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# The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of physical education teachers

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the present research was to study the relationship between emotional intelligence as well as its five components and job satisfaction of physical education teachers. The research was descriptive-correlational and the population of the research consisted of all the physical education teachers of Zanjan Province in the period 2008-2009. Of the total number of 486 PE teachers, 215 teachers were randomly selected using proportional stratified sampling. Data collection materials were the standard Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire of Siberia Schernig and the Job Description Index (JDI). Descriptive and inferential (Pearson's correlation coefficient, stepwise regression, and Fisher's exact test) were applied for data analysis. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.349$ ) and between the components of social skills, empathy, and motivation and job satisfaction at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. Further, the results of stepwise regression showed that among the five components of emotional intelligence, social skills (0.442), empathy (0.302), and motivation (0.235) were predictors of teacher's job satisfaction. The calculated Fisher's  $z$  revealed that the difference between the correlation between the teachers with diploma and those with MSc is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. It seems that job satisfaction of teachers can be increased by training and improving their emotional intelligence along with providing facilities and satisfying their needs.*

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, physical education teacher.

## INTRODUCTION

The most important factor in achieving the goals of any organization is manpower and doubtlessly the success and progress of any organization depends on its human resources. The Education Organization is one of the organizations in which most of the human resources are hardworking, committed individuals and providing that working conditions are favorable, the will employ their talent and skill in service of the organization and will grease the wheels of its machinery. One of the driving aspects of this organization in physical and spiritual cultivation of

students is the Physical Education Department where the role of PE teachers is more outstanding than other members of this organization. In brief, physical education in schools is particularly recognized as an important tool for providing physical activity for millions of children and adolescents, and PE teachers play a vital role in the development of their behavior, attitude, skills, and the knowledge necessary for physical activity throughout life. Considering the lack of specialized physical education teachers, imprecision in employing experts, and most importantly the dynamic, emerging nature of physical education as a science, the necessity for motivating teachers has become increasingly evident [2].

Motivation and job are of the issues that have been very much dealt with during the past few decades. For achieving the goals of any organization, the necessary conditions must be provided so that the employees will perform their assigned duties in an appealing environment and with pleasure and satisfaction and have the required efficiency in achieving the critical organizational goals. Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasing emotional state from the appraisal of one's job or experience. Wysocky and Kromm consider work, supervision, coworker, promotion, and benefits as the dimensions of job satisfaction [24]. Low activity, absenteeism, aggression, disease, and turnover can be mentioned as the consequences of job dissatisfaction. Usually employees display their dissatisfaction with the working conditions through resignation, objection, and negative actions [25]. These days, researchers list numerous factors as affecting the job satisfaction of employees including: payment, the nature of the work, promotion, leadership and supervision, relations with coworkers, job safety, organizational structure, physical conditions of the job, personality factors, personal characteristics, and equality [12].

Tett and Meyer (1993) divide the driving factors in job satisfaction into two categories: organizational, social, and cultural characteristics which are considered as external aspects and personality, affective, and emotional characteristics which are referred to as internal aspects. In other words, according to the view of organizational behavior theorists, job satisfaction of employees is not affected only by wage, benefits, coworkers and other external factors; rather, emotions, personality traits, and other internal factors of this sort have a close relationship with employees' job satisfaction. Personality characteristics can be taken into account as determinants of adjustment of employees with organizational conditions and their job motivation. For Mayer and Salovey (2000), one of the personality characteristics of an individual is their emotional or affective intelligence. Goleman (1998) believes that emotional intelligence is a factor that determines the capacity of humans in recognizing their emotions and those of others and helps them motivate themselves, control their emotions, and establish their relationships with others accordingly. On the other hand, Spector (1997), in a model of job satisfaction, states that job satisfaction is affected by two factors: organizational and personal factors [16]. Hendee (2002) expanded this model and incorporated emotional intelligence as a personal factor which, along with other personal factors such as gender, educational degree, demographic characteristics, etc., affects one's job satisfaction. Thus, it appears that personality and personal characteristics of individuals, including their emotional intelligence, must be taken into consideration along with other factors in studying job satisfaction of the employees of any organization. The results of Thomas and Tram (2006) and Ashkanasy and Jordan (1997) suggested that emotional intelligence of employees has a significant positive relationship with their job satisfaction.

The relatively established role of emotional intelligence in prevention and moderation of physical and mental disorders on one hand and the necessity to pay attention to emotional abilities on the other hand necessitates studying issues such as the level of emotional intelligence in families, schools, organizations, and other social levels which can take a giant step toward promoting the level of mental hygiene of the society. Humans confer order and consistency to

their lives by means of their emotional intelligence; a person with a high level of emotional intelligence experiences fewer negative incidents in their lives. People with higher levels of emotional intelligence can successfully cope with the problems occurring in their working and living environments and thus enjoy a better health [11]. Martinez (1997) considers emotional intelligence as a set of non-cognitive skills, abilities, and capacities that make the individual resistant to external demands and pressures. In the view of Goleman, emotional intelligence involves both internal and external elements. The internal elements include self-awareness, self-concept, independence, self-actualization, and decisiveness. The external factors include interpersonal relationships, empathy, and responsibility. Moreover, emotional intelligence involves the capacity of the individual for accepting the realities of life, the ability to solve emotional problems, and the ability to cope with stress and impulses. People are interacting with others regardless of what their position may be and if they wish to have a high level of efficiency and performance and to achieve their goals in concert with other, they need to be equipped with technical abilities along with certain characteristics which he refers to as emotional intelligence. That is because these abilities make the individual self-aware, composed, respectable, observant, supportive, participative, visionary, and receptive in confrontation with others or situations. In Goleman's word, emotional intelligence consists of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills [11].

There is evidence that emotional intelligence affects job satisfaction of employees. Awareness of interpersonal emotions can help the regulation of negative feelings and emotions and thus the individual will have a better performance in their job; better performance will in turn set the foundations for job satisfaction. It seems that employees with high emotional intelligence will be more satisfied with their jobs, for they will identify the sense of despair and stress more easily and will reduce it. Meanwhile results of different research studies have shown that people with less workplace stress enjoy a higher level of job satisfaction. Further, researchers have come to the conclusion that people with higher emotional intelligence are at a favorable level of life satisfaction, while job satisfaction is a small portion of the larger concept of life satisfaction. The results of Thomas and Tram (2006) suggested that emotional intelligence of employees has a significant positive relationship with their job performance. Millet (2007) came to the conclusion that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is not significant in police officers. There exists a weak negative relationship between stress management component of emotional intelligence and a weak positive relationship between adjustment and general mood components of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction; yet, these relationships are not significant. Further, quoting Ashkanasy and Jordan (1997), Millet mentions that emotional intelligence and job control can account for 26% of job satisfaction variance [22]. Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2007) concluded that emotional intelligence is an important predictor of job satisfaction. Moreover, only the component of recognizing other's emotions had a significant relationship with job satisfaction. Casper (2007) came to the conclusion that there is no significant relationship between managers' emotional intelligence and age, education, organizational post, and career roles. On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Hasankhoyi (2006) concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Further, there is no significant difference between men and women in motivation, self-awareness, self-control, and social skills; however, women had a higher level of emotional intelligence and empathy. Moreover, he points out that emotional intelligence skills can be used in order to increase job satisfaction in educational environments. Hosseinian et al. (2008) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction and concluded that there is no significant difference between any of Bar-On's components of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction which was measured using the Job Description Index.

Considering the contradictory results of the research carried out so far on emotional intelligence and job satisfaction and considering that one of the factors affecting the internal aspect job satisfaction is emotional intelligence, the researcher aimed to investigate the relationship between these two factors in one of the important and critical jobs, namely physical education teachers. Thus, the present research seeks to find the answer to such questions as whether there is any relationship between emotional intelligence as well as its components (self-awareness, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills) and job satisfaction of physical education teachers of Zanjan Province and whether the predictor variables, including the five components of emotional intelligence, can predict the job satisfaction of these teachers. Finally, it seeks to answer whether there is a significant difference between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of physical education teachers in terms of gender, experience, education, teaching level, and educational degree.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research is descriptive-correlational in which the relationship between five components of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of physical education teachers is examined.

### Participants

The participants of the research include all the physical education teachers of Zanjan Province. The total number of PE teachers in the province was 486 of which 265 were female (117 elementary school teachers, 84 junior high school teachers, and 64 high school teachers) and 221 were male (81 elementary school teachers, 103 junior high school teachers, and 37 high school teachers). The sample size of the research was determined to be 215 based on Morgan's table (1970) and using proportional stratified sampling and simple random sampling, 98 male teachers and 117 female teachers were selected.

**Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire:** Siberia Schernig's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire was used to measure the emotional intelligence of the teachers. This questionnaire has 33 questions with the Likert scale and consists of 5 subscales – self-awareness, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The developer of the scale examined the validity of the questionnaire using concurrent validity and its construct validity through internal consistency, factor analysis, and convergence test. Further, Jirabket (1996) deemed this test as valid and reliable. Mansouri (2001) used construct validity to determine the validity of the questionnaire and based on the results ( $r = 0.62$ ) it can be claimed that Siberia Schernig's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire is sufficiently valid. Regarding the reliability of the mentioned questionnaire, Jirabket (1996) obtained 0.94 and 0.91 using the split-half method and Cronbach's alpha. Mansouri also obtained 0.86 as its alpha coefficient [] (Eidi, 2007).

**Job Satisfaction Questionnaire:** Wysocky and Kromm's Job Description Index was used for measuring job satisfaction. This questionnaire is the most valid and reliable job satisfaction questionnaire which contains 41 questions based on a 5-point Likert scale and a question pertaining to the general satisfaction with job. The mentioned questionnaire measures several dimensions, namely work, supervision, coworker, promotion, and benefits. Koozechian (2003) calculated the reliability of this questionnaire as 0.92 using Cronbach's alpha.

In the present research also the researcher examined the validity of these two questionnaires through experts in sport management. Moreover, the reliability of the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was obtained as 0.79 and 0.83 respectively

through experimental distribution among 30 physical education teachers and by means of Cronbach's alpha.

### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used for reporting research findings. Kolmogorov-Simonov test was applied to examine the normal distribution of data and due to the normality of data, Pearson's correlation coefficient test and stepwise regression were applied. Moreover, Fisher's exact test was applied to determine the difference between groups in the correlation coefficient of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

## RESULTS

Based on table 1, the correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. In other words, based on the findings of the research it can be asserted with 95% confidence that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence of PE teachers and their job satisfaction.

Further, the calculated "r" at  $P \leq 0.05$  level suggests a significant positive relationship between motivation, empathy, and social skills job satisfaction of PE teachers in Zanjan Province. However, the relationship between self-awareness and job satisfaction is not significant (table 1).

**Table 1. Correlation between emotional intelligence as well as its components and job satisfaction of PE teachers in Zanjan Province**

Variables	N	r	P
Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction	215	0.349**	0.001
Self-Awareness and Job Satisfaction	215	0.008	0.905
Self-Control and Job Satisfaction	215	0.034	0.621
Motivation and Job Satisfaction	215	0.298**	0.001
Empathy and Job Satisfaction	215	0.327**	0.001
Social Skills and Job Satisfaction	215	0.508**	0.001

$**P \leq 0.01$

**Table 2. Stepwise regression, the relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PE teachers in Zanjan Province**

Step	Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
First Step	Constant	95.056	-	11.78	0.001
	Social Skills	3.71	0.508	8.604	0.001
Second Step	Constant	61.784	-	6.175	0.001
	Social Skills	3.542	0.484	8.651	0.001
	Empathy	1.898	0.288	5.137	0.001
Third Step	Constant	18.470	-	1.328	0.186
	Social Skills	3.235	0.442	8.093	0.001
	Empathy	1.993	0.302	5.604	0.001
	Motivation	1.640	0.235	4.312	0.001

The results of stepwise regression indicate that the variables of social skills, empathy, and motivation can enter the final regression equation as predictor variables for explaining job satisfaction of PE teachers (criterion variable). Thus, in the first step, social skills entered the equation and 0.508% of job satisfaction of PE teachers was predicted by this variable. In the second step, both social skills and empathy entered the model simultaneously and their



contribution was calculated as 0.484 and 0.288 respectively. In the third step, the predictor variables of social skills, empathy, and motivation entered the regression equation and their contribution in explaining the criterion variable of job satisfaction were calculated as 0.442, 0.302, and 0.235 respectively.

Fisher's exact test was applied to determine the difference between groups in the correlation coefficient of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. The results are as follows:

The Fisher's  $z$  was calculated as 0.05 for men and women and since it is less than the critical value (1.96), the difference between the correlation coefficients of these two groups is not significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level.

The Fisher's  $z$  calculated for the variable of career experience showed that only the calculated  $Z$ -value was above the critical value (1.96) only for teachers with 11-15 and above 20 years of experience and as well for teachers with 16-20 experience and above 20 years of experience; as a result, the difference between the correlation between these groups is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level (table 3).

**Table 3. The difference between the correlation coefficients of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction with respect to career experience**

Career Experience	Correlation			$Z_r$
	r	P	N	
11-15 Years	0.162	0.298	43	2.57*
Above 20 Years	0.589**	0.001	69	
16-20 Years	0.297*	0.028	55	2.01*
Above 20 Years	0.589**	0.001	69	

\*  $P \leq 0.05$ , \*\* $P \leq 0.01$

Among the teachers with different educational degree, only the calculated Fisher's  $z$  for teachers with diploma and those with MSc was greater than the critical value (1.96) indicating that the difference between the correlation coefficients of these two groups of teachers is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level (table 4).

**Table 4. The difference between the correlation coefficients of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction with respect to educational degree**

Career Experience	Correlation			$Z_r$
	r	P	N	
Diploma	0.631*	0.016	14	1.98*
MSc	0.129	0.646	15	

\*  $P \leq 0.05$

Among the teachers with different educational stage, the calculated Fisher's  $z$  was not greater than the critical value for any of the elementary, junior high school, and high school stages. Thus, the difference between the correlation coefficient of none of the stages is significant at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. Moreover, the calculated Fisher's  $z$  for teachers with and without a degree in the field of physical education was obtained as 0.99 and since it is less than the critical value (1.96), the difference between the correlation coefficient of these two groups is not significant either ( $P \leq 0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Analyzing the findings related to the first hypothesis revealed that the correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of physical education teachers is positive and significant. Thus, it can be asserted that the more the emotional intelligence of PE teachers is, the more will be their job satisfaction. The findings of the research are directly consistent with the results of Abraham (2000), Busso (2003), Thomas and Linda (2006), Hasankhoyi (2006), and several other researchers.

Carmeli (2003) states that people with high emotional intelligence are constantly in a good mood and that they experience a higher level of job satisfaction and well-being (in comparison with people with lower emotional intelligence). Moreover, Busso came to the conclusion that there is a significant difference relationship between emotional intelligence and career performance as well as job satisfaction [4]. Hasankhoyi (2006) concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Gardner and Stough (2003) observed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. In many jobs, emotional intelligence plays an important role in job opportunities, job skills, required skills and talents, and career success. Each job requires a certain level of emotional intelligence with regards to its nature. Some jobs do not need a high degree of emotional intelligence since they focus mainly on performing the duties; thus, people with a high level of emotional intelligence do not succeed in such jobs. In contrast, there are jobs where employees need to establish empathetic relationship and effective communication with others and create work groups in order to perform their duties. These jobs do require a high level of emotional intelligence. It seems that the job of teachers – in particular physical education teachers – requires a high level of emotional intelligence, for physical education teachers have a close relationship with students and play a vital role in the development of their behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary for physical activity throughout life.

However, many studies have not arrived at a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Hendee (2002), Villard (2004), Millet (2007), and Casper (2007) came to the conclusion that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. A possible reason for such an inconsistency between the results could be attributed to the different measurement materials used for measuring emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. In most studies, emotional intelligence has been measured using Bar-On test, while the common test for measuring job satisfaction in the mentioned research studies is the Job Description Index (JDI). Another justification for the differences in the results could be that the population studied in different research has been different. Unfortunately, no similar research was carried out among physical education teachers.

In the present research, the relationship between self-awareness and self-control and job satisfaction is not significant. The results of Livingstone (2001) showed that intrapersonal skills and stress management have no significant relationship with job satisfaction. These two components are adopted from Bar-On and the component of intrapersonal skills includes Goleman's self-awareness as well. Moreover, stress management in Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence is closely related to Goleman's self-control [18]. Villard (2004), Muhammad (2005), and Hosseinian *et al.* (2008) came to the conclusion that intrapersonal skills and stress management in Bar-On's questionnaire have no significant relationship with job satisfaction. On the other hand, Clanton (2005) carried out a research where the relationship between self-awareness and work and payment components of job satisfaction was significant in women. Moreover, the relationship between self-awareness component of emotional intelligence and

supervision and promotion components of job satisfaction was significant. It can thus be gathered that most research results are either directly or indirectly consistent with and support the results of the researcher in this section. The lack of a significant relationship between self-awareness and self-control and emotional intelligence seems logical. Self-awareness refers to the internal feelings and emotions of the individual and self-control is also related to controlling internal emotions and having these abilities per se cannot bring about job satisfaction for the individual.

Furthermore, another result of the present research was the significant relationship between motivation, empathy, and social skills and job satisfaction of physical education teachers. The following research studies also came to similar results: Gardner and Stough (2003) concluded that job satisfaction has a significant positive relationship with the components of emotional intelligence and emotional management and emotional control. Martos et al. (2006) found that there is a significant relationship between emotional repair and job satisfaction. Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2007) found that among the dimensions of emotional intelligence, use of emotions and emotion regulation were significant predictors of positive and negative affectivity at work, but only other's emotional appraisal (OEA) had a significant relationship with job satisfaction.

It seems that physical education teachers with a high level of social skills can use it for proper reaction, understanding differences, group work, conversational ability, mediation, and communicative ability. People with this skill can quickly create a convivial atmosphere with others. Further, empathy means understanding others, knowing and valuing their needs, and enthusiasm for serving being helpful. The ability to empathize and manage interpersonal relationships help teachers in identifying and paying heed to the feelings, views, and ideas of coworkers and students so as to be able to treat them properly as people with unique needs and abilities. Considering this issue and the fact that one of the foundations of job satisfaction is satisfaction with coworkers, it seems that physical education teachers with high social skills and empathy have the ability to establish friendly relationships with coworkers, managers, students, and students' parents and not only create becoming interactions with people around them, but also improve their satisfaction with coworkers and supervision as well as their general satisfaction. Motivation is commitment and obligation to perform tasks without discouragement or despair in face of failures and as well optimism regarding the future. A physical education teacher with a high level of motivation will resist against difficulties and nothing can prevent them from achieving their premeditated goals. They will be more optimistic and hopeful and they will be positive models for motivating others. Further, they can withstand the shortcomings of the job and other organizational problems. Motivation will make them fight the difficulties and prevent these difficulties from diminish their spirit and reduce their job satisfaction.

In the present research, the results from stepwise regression analysis showed that social skill, empathy, and motivation are eligible as predictor variables to enter the final regression equation for explaining the job satisfaction (the criterion variable). The contribution of each of the predictor variables of social skills, empathy, and motivation was 0.442, 0.302, and 0.235 respectively. The two components that were not allowed to enter the regression equation were self-awareness and self-control. Abraham (2000) came to the conclusion that emotional intelligence predicts a large extent of job satisfaction variance. Livingstone (2001) concluded that emotional intelligence can predict 16% of job satisfaction variance. Moreover, among the five components of Bar-On's emotional intelligence (intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management, adaptability, and general mood), only general mood can predict job satisfaction. The results of Downey (2005) and Ashkanasy (1997) indicated that emotional intelligence can predict 18 and 26 percent of job satisfaction variance. Thiebaut (2005) mentions



that emotional intelligence can approximately predicts 36% of organizational indices, 25% of interpersonal relationships, 34% of wage and benefits, and 42% of job satisfaction in general.

In sum, in contrast with emotional intelligence that is relatively constant, emotional intelligence can be improved through training and with the development of emotional intelligence in physical education teachers, they will acquire the necessary interpersonal skills and will turn into insightful and tactful teachers; these positive changes will enable them to become productive and efficient teachers, improve their skills, and be satisfied with their jobs. If one wishes physical education teachers to be at a favorable level of efficiency and productivity, scientific findings and principles will have to be used. Recently, many organizations have paid attention to the issue of emotional intelligence. If besides providing the required facilities and satisfying the needs and pertinent wishes of physical education teachers the Education Organization takes measures for training emotional intelligence, it will witness increasing job satisfaction among these teachers in the future.

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