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The impact of job satisfaction on teachers' mental health: A case study of the teachers of Iranian Mazandaran province

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ABSTRACT

Today, the more trainers are satisfied with their work, the more they are encouraged to work harder and also the more the efficiency of schools rises. On the other hand, dissatisfaction and low levels of the performances of teachers derive in turn from their lack of satisfaction. As previous researches show, dissatisfied employees give up their jobs and leave the organization. And satisfied employees enjoy mental health and live longer, and being satisfied and happy can affect the employees beyond their offices and have an effect on their personal lives. On that account, this research aims to examine the impact that job satisfaction has on the mental health of teachers. The method used in this study was a descriptive-explanatory one. The research sample consists of 332 teachers in the province of Mazandaran, Iran. The data were collected using questionnaires and the results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between job satisfaction and mental health of the studied teachers.

Keywords: job satisfaction; mental health; teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

Each country's future is at the hands of its teachers. The performances of teachers in any society are affected by various factors which one of them is the teacher job satisfaction. In

today's world, public education is one of the main pillars of sustainable development, and each country allocates a significant deal of its national income to education. In fact, education is located at the core of human society, and one of its major goals is to train proficient young children and adolescents. Therefore, teachers establish the basis of a successful educational system, and the first stage to have effective educational staff can be reached through diagnosing the factors which affect the performances of school teachers. There is a direct relationship between people's satisfaction with their jobs and their performances, and in turn that could have an effect on the performance of the human society in general. On the other hand, dissatisfaction and lower performance level of the teachers in a society is related to the lack of job satisfaction.

Today, all organizations have realized that employees' physical and mental health should be considered alongside the organizational productivity in order to achieve success. Manpower is the most important resource in any organization, and plays a pivotal role in meeting organizational objectives; in fact, organizations, without considering their employees' tendencies, will not accomplish their goals. If the employees have motivation, satisfaction, and high spirit, they direct their talents and skills toward organizational purposes. Job satisfaction is defined as the fulfillment of major occupational needs in the workplace and feeling of effectiveness. In general, job satisfaction represents the positive or negative attitude of an individual toward his/her occupation. Job satisfaction affects important aspects of life such as life satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, occupational stress, and quality of service.

Examined by several disciplines such as psychology, sociology, economics and management sciences, job satisfaction is a frequently studied subject in work and organizational literature. This is mainly due to the reality that many experts believe that job satisfaction trends can influence work productivity, work performance, work effort, employee absenteeism and staff turnover. Moreover, job satisfaction is considered a strong predictor of overall individual well-being, as well as a good predictor of intentions or decisions of employees to leave a job. Beyond the research literature and studies, job satisfaction is also important in everyday life. Organizations have significant effects on the people who work for them and some of those effects are reflected in how people feel about their work. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive feelings about the job, while a person who is dissatisfied holds negative feelings about the job.

Therefore it seems the more educational workforce especially teachers are enjoying mental health and satisfaction with their jobs, the more they are encouraged to work harder and their capability and the efficiency of the total educational system will rise and will affect the performances of the society in general. On the other hand, low level of teachers' performances goes back to the lack of job satisfaction. In summary, the goals of every educational system are: Helping young talents blossom; providing the society with mental health and welfare, and prevention of the emergence of any emotional and behavioral disorders. Therefore, knowing about the level of mental health and job satisfaction of teachers in a society matters very much, and in turn can have an important role in the planning of teaching methods and the rise in the efficiency of educational system.

Given recent evidence that teacher quality is very important for student achievement but unrelated to most observable teacher characteristics, motivating teachers to perform well and attracting a pool of high-performing teacher applicants are promising policies to improve student outcomes (Woessmann, 2010). When the teachers provide high quality performance

this will lead to high quality students, then qualified health care professionals working to promote health care system. There are several influences affect the performance of teachers as other professions and job satisfaction considered as one of them. Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction depends on a large number of factors ranging from where employees have to eat their lunch to the sense of self-fulfillment they may receive from doing their jobs (Newby 1999). Previous studies had shown that present of positively correlated between job satisfaction and job performance (Pugno, 2009).

The main questions of the research are how the teachers' mental health relates to their gender and teaching experiences in secondary and guidance schools, and how the job satisfaction of teachers in Mazandaran province of Iran is, and what relationship between job satisfaction and mental health exist?

2. THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The most important information to have regarding an employee in an organization is a validated measure of his or her level of job satisfaction (Roznowski et al 1995; Castillo et al., 1999). Many studies have been conducted on teachers' job satisfaction because "The relevance of job satisfaction is very crucial to the long-term growth of any educational system around the world (Alsweel & Buehl 2009).

A review of satisfaction literature reflects one area in which there seems to be some general agreement among researchers. The area of agreement is the definition of job satisfaction. Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) define it as "the feelings the worker has about his job". These feelings were based on the individual's perceptions of the differences between what was expected as a fair return and what was actually experienced (Newby 1999). Lawler (1973) also explained job satisfaction in terms of the difference between what people thought they should receive and what they perceived that they actually did receive (Newby 1999). Locke (1976) gave a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as involving cognitive, affective and evaluative reactions or attitude and states that it is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or experience (Olorunsola 2010).

Schultz (1982) defined job satisfaction as " the psychological disposition of people toward their work – and this involves a collection of numerous attitudes or feelings" (Newby 1999).

Job life is one of the important parts of our daily lives which cause a great deal of stress. Due to the competitive nature of the job environment most of the people in the world are spending their time for job related work purposes resulting ignore the stressor those are influencing their work and life (Ahsan et al., 2009).

Usually people are more worry about their outcome of their work that can even affect the way they treat other people and how they communicate with their peers and customers (Ahsan et al., 2009). For example, people with a higher percentage of occupational stress may not be satisfied with their job and therefore they will not feel happy working in the organization (Ahsan et al., 2009). They may feel frustrated or "burned out" when they are having problems with peers or customers (Ahsan et al., 2009).

This may leave a negative impact to the organization itself. Therefore, it is very important for employer and employees to realize the stress and the stressor that cause all the negative effects (Ahsan et al., 2009).

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely discussed and enthusiastically studied constructs in such related disciplines as industrial-organizational psychology, organizational behavior, personnel and human resource management and organizational management (Tasnim 2006).

It is a generalized affective orientation to all aspects of the job. In simple terms, it is the extent to which one feels good about the job. These feelings were based on the individual's perceptions of the differences between what was expected as a fair return and what was actually experienced (Newby 1999).

The source of job satisfaction is not only the job; it also creates from working environment, supervision style, interpersonal relationship, and organizational culture also (Tasnim 2006).

3. THEORIES RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH

Freud's Theory

Sigmund Freud believes that most people are neurotic to different degrees, and that mental health is an ideal not a statistical norm (Hogan, 1976)

He suggests that the first characteristic of mental health is self-consciousness, which is everything that should be brought back to Ego in our unconsciousness. In the end, real consciousness is not possible unless unnecessary Super Ego is overcome. For him a normal individual is someone who has passed his sexual, mental growth successfully, and none of those stages is uncompleted (Kurisiny, 4).

Murray's Theory

For Henry Murray (1938) a healthy individual has enough consciousness. He sees natural and healthy growth as a process in which ID, ego and super-ego play the primary role in determining one's behavior. ID impulses should be satisfied under the wise supervision of "ego" and under the surveillance of "super-ego" as acceptable to the society and its culture.

Needs is Murray's another important concept. For Murray, human nature involved a set of universal basic needs, with individual differences on these needs leading to the uniqueness of personality through varying dispositional tendencies for each need. In other words, specific needs are more important to some than to others. So, for him a healthy person is someone who doesn't have firm needs.

For Murray, a person with a healthy mind is a special person who should be studied uniquely and has the characteristics below:

- A) There is a difference between super-ego and the ego ideal. Ego has a lot of power and effectiveness and is aware of its own mental structure.
- B) Its final goal is creativity and realization of itself.

Maslow's Theory

Abraham Maslow characterizes people with mental health as:

These people have satisfied their own low level needs and so do not have psychological disorders. They know who they are and where to go. With respect to their age, they are in their middle and old ages, as younger people do not have independent identity and self-confidence and still have not grown their own values, patience, braveness, and wisdom. The

understanding of the people with healthy minds is true and in correspondence with the outside world. They perceive the world as it exists and not as they wish to be. These people accept themselves and others as they are.

Therefore, they are not in a defensive position and they live in peace with themselves and accept their own desires not in a defensive position. These people are spontaneous, healthy and natural. People enjoying mental health pay attention to their surrounding issues. They do not see professional commitment as enough. These healthy people need privacy and independence. They do not rely on other people's satisfaction so that they can avoid their judgment. They decide for themselves and they themselves experience their excitements. All of these characteristics lead people to see them as insincere, arrogant and even as their own enemies.

Kelly's Theory

George Kelly's theory on the characteristics of the people is that people with mental health want to assess their personal constructs and examine their own relations with others. Healthy people are able to assess their personal constructs and when it needs be they reconstruct and modify them. Kelly believes personal constructs of the healthy people are impenetrable and these people are able to accept their mistakes easily.

Another characteristic of these people is that they tend to widen their fields of vision and the scope of their personal constructs. In other words, these people are open to the possibilities and potential of personal growth.

3. 1. Theories relating to job satisfaction

Key theories on the issue of job satisfaction are as following:

- A) Need theories: These theories define satisfaction as the extent of success in satisfying the needs of a human, including physical, mental and psychological needs.
- B) Hope and expectation theories: satisfaction is defined as how an individual's successes correspond with his/her hopes and expectations, while dissatisfaction is resulted from the failure to meet those expectations.
- C) Hope and expectation theories: satisfaction is defined as how an individual's successes correspond with his/her hopes and expectations, while dissatisfaction is resulted from failure to meet those expectations.
- D) Brofi Theory: Brofi in 1959 classified theories relating to job satisfaction as below:
 - 1- Need theory: Job satisfaction level of every employee depends on two elements. First, how many of the needs are satisfied through the job. Second, how many of the needs remain dissatisfied through the job. The level of job satisfaction can be obtained through examining those two elements.
 - 2- Expectations theory: An individual's expectations affect the level and type of his/her job satisfaction. The higher his expectations of the job are, the lower his job satisfaction level will be. For example, one satisfies with his job if all his expectations are met through his work. Therefore this person gets job satisfaction much harder than someone who has much lower expectations of his job. So, job satisfaction meaning differs from an individual to another.

- 3- Work theory: This theory considers the social and psychological aspects of the job. Regarding social aspect, it looks at the impact of factors such as organizational system and the environment of the work. These factors are actually the external conditions of the job satisfaction. The psychological aspect of job satisfaction relates to the expectations of the individuals. In other words, how the individual's feeling about the job position and the activities required to do the job are.
- 4- Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory: organizational psychologists often believe that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is very useful in examining job satisfaction condition. Maslow was a psychologist and introduced his theory in 1940s. He was under the influence of Human Relations Theory. For him humans are animals "in need" and with intrinsic desires. He believes that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and that certain lower needs need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied.
- 5- Need Satisfaction Theory: Job satisfaction comes when the individual's personal needs are satisfied through the job position and has a direct relationship with it.

4. METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL RESULT

This descriptive-correlational study was performed in 2014, the impact of job satisfaction on teachers' mental health: A case study of the teachers of Iranian Mazandaran. Two-stage sampling was applied; in the first stage, stratified sampling was used and in the second stage, convenience method was employed.

4. 1. Research Hypothesis

It seems job satisfaction affects teachers' mental health, which in turn mental health of the students will raise.

4. 2. Independent and dependent variables

Job satisfaction

Since 1930s job satisfaction has been studied widely and many theories about it have been coming out.

Job satisfaction: a score which each respondent (here teachers) gets on the job satisfaction test.

Mental health

Mental health: in this research mental health means the score each respondent gets on SCL90-R test.

The concept of mental health or psychological health is a feature of the general concept of physical, psychological and social health.

4. 3. Research Methodology

In line with the aims of this research, the method of Social Survey was used and the data were collected through questionnaires with open and close questions. The statistical population was teachers of the Iranian Mazandaran province and the size of the sample was determined according to Krejcie and Morgan method, which came out a number of 332 teachers.

4. 4. Descriptive Findings

Distribution of the respondents according to their gender

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of the respondents according to their gender.

	Frequency	Confidence Percentage
Male	142	42.8
Female	190	57.2
Total	332	100

Table 1 shows that a number 141 teachers (42.8%) were women and 190 (57.2%) were men. Age distribution of respondents according to their gender:

Table 2. Age Frequency and Percentage of respondents according to their sex.

	Indexes of age	Frequency	Confidence Percentage
Female	<30	8	5.6
	31-40	80	56.3
	41-50	50	35.2
	51-60	4	2.8
	Total	142	100
Male	<30	12	6.3
	31-40	58	30.8
	41-50	108	57.1
	51-60	11	5.8
	Total	189	100

According to the results from table 2, of the questioned women 8 people (5.8%) were below 30 years old, 80 (56.3%) were between 31-40, 50 (35.2%) were between 41-50, 4 (2.8%) were between 51-60 years old. Of the male studied teachers 12 (6.3%) were below 30 years old, 58 (30.7%) between 31-40, 108 (57.1%) between 41-50, 11 (5.8%) were between the ages of 51-60.

Explanatory Findings

In order to examine the relationship between the two dependent variables of the research (job satisfaction and mental health), which were measured by data collected from the questionnaires, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used. The results are presented in the tables below.

Table 3. Results from Pearson's correlation between dependent variables (job satisfaction and mental health)

Variable	Frequency	Pearson's correlation	Sign	Prob
Job satisfaction and mental health	299	0.300	Positive	0.000

Table 4. Comparison between Pearson's correlation between job satisfaction and mental health among women and men.

Variable	Frequency	Pearson's correlation	Sign	Prob
Job satisfaction and mental health	124	0.335	Positive	0.000
	165	0.276	Positive	0.000

The Pearson's correlation coefficient was $r_{xy} = 0.300^{**}$ and significance level was $sig = 0.000$. As a result, there is a direct relationship between the two variables and confidence level was 99%.

Now, in order to compare this relationship separately between male and female teachers according to the data from the tables above, we can say that the Pearson's correlation coefficient among women was $r_{xy} = 0.335^{**}$ and among men was $r_{xy} = 0.276^{**}$.

The correlation between those two variables among women is almost medium and among men is poor. So, the correlation among women is stronger than men's.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As every educational system aims to blossom young talents and produce healthy teachers and students, and also social welfare for all people of the society, so to know how much the teachers in the Iranian province of Mazandaran (as the case study of this research)

are satisfied with their jobs matters and also about the situation of their mental health matters very much. The goals of the research were: discovering the level of mental health among secondary and guidance school teachers who were working at least 12 hours per week in the Iranian mazandaran province and their level of job satisfaction and its relation with the mental health of that population. The sample size was determined 332(140 women and 192 men) by using Krejcie and Morgan method. A descriptive research method was used and data were collected through: for the measuring of mental health the test SCL-90-R was carried out which its credibility was proved at 91% and for the measuring of the level of job satisfaction the test Sayadain was used, which its credibility was proved at 88%. To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency, percentage and sizes tend to center, median, mean and minimum variability in size, background, standard deviation, pie charts, histograms and bar and Spearman correlation coefficients of Pearson independent T-test and analysis of variance were used.

Findings from the analysis of the two sorts of questionnaires (measuring mental health and job satisfaction) and from the obtained coefficients show that there is a meaningful relationship between job satisfaction and mental health and the correlation between those two variables among women is almost medium and among men is poor. Therefore it can be concluded that the correlation is meaningful and positive, and, second it is stronger among women. Our findings correspond with those of Biergi (1992) who believed that whoever had a high level of work satisfaction, loves his job, and also with the findings of Palmour who found out that satisfaction is the best predictor of life span. Moreover, the finding also correspond with those of Freng who found out that the higher the level of work satisfaction, the lower the risk of mental and psychological will be.

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