

The effect of factors on the job satisfaction of pre-school teachers

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Abstract. The aim of this research was to examine the factors affecting the job satisfaction of teachers working in Ayten Cagiran independent kindergarten in Muratpasa, Antalya. Thus, pre-school teachers' opinions on the factors affecting job satisfaction related to the gender, age, seniority, salary, management style, co-workers and working conditions were understood and interpreted. As a sample of the study, volunteer ten teachers, one male and nine female, working in an independent kindergarten participated in the research, and the research was qualitative research with a descriptive phenomenological design. Semi-structured individual interviews were used to reveal the factors affecting the job satisfaction of pre-school teachers in line with teacher opinions. Qualitative data were coded and thematic, descriptive and content analysis were carried out. As a result, in the light of the answers from the teachers based on their opinions, it was understood that the variables such as age, seniority, salary, management style co-workers and environmental conditions affected the job satisfaction of the employees.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, pre-school teacher, demographic variables

Introduction

It is of importance to have professional staff who are satisfied with their work and high job satisfaction in the development and progress of societies. There are many different areas of satisfaction in life. One of the most important of these is the satisfaction obtained from the work done. Because it is the strongest bond between human and life (Yeşilyaprak, 2006). According to Hayran & Aksayan (1991), job satisfaction is an emotional reaction that occurs as a result of the employee's evaluation of his job, work environment and working conditions. According to Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (2000), job satisfaction is defined as what is the person's feeling of happiness about his/her job.

It can be mentioned about two basic theoretical approaches to job satisfaction. The first is Herzberg's (1974) theory of two factors (motivation and hygiene), and the other is the situational occurrences theory of job satisfaction of Quarstein, Mcaffee and Galssman (1992). According to Herzberg's two factor theory, the individual's job satisfaction should be considered as two dimensions. First dimension; is the essence of the job. It includes factors such as the job being suitable for talent and interest, being able to achieve the job, and being motivating. Besides, there are factors that can cause dissatisfaction, such as poor work environment, inability to get along with colleagues, and insufficient salary (Kuzgun, Sevim, & Hamamcı, 1999). On the other hand, Quarstein, Mcaffee and Galssman (1992) state that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are affected by situational occurrences (breaks, meals) and situational characteristics (co-workers, working conditions, etc.). There are many factors that determine teachers' job satisfaction. Salary, working conditions, working hours, attitudes and behaviors of managers and personal characteristics can be counted among these factors. According to the research; stress, working conditions, working environments, school environment are important factors affecting teachers' internal job satisfaction (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986).

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As in many working environments, teachers working in pre-school education, which requires intense communication and attention with students, may experience some problems. It is known that pre-school teachers, due to the nature of their jobs, are in a busy work schedule due to the fact that they have a lot of communication with the families of children, they are interested in the development and education of children in all areas, they continue education in their classrooms where the number of students is high. Teachers who experience burnout due to this intensity and negative reasons may have a negative impact on their students' academic success and development, although they may experience many physical, mental and work-related problems (Kan, 2008).

The aim of this research was to examine the factors affecting the job satisfaction of pre-school teachers in terms of gender, age, seniority, salary, management style, co-workers and working conditions. Thus, pre-school teachers' opinions on the factors affecting job satisfaction related to the gender, age, seniority, salary, management style, co-workers and working conditions were sought to understand and interpret.

Method and paradigm of research

This study is based on practical knowledge constitute interest and the paradigm interpretive as it is based on subjective and inter-subjective views of the individuals (Gunbayi & Sorm, 2018, Gunbayi & Sorm, 2020; Gunbayi, 2020 a,b). A qualitative approach was chosen in this study. Because in the research, individual interviews with the participants were carried out and their views on factors affecting job satisfaction related to the gender, age, seniority, salary, management style, co-workers and working conditions were understood and interpreted. The research was a qualitative research and a descriptive phenomenological design was used. The aim of phenomenology study is to understand and interpret the meanings that individuals create in their minds by emphasis on how individuals perceive reality based on their perspectives and their experiences regarding these perceptions (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 1990, Polkinghorne, 1989)

Sampling

With the purposeful sampling and criterion sampling technique (Palys, 2008), pre-school teachers working in Ayten Cagiran independent kindergarten in Muratpasa, Antalya in 2021-2022 academic year were included in the sample of the research. The sample of the research was chosen on a voluntary basis.

.Table 1.

Distribution of demographic variables of the participants

Participants	Age	Gender	Education	Seniority
A	45 years	Female	Under-graduate	21 years
B	30 years	Female	Under-graduate	8 years
C	38 years	Female	Under-graduate	16 years
D	50 years	Female	Under-graduate	24 years
E	36 years	Female	Under-graduate	12 years
F	29 years	Female	Under-graduate	6 years
G	39 years	Female	Under-graduate	17 years
H	40 years	Female	Under-graduate	11 years
I	37 years	Female	Under-graduate	14 years
J	44 years	Male	Under-graduate	22 years

Data collection

Semi-structured individual interviews were used to reveal the factors affecting the job satisfaction of pre-school teachers in line with teacher opinions. Before the interview questions were prepared, national

and international literature review was conducted on the research topic. The interviews were recorded, and the interviewee was informed about this before the recording was carried out.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics Committee Approval of this research was obtained from Akdeniz University Social Sciences Ethics Committee at the meeting of 14 decision numbered 380 on November 4th, 2021, formal permission was obtained from the Antalya Provincial Directorate of National Education for the research numbered E-98057890-605.01-38780230 on December 10th, 2021, an informed consent form was obtained from the participants before the interview and participants were informed that their names would not be mentioned and be given the alphabetical codes as A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J.

Validity and Reliability of the Research

The internal and external validity and reliability of the qualitative data were increased based on the criteria of credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985): (1) the semi-structured interview form was developed by the review of the relevant literature for credibility (2) based on voluntarism a purposive sampling method was chosen to get opinions and experiences of participants based on perspectives for transferability (3) the themes of the transcripts were nodded by two independent researchers and Cohen's kappa coefficient was calculated as 0.91 indicating a perfect level of agreement between nodes for confirmability d) all data collected were kept to prove on demand for dependability (Landis and Koach, 1977; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007, Gunbayi, 2018).

Data Analysis

The interviews were carried out by the researcher and recorded as audio files, transcribed verbatim and their accuracy was confirmed by the participants. The answers to the questions were coded and thematic, descriptive and content analysis were done via NVIVO software (Kelle, 1995; Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007). In conclusion and discussion, the findings were interpreted and discussed.

Findings

1. Pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of gender on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of gender on job satisfaction are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

The effect of gender on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Job satisfaction differs by gender.	A,B,D,E,İ
Job satisfaction does not differ by gender.	C,H,F,G,I

As indicated in Table 2, pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of gender on job satisfaction were gathered under 2 sub themes.

As seen in Table 2, half of the participants stated that job satisfaction differed by gender, while the other half stated that job satisfaction did not differ by gender. 9 female and 1 male teacher answered the question about the effect of gender on job satisfaction. Below are some of pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of gender on job satisfaction:

I think it makes a difference. When I thought of women as men, I did not see that men were also very willing (A)

... I think that the profession perspective of women and men, the burdens placed on their shoulders and the responsibilities they have are reflected in their profession (B)

... Because pre-school is a female-dominated profession, job satisfaction is lower for a male teacher like me than for females (D)

I think it does not differ according to the gender variable. I think it differs according to the individual (F).

In my opinion, it does not differ according to the gender variable in the level of job satisfaction. In other words, I think that being a woman or a man does not affect whether you love a job more or less (G).

2. Pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of age on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of age on job satisfaction are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

The effect of age on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Job satisfaction differs according to the age.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
Job satisfaction is high at a young age.	A, B, D, E, F, I, Ī
Job satisfaction is high in old age.	C, G, H

As seen in Table 3, all of the participants said that job satisfaction in pre-school differed according to the age, 7 of the participants said that job satisfaction was high at a young age and 3 of them said that job satisfaction was high in old age. Below are some of pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of age on job satisfaction:

I think it does, because teachers who have completed 10-15 years later lose their initial idealism as a result of professional burnout (D).

Yes, of course it differs according to the age variable. We don't have that dynamic state when we were young. As you get older, you may start to have difficulties (E).

It differs according to the age variable, because at a young age you get more satisfaction from work, while providing efficiency, you can get bored as time passes (F).

.....In other words, while the satisfaction was lower when I first started my profession, I think that the level of job sensation increased in the following years with the effect of my age and experience (G).

3. Pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

The effect of seniority on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Job satisfaction differs according to seniority.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
As seniority increases, job satisfaction increases.	C, E, G, I, H
As seniority increases, job satisfaction decreases.	A, B, D, E, F, I, Ī

As seen in Table 4, all of the participants stated that job satisfaction in pre-school differed according to seniority, but 7 of the participants stated that as seniority increased, job satisfaction decreased, and 5 of them stated that as seniority increased, job satisfaction increased. Below are some of pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction:

That's why it differs. As seniority increases, job satisfaction decreases (A).

Yes, as I just said, I am working on my twenty-first year in the profession. Over the years, our job satisfaction declines despite the increase in experience (D).

Yes it shows. It affects some positively, some negatively. As seniority of some people increases, that is, as both their age and presence in school increase, some people become bored and give up, while others go further with experience. That's why I think it does. As good or bad (G).

4. Pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of salary on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of salary on job satisfaction are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

The effect of salary on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
The salary affects job satisfaction.	A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
The salary does not affect job satisfaction.	C
As salary increase, job satisfaction increases.	A, F, H, I,
As salary decrease, job satisfaction decreases.	B, D, E, Ī

As seen in Table 5, the majority of the participants said that the salary factor affected job satisfaction, only one of the participants said that the salary did not affect job satisfaction, While 4 of the participants indicated that as salary increased, job satisfaction increased, other 4 of the participants stated that as the salary decreased, job satisfaction decreases. Below are some of pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of salary on job satisfaction:

...This has no monetary value in my opinion. Its value is spiritual (C).

Sorry, I'll say yes again. Because it makes us sad that our colleagues in Europe do the same job and get paid more to make a living than we do (D).

Yes, because until a certain time, that is, if someone gets low salary, after a certain time this no longer motivates this person (F).

I think the fee also differs according to the variable. Why? Because I don't think that a teacher who thinks about financial difficulties during the lesson, that is, how I will make it to the end of the month, how I will pay my rent, how I will make my payments, will be much more satisfied with his profession with this morale (H).

5. Pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of management style on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of management style on job satisfaction are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

The effect of management style on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Management style affects job satisfaction.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
Positive attitude of management increases performance.	D, E, G, H
Negative attitude of management reduces performance.	A, B, C, D, F, G, I

As seen in Table 6, all of the participants stated that the management style affected job satisfaction, 7 of them stated that the negative attitudes of the management negatively affected their job performance, and 4 of them said that the positive attitude of the management affected their work performance positively. Below are some of pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction:

Another question I'd say yes too. Because the better the relationship between the management and the employees in the institution you work for, the higher your job satisfaction level will be (B).

I think the level of job satisfaction definitely differs according to the management style. If you want to ask why, if we teach in a democratic environment or if we teach in an environment where we are appreciated, we enjoy our work more because it increases our moral motivation (H).

...Because when you work in a democratic place or work with administrators who understand you, work becomes more enjoyable. But when you work with the management who is constantly trying to put pressure on you, you can do the job, but you don't want to do it (I).

6. Pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of co-workers on job satisfaction

The findings related to Pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of co-workers on job satisfaction are presented in Table 7.

Table 7.

The effect of co-workers on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Co-workers affect job satisfaction.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
It differs according to the character of the employee.	C, F
Positive communication and cooperation, sharing and cooperation with the co-workers increase performance.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
Negative communication with the co-workers, jealousy, competition reduces performance	A, B, D, E, F, G, I

As seen in Table 7, the majority of the participants said that co-workers affect job satisfaction and 2 people emphasized that job satisfaction differed according to the character of the employee. While 10 of the participants said that positive communication and cooperation, sharing and cooperation with the co-workers increased performance, 7 participants said that negative communication with the co-workers, jealousy, competition reduced performance. Below are some of pre-school teachers’ opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction:

This may differ individually. The work environment is very important to me. Friendship is very important. Yes, you do not see anyone when you enter the classroom, but you are more productive in an environment where you are peaceful and happy. At least that's how I am (C).

... of course. If the co-workers are cohesive, everything walks, runs, goes. But if it is not compatible, there may be different ideas, of course, differences of opinion, but it is important to meet at one point. In cases where they are not met, morale can be broken. The harmony of this co-workers can also improve everything positively (E).

...If a person comes to school happily, what happiness depends on, to his or her friend, manager there, to feel comfortable and happy, and if he or she comes across that environment, he or she will enter the classroom in the same way happily. In this way, someone reflects himself or herself better on children. But if he or she is uncomfortable with the environment he or she is in, he or she does not want to come to school. He or she may not want to do the activities when he or she does not want to come (F).

7. Pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of working conditions on job satisfaction

The findings related to pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of working conditions on job satisfaction are presented in Table 7.

Table 8.

The effect of working conditions on job satisfaction

Themes	Participants
Working conditions affect job satisfaction.	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, Ī
Positive working conditions increase job satisfaction.	B, C, D, E, F, G, H, Ī
Unfavorable working conditions reduce job satisfaction.	A, B, D, F

As seen in Table 7, all of the participants said that working conditions affected job satisfaction. 9 of participants emphasized that positive working conditions increased job satisfaction. And 4 of the participants said that unfavorable working conditions reduced job satisfaction. Below are some of pre-school teachers' opinions on the effect of seniority on job satisfaction.

... I wouldn't want to work with 35 kids in a small class if your environment is under better conditions. this lowers my performance. So I think you will definitely notice. Physical conditions are important (A).

I'll say yes to that too. I have also worked in very disadvantaged areas. I also worked in schools where all the opportunities were available. Working conditions also motivate people in a way. So you enter the classroom, there is no material, there is nothing you want. You will teach children something, you have no paper, no cardboard, no computer, and these of course affect people. I mean, if the working conditions are good, not only financially, but in every sense, your co-workers are good, you reach the things you want and are very necessary, you also have job satisfaction. . (B).

Yes, it also differs according to the working conditions. Especially people who work more hours in terms of hours cannot provide job satisfaction. Because now a boredom comes (F).

Discussion and conclusion

In this section, conclusions were discussed in the light of the findings obtained from the research and suggestions were put forward in line with the findings obtained. The views of the teachers participating

in the research were discussed in terms of factors of age, gender, seniority, salary, co-workers, working conditions, and management style affecting job satisfaction.

Based on the research findings on the effect of gender on job satisfaction, half of the participants said that the gender variable affected job satisfaction, while the other half said that the gender factor did not affect job satisfaction. Similarly, when Bilgiç (1998) examined the gender variable of job satisfaction of men and women in different institutions in Turkey, no significant difference was found.

As a result of the findings related to the effect of age on job satisfaction, all of the participants stated that the age variable was affected by job satisfaction, but job satisfaction was higher at younger ages, and job satisfaction decreased at older ages. The reason why teachers' job satisfaction was high at a young age may be because they were more idealistic. However, Akkurt (2008) in his study examining the job satisfaction and burnout levels of pre-school teachers, concluded that pre-school teachers who lived in their first years in the profession were more satisfied with their jobs than teachers with more seniority.

As for the findings related to the effect of seniority on job satisfaction, all of the participants stated that seniority was effective on job satisfaction, while the majority of them stated that as seniority increased, job satisfaction decreased. As a result of the results obtained, the age variable and seniority variable showed similarity.

When the findings related to the effect of salary on job satisfaction were examined, the majority of the participants stated that salary affected job satisfaction. In the recent researches, it was found that the job satisfaction of the teachers with low salaries was lower than the teachers with high salaries. A significant difference was determined between the job satisfaction levels of the participants according to the monthly income level (Balıkçı, 2016). In another research by Tunacan & Cetin (2009), it was found that the fact that teachers were not satisfied with the salary they received reduced both the quality and the number of candidates willing to the teaching profession and reduced the productivity. Similarly, in most of the findings related to salary, it was found that teachers were not satisfied with the salary they received in any period of their profession. However, it was observed that this dissatisfaction was more in the early days of their profession.

In the light of the findings on the effect of the management on job satisfaction, all of the participants stated that the management style affected their job satisfaction, while the majority of the participants concluded that the negative attitude of the management reduced the job satisfaction of the teachers. Similarly, Akdoğan (2002) in his study on the relationship between the perceived leadership styles of the instructors and their job satisfaction levels, concluded that the positive leadership skills of the administrators affected the teachers' job satisfaction levels positively.

As for the findings related to the effect of co-workers on job satisfaction, the majority of the participants stated that their colleagues' job satisfaction affected their job satisfaction, but while variables such as sharing, helping, and cooperation affected positively; they said that variables such as jealousy and competition negatively affect their performance. In parallel with this finding, as in a research by Durmaz, & Gümüştekin (2021), it was found that as the working time of teachers with co-workers in an institution increased, the satisfaction they got from their co-workers increased.

Finally, in the light of the findings related to the effect of working conditions on job satisfaction, it was understood that the physical conditions of the school affected the job satisfaction of the participants and the positive physical conditions had a positive effect on the job satisfaction of the teachers. Similarly, in the other researches, teachers stated that the physical conditions of the school and the sufficient equipment used in the course have an important place in their job satisfaction (Günbayı, 2000). Additionally, according to Cetinkanat (2000), improving the heating, lighting, decoration and equipment conditions of teachers, their departments and teacher's rooms contribute to increasing their satisfaction levels. Thus, teachers' job satisfaction was affected by the physical conditions of the school.

Recommendations

In line with the findings, following suggestions were put forward:

Teachers' low job satisfaction will cause their psychological complaints to increase in the process. For this reason, various in-service trainings can be carried to increase the job satisfaction of teachers.

Retirement age can be decreased because pre-school teachers' job satisfaction is high at a younger age.

The interest of male teachers in pre-school teaching should be increased, therefore, male teachers should be encouraged to prefer pre-school teaching.

The amount of salary paid to pre-school teachers can be improved.

School administrators can make improvements by identifying negative situations that affect pre-school teachers' job satisfaction.

Cooperation and sharing among teachers should be increased with the activities carried out in the school.

In order to increase the job satisfaction of teachers, the physical conditions of the schools should be improved, and the number and the quality of the equipment and materials should be increased.

Working with a larger sample group will enable us to obtain more precise results about job satisfaction.

The job satisfaction of pre-school teachers working in an independent kindergarten and pre-school teachers working in a kindergarten of primary education can be compared.

Job satisfaction of male pre-school teachers and female pre-school teachers can be compared.

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Ethical approval

In the writing process of the study titled “**The factors affecting the job satisfaction of pre-school teachers in terms of various variables**”, the rules of scientific, ethical and citation were followed; it was undertaken by the authors of this study that no falsification was made on the collected data. “Journal Action Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research [JAQMER] and Editor” had no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, and all responsibility belongs to the authors and that the study was not submitted for evaluation to any other academic publishing environment.

Ethics committee approval

Ethics Committee Approval of this research was obtained from Akdeniz University Social Sciences Ethics Committee at the meeting of 14 decision numbered 380 on November 4th, 2021.