aspects of control with respect to the respondent's most recent TNE teaching period:

- What content (apart from assessment) did you create for the transnational offering? (Options were: 'learning objectives', 'topic objectives', 'topic lecture slides', and 'tutorial/laboratory exercises'. A composite variable was calculated as a count of items selected)
- What degree of responsibility do you have for the creation of the assessment items in the unit/course? (Options ranged from 'I have no involvement' (0) to 'I create all of the assessment items' (3))
- Which of the following statements best describes your involvement in the marking of the assessment items? (Options ranged from 'I do not have any involvement with marking' (0) to 'I mark all of the assessment items' (4))

The third section asked about the academic's degree of satisfaction with various aspects of TNE by asking the participant to indicate their degree of agreement with a number of statements regarding their most recent experience of TNE and with TNE in general. The items were all measured on 5 point Likert scales labelled from 1 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 'Strongly Agree' (see Tables 3 and 4 for lists of the items)

The final section of the instrument included several open-ended questions seeking participants' opinions on their involvement with TNE: what benefits do they see as accruing to them from involvement in TNE; what aspects of TNE they find satisfying and dissatisfying; the impact that TNE has on their 'normal' work; and what 'reward' they receive from their institution for their involvement in TNE.

The questionnaire was pre-tested by several academics from different universities to ensure firstly, that the language and terminology used in the instrument was appropriate (e.g., terms relating to units/courses and teaching staff at both home and TNE locations) and applicable across a range of institutions. Secondly, comments were sought on the structure and nature of the information sought. Their feedback was incorporated into subsequent versions of the questionnaire. Following piloting, the instrument was finalised and hosted using SurveyMonkey.

RESULTS

A total of 47 responses were obtained, however, six were discarded as they were largely incomplete, leaving a total of 41 valid responses: a participation rate of 19.8%. Respondents generally had substantial amounts of TNE teaching experience, with nearly half of the respondents (46.3%) having been teaching TNE for between 6 and 10 years. In response to a request to list the countries in which they had taught, or in which courses for which they were responsible had been offered, respondents listed a total of 15 different countries. The mean number of countries was 2.8 (31.7% of respondents had only listed a single country). Singapore and Malaysia were the most commonly reported countries for TNE involvement, with 24.3% having some involvement with offerings in Singapore and 15.0% in Malaysia. When asked to indicate the number of course offerings for which

they had responsibility in the past year, 61.0% indicated three or less. It is interesting to note that two respondents indicated they had been responsible for more than 20 offerings.

Table 1 provides a summary of the types of interaction that respondents had experienced in their most recent TNE offering. The majority of participants (61.0%) had no face-to-face contact with students in their most recent TNE teaching experience. Levels of interaction (by any means of communication) with students were also low: 22.0% of the respondents had no interaction with individual students during their most recent TNE teaching experience, and only 4.9% had daily in contact with students. Levels of contact with teaching staff were much higher: 34.1% of respondents had daily contact with teaching staff, and only 4.9% had no contact.

Table 1. Summary of types of interaction

	Number	%
<i>Physical Delivery</i>		
None	25	61.0
Lectures	2	4.9
Tutorial/laboratory sessions	14	31.4
<i>Student Contact</i>		
Daily	2	4.9
Weekly	8	19.5
Fortnightly	5	12.2
Monthly	3	7.3
Once or twice during the teaching period	11	26.8
None at all	9	22.0
<i>Staff Contact</i>		
Daily	14	34.1
Weekly	0	0.0
Fortnightly	11	26.8
Monthly	7	17.1
Once or twice during the teaching period	3	7.3
None at all	2	4.9

Table 2 provides a summary of the types of control that respondents had over content creation and assessment in their most recent TNE offering. The participants had relatively high levels of control over the content, with all creating the lecture slides for the offering (100%), and almost all (97.4%) creating the tutorial/laboratory exercises. Levels of creation of learning objectives (78.9%) and topic objectives (81.6%) were also high. The respondents were also mainly responsible for the development of assessment items with 76.9% being solely responsible, and only 2.6% having no involvement. Marking of assessment items was, however, more commonly undertaken by offshore TNE staff. The most common approach was for a marking guide to be provided to offshore TNE staff and for the participants to then moderate that marking (39.5%); only 13.2% of the respondents marked all assessment items.

Table 2. Summary of types of control

	Number	%
<i>Content Creation</i>		
Learning objectives	30	78.9
Topic objectives	31	81.6
Topic lecture slides	38	100.0
Tutorial/laboratory exercises	37	97.4
<i>Assessment Creation</i>		
Create all assessment items	30	76.9
Create assessment items in cooperation with TNE staff	5	12.8
Approve assessment items created by TNE staff	3	7.7
No involvement in creation of assessment items	1	2.6
<i>Assessment Marking</i>		
Mark all assessment items	5	13.2
Mark some items and moderate marking of others	13	34.2
Provide marking guide to TNE staff then moderate their marking	15	39.5
Provide marking guide to TNE staff	5	13.2
No involvement in marking	0	0.0

Participants' levels of agreement with the items measuring satisfaction with their most recent TNE offering are presented in Table 3. The highest level of agreement was with respect to the degree of enthusiasm shown by local staff towards the course (3.84). The lowest level of agreement related to the level of feedback that respondents were able to provide to their transnational students.

Table 3. Satisfaction with most recent TNE offering

I am satisfied...	N	Mean	SD
with the support in designing and running my transnational units/courses provided to me by the University.	38	3.45	1.24
that my transnational students are receiving an equivalent experience of my unit/course to my local students	38	3.29	1.01
with the degree of control I have over the conduct of my unit/course transnationally	38	3.63	0.94
with the degree to which my transnational students communicate with me regarding their unit/course matters	38	3.24	0.91
with the degree of enthusiasm my transnational students demonstrate toward their studies when compared with my local students	38	3.50	0.89
with the level of feedback I am able to provide to my transnational students on their performance in the unit/course	38	3.18	0.98
with the degree to which the transnational teaching staff communicate with me regarding unit/course matters	38	3.63	1.00
with the degree of enthusiasm the local teaching staff demonstrate toward the unit/course	38	3.84	0.89
that the transnational staff are adequately qualified to teach my unit/course	38	3.74	0.92
with the level of support I need to provide to the transnational teaching staff	37	3.38	1.11

Table 4 reports levels of agreement with the items measuring general satisfaction with TNE teaching. Whilst participants tended to perceive students studying in the TNE courses with which they had involvement as their "own" students (3.45), very few were more satisfied with transnational teaching than other forms of teaching (1.95). Levels of satisfaction with the "reward" associated with TNE teaching, be it financial or other, were not high (2.58).

In order to answer the research questions, summary variables were calculated for Satisfaction with Latest TNE Offering, and General Satisfaction with TNE, as the mean of the individual item scores. Both scales proved to be of acceptable reliability with a Cronbach alpha of 0.88 for Latest TNE Offering, and 0.86 for General Satisfaction with TNE.

Table 4. Satisfaction with TNE teaching in general

	N	Mean	SD
I regard the students studying in my transnational units/courses as being "my" students	38	3.45	1.33
I look forward to teaching my next transnational unit/course	37	3.16	1.40
I am satisfied with the "reward" I receive for teaching my transnational units/courses	38	2.58	1.43
I am satisfied with the professional development opportunities that teaching transnational units/courses has provided me	38	2.76	1.42
I am more satisfied with transnational teaching than other forms of teaching	38	1.95	1.04
I am satisfied with transnational teaching because it provides me with an opportunity to reach students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to take my units/courses	38	3.11	1.23

Multiple linear regressions, with simultaneous entry of all terms, were performed to determine if the different types of interaction and control influenced satisfaction (see Table 5). For Satisfaction with Latest TNE Offering the overall model was significant ($F(6,30)=2.560$, $p=0.040$), and 33.9% of the variability in Satisfaction with

Latest TNE Offering was explained by the model ($R^2=0.339$). However the results of the regression indicated that only Physical Contact was associated with level of Satisfaction with Latest TNE Offering ($\beta=0.364$, $p=0.003$), showing a moderate positive relationship. Neither of the other interaction variables (Student Contact ($\beta=0.021$, $p=0.745$) and Staff Contact ($\beta=-0.008$, $p=0.929$)) had a significant influence, nor did any of the Control variables (Content Creation ($\beta=0.164$, $p=0.152$), Assessment Creation ($\beta=-0.016$, $p=0.993$), Assessment Marking ($\beta=-0.187$, $p=0.141$)).

Table 5. Multiple regressions examining the impact of interaction of satisfaction with TNE teaching

	B	SE (B)	t	Sig.
Satisfaction with Latest TNE Offering				
Constant	3.141	0.758	4.146	<0.001
Physical Contact	0.364	0.114	3.182	0.003
Student Contact	0.039	0.067	0.581	0.566
Staff Contact	-0.033	0.086	-0.379	0.708
Content Creation	0.164	0.111	1.471	0.152
Assessment Creation	-0.016	0.189	-0.085	0.933
Assessment Marking	-0.187	0.123	-1.511	0.141
General Satisfaction with TNE				
Constant	2.140	1.066	62.007	0.054
Physical Contact	0.406	0.161	2.520	0.017
Student Contact	0.208	0.094	2.206	0.035
Staff Contact	-0.263	0.121	-2.169	0.038
Content Creation	0.308	0.157	1.964	0.059
Assessment Creation	-0.125	0.265	-0.469	0.642
Assessment Marking	-0.009	0.174	-0.051	0.959

For General Satisfaction with TNE the overall model was significant ($F(6,30)=7.4.284$, $p=0.003$) and 46.1% of the variability in General Satisfaction with TNE was explained by the interaction and control variables ($R^2=0.461$). Each of the interaction variables was found to be associated with General Satisfaction with TNE, with Physical Contact being the most influential. However although Physical Contact ($\beta=0.406$, $p=0.017$) and Student Contact ($\beta=0.208$, $p=0.035$) had a positive association with General Satisfaction with TNE, Staff Contact ($\beta=-0.263$, $p=0.038$) was found to have a weak negative relationship with General Satisfaction with TNE. Thus it appears that although greater contact with students is satisfying, greater contact with TNE staff appears to have the opposite effect. As with Satisfaction with Latest TNE Offering, none of the Control variables had a significant influence on General Satisfaction with TNE (Content Creation ($\beta=0.308$, $p=0.059$), Assessment Creation ($\beta=-0.125$, $p=0.642$), Assessment Marking ($\beta=-0.0009$, $p=0.959$)). However, the result for Content Creation was marginal, which suggests that further investigation of the role of control over the creation of the various kinds of content is warranted.

DISCUSSION

This paper set out to answer the following research questions:

- *Does the degree of interaction academics have with TNE teaching colleagues and students impact on the satisfaction the academic gains from participating in TNE?*
- *Does the degree of control an academic has over a TNE course impact on the satisfaction the academic gains from participating in TNE?*

Interaction with Students and TNE Teaching Colleagues

The results of this study suggest the degree of interaction academics have with their TNE students does impact on the satisfaction associated with participation in TNE. In particular, satisfaction appears to improve where the interaction with students is face-to-face. One of the participants commented, *“If I meet the students, then I see how they are working and I feel some satisfaction”*. When there is no face-to-face, or the face-to-face component is removed, then satisfaction appears to decrease; *“In the past when there was some face to face teaching I found that satisfying. But I do not find any aspects of teaching at a vast distance satisfying”*. A comment from one of the participants suggests that face-to-face interaction is a good way to establish relationships with students, *“Actually, it is only when I am on the ground in the TNE location and can physically talk to them and get to know them. After knowing them I find the use of Skype much better. You have to communicate and know students to derive any satisfaction from teaching”*. It is interesting to note that other, non

face-to-face forms of interaction also improve satisfaction. This was noted by Bolliger and Wasilik (2009), who, in the context of online teaching, suggested that the more contact faculty had with students, the higher the satisfaction. More than half the respondents reported having either no or very limited contact with the students; it was not clear why this was the case and requires further examination, particularly to discover whether this occurs as a result of explicit university policy, or if it is a choice made by the individual academic.

In contrast, the study suggests that higher levels of contact with TNE teaching colleagues resulted in a decrease in satisfaction. It is possible that this is because the relationship is more supervisory than collegial in nature, and results in unwanted administrivia. One respondent commented, *"...my role is almost entirely composed of administration, creating spreadsheets, marking assignments and (often unsuccessfully) attempting to train the affiliate staff on how to assess and teach students in the way that we would do at this university"*. Leask (2004) notes this, and suggests the relationship between university and local teaching staff is similar to that between academics and tutors, where tutors are not seen as being *"full members of the university's cultural community"*. One respondent suggests that this relationship could be more collegial if more time was available; *"In principle I could find the different perspectives offered by the local lecturers valuable for unit development. In practice there seems to be no time for such reflection"*.

Control over TNE Courses

The study demonstrated very high levels of provision of content. While not shown to be significantly related to satisfaction, a marginal association was demonstrated which warrants further investigation. Given the high levels of content provision, it is likely that there was insufficient variation in university practices to discern the relationship. Similarly, practices associated with the creation and marking of assessment items did not appear to influence satisfaction. Although as indicated by the following quote the confounding of factors requires further investigation: *"The almost constant requirement to be writing assessment items, moderating and re-marking offshore work occupy a lot of of time and have little perceivable benefit. These same tasks may not be perceived as being so negative if there was any kind of contact or engagement with the offshore students"*.

Other causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with TNE

Given the increasing importance being placed on TNE as a valuable component of Universities' funding, it is worthwhile examining the factors that create both satisfaction and dissatisfaction for academics involved in TNE. Nearly all respondents, in response to the statement, "I am more satisfied with transnational teaching than other forms of teaching", indicated a preference against TNE. The increased administrative workload associated with TNE, particularly when coupled with a lack of contact with students, appears to be a factor here. As one respondent stated, *"I fail to see how transnational teaching is anything other than an administrative drain on the academic"*. Many respondents also reported a lack of adequate reward or recognition for their involvement in TNE as being a cause of dissatisfaction; *"Previously, I did receive payment however this in reality was token and less than that provided to a sessional lecturer teaching the same unit (at the home campus). Now teaching is calculated in load and in fact one is even less fairly compensated for the effort required"*. As many academics involved in TNE previously received additional payment for this work, its gradual movement into standard workload is consistent with it being an Extrinsic factor that may cause dissatisfaction (Pearson and Seiler 1983).

Factors reported by respondents as creating satisfaction from involvement in TNE tend to note the opportunity to travel and teach in a different country and to have *"Exposure to a very different culture of learning and the challenge of moving those students to succeed in a western style education program"*. Similarly, another participant reported that they saw teaching in this context to be *"the pinnacle of teaching...(to) adapt to different cultures and deliver complex content or complex activities. This is challenging and very satisfying"*.

It was interesting to note the different results with respect to satisfaction with latest TNE offering as opposed to TNE in general. The only factor that influenced satisfaction with the most recent TNE offering was the amount of physical interaction, while other forms of interaction (e.g., email, skype etc) appeared to influence satisfaction with TNE more generally. This requires further investigation.

Implications for Universities and Academics

The results of the study suggest that the most important factor in IT academics' satisfaction with TNE is their level of interaction with students; in particular, face-to-face interaction appears to have the most impact. Further, other factors that result in satisfaction for academics, such as the opportunity to experience different cultures and approaches to learning, rely on the physical presence of the academic. Negotiation of new TNE partnerships and renegotiations of existing arrangements need to take this into account, and, at the very least, encourage academic involvement in TNE, but preferably, include some face-to-face component.

Those factors that appear to cause IT academics to feel dissatisfaction with TNE, including increased interaction with local teaching staff and increased administrative workload, should also be addressed. Development of more collegial relationships and better training of local teaching staff in the expectations of the university should be considered. Similarly, review of the allocation of responsibility for the myriad administrative functions involved in the offering of TNE courses should be reviewed.

CONCLUSION

This paper has presented the preliminary results of an investigation into IT academic job satisfaction and TNE; in particular, how the nature and frequency of the interaction the academic has with the TNE students impacts on satisfaction with TNE, and how the level of control an academic has over the offering of "their" course impacts on their satisfaction. The results of the study suggest that academics are more satisfied with TNE when they have more contact with the students, in particular when that contact involves some face-to-face component. The paper identifies several factors that require further investigation and discusses the implications of the research for universities in the ongoing management of their TNE activities. It recommends that some face-to-face contact between academics and TNE students should be considered as an important part of any IT TNE programme.

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