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Organizational Factors that Affect Job Satisfaction and Job Performance in Basic Education Teachers

Luis F. García-Hernández ^{a, *}, Sandra C. Fulquez-Castro ^a, Joaquín Vázquez-García ^a, Evangelina Lopez Ramirez ^a

^a Autonomous University of Baja California, Baja California, Mexico

Abstract

The objective of this study was to evaluate organizational stressors and job satisfaction based on the categories of professional concerns, lack of professional recognition and role stress in basic education teachers of the public system in Mexico. The methodology used a quantitative, non-experimental and descriptive approach. The sample consisted of 415 teachers – 263 women and 152 men – under a non-probability sampling. The Burn Out Teacher Revised Questionnaire (CBPR) with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.943 was applied as an instrument. To obtain results, an inferential analysis based on linear regression tests and bivariate correlation was performed with a $p < 0.05$. The results obtained, job dissatisfaction is determined by job stressors which were evaluated through the categories lack of professional recognition, professional concerns and role stress within education professionals. As can be seen in the results obtained, job dissatisfaction is determined by work-related stressors, which were evaluated through the categories lack of professional recognition, professional concerns and role stress within education professionals. Likewise, these results allow us to observe that they coincide with other studies carried out in different Latin American countries and under similar conditions, specifically in elementary and high school schools, where the results mention work stressors as triggers of work stress and consequently dissatisfaction labor.

Keywords: teacher job stress, professional recognition, job performance, job satisfaction, job concerns.

1. Introduction

Due to the diverse changes that have taken place in education, the teaching role has undergone associated changes, including higher demands, according to the United Nations

* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: luis.fernando.garcia.hernandez@uabc.edu.mx (L.F. García-Hernández)

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2015: 17). As a result, various studies have been conducted on the conditions and the teaching role.

This has been due to the fact that in recent decades, quality has gained relevance in education. Therefore, the education sectors have been in charge of complying with this standard. Educational quality is one of the challenges and priorities of education systems worldwide, as Garcia (2017) mentions, in “1995 the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined this as one that achieves that all students acquire knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to develop optimally in adulthood”. An element that is determined to meet this educational quality is the teacher.

Historically, “teaching has been configured as an apostolate”, as a social service, “rather than as a job for which qualifications, performance standards and evaluation processes” are required (UNESCO, 2015: 15). Following the various changes that have taken place in society, the teaching role has encompassed more demands and therefore requires more evaluations of teachers’ performance and knowledge.

Likewise, in the Mexico Cooperation Agreement which was made to ensure the quality of education, the OECD made some recommendations to Mexico. Among the recommendations is that the professional teaching career, consolidating a quality profession, seeks to “build a solid system that allows selecting, preparing, developing and evaluating the best teachers for their schools” (OECD, 2015: 5). Therefore, in Mexico teachers are constantly evaluated and undergo standardized tests, upon which their entry or stay in institutes depends.

In addition, adding the context of where teachers work and everything that this work encompasses, UNESCO mentioned that work in inadequate conditions, travelling enormous distances to school, having rudimentary teaching resources, suffering from diseases arising from exercise, etc. was part of what a someone who had opted for teaching as career was (or still is) willing to accept. Dysphonia, varicose veins, lower back pain and fatigue, have been and are assumed to be the inevitable “marks” of the profession (p. 15).

In various studies conducted by UNESCO, it is shown that some research carried out in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico) represents a voice of alarm for the education system and society as a whole “because they offer multiple findings, in particularly related to the mental health condition expressed in diseases such as stress, depression, neurosis and a variety of diagnosed and perceived psychosomatic diseases (gastritis, ulcers, irritable bowel, among others)” (UNESCO, 2015: 16).

It is observed and confirmed that all these changes have caused alterations in the health conditions of teachers, among which the diseases that stand out the most are stress and malaise.

Some of the reactions that occur in teacher stress, according to the World Health Organization (WHO, s.f.), include:

- physiological responses (for example, increased heart rate or blood pressure, hyperventilation, as well as secretion of “stress” hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol);
 - Emotional responses (for example, feeling nervous or irritated);
 - Cognitive responses (for example, reduction or limitation in attention and perception, lack of memory);
 - Behavioral reactions (for example: aggressiveness, impulsive behavior, making mistakes)
- (p. 10).

All this leads to poor performance in teachers, and coupled with serious health consequences, it is an increasing problem. In addition, there is a high level of dissatisfaction of the role, among other consequences.

Various studies have been undertaken on this subject, such as those by Zubieta and Susinos (1992); Grasso (1993); Esteve (1998); Gil-Monte and Peiró (2008); Guerrero (2001); CCOO (2000); Pansa (2002); and Zavala (2008), and more recently those by Orasma (2013); Aldrete et al. (2006); Aldrete (2008); Salanova and Llorens (2011); and Güell (2015). They explain the factors surrounding teacher dissatisfaction, from poor social recognition, the professional structure, which has few possibilities for promotion, and the characteristics of the school context and how it is impacting the different educational levels that make up the Mexican educational system of basic education and upper middle. In addition, Restrepo et al. (2006) discuss how labor overload, interpersonal conflicts with other teachers, parents and superiors, and the problems derived from educational policies can negatively affect teachers and obviously their students.

In its report on mental health throughout the world, WHO (2013) defined satisfaction as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being; not only as the absence of poor physical, mental and social conditions or diseases. Likewise, Muñoz (1990) points out that job satisfaction is conceived as a feeling of pleasure or positivity that a subject experiences due to doing a job that interests him, in an environment that allows him to be comfortable, within the scope of a company or organization that appeals to him and for which he perceives psycho-socio-economic compensation according to his expectations.

In terms of job satisfaction, Daft (1999) points out that this is a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of work or work experience, and that it is achieved when expectations and reality coincide. Topa et al. (2004) mention that job satisfaction is perceived in a defined attitudinal dimension as a set of positive emotional attitudes and positive emotional reactions which the individual experiences regarding their work. Bisquerra (2008) defines it more as emotional well-being than as job satisfaction and says that it is “the degree [to which] a person judges favorably the overall quality of his life”.

Cornejo (2009) talks about decisive factors in obtaining teacher welfare, and mentions the following: control over the situation, social support at work, time management and significance, or perceived self-efficacy and strategies of coping with stressful situations. Newstrom (2007) points out that job satisfaction is a set of favorable feelings and emotions with which employees perceive their work; it is a feeling of relative pleasure, which differs from objective thoughts and behavioral intentions.

According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction can be defined as a positive response to work in general or to some aspect of it, which leads to an emotional or pleasant emotional state resulting from the subjective perception of the subject’s work experiences. Focusing on the field of education, the concept of teacher satisfaction has been addressed by different theorists and through different topics such as “mental health of teachers”, “emotional balance”, “anguish of teachers”, “conflict of teachers”, “teacher stress and anxiety”, “burnout (teacher discomfort) or professional attrition”, “teacher job satisfaction”, etc.

All these terms lead us to observe from which points of view the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of teachers has been addressed. In 1995 Padron pointed out that “personal and professional satisfaction is closely related to mental health and personal balance. In the case of teachers, satisfaction is accompanied by specific situations of their teaching work and with the characteristics of their own personality, since all this affects their emotional stability, creating tension, stress, and causing discomfort, both from a personal perspective as a professional”.

Herrador et al. (2006) argue that the main basis of teacher discomfort is linked to the situations they face in the teaching environment, and to the pressures that fall on them; teachers have never before been subjected to such intense and contradictory demands from the administration, students, parents and society in general as they are now. Against this background, various studies have been developed that address teacher job satisfaction. Most of these studies focus on the relationship between teacher satisfaction and center effectiveness. Based on these ideas, we can understand teacher satisfaction, as in reality this should be the teaching work itself, and what this should be, according to their expectations (Díaz, 2005).

2. Methodology

It is important in any study to understand the methodological approach to the phenomenon that is being analyzed. Due to the need to know and understand the object of study, it was proposed to approach it from a quantitative, non-experimental and descriptive approach, which allows us to answer various questions that have arisen in relation to the subject.

Based on these ideas, it is understood that the methodology that has been used to carry out this particular study allows us to evaluate stressors and degree of job satisfaction in basic education teachers of the public system in Mexico through the categories of professional concerns, lack of professional recognition and role stress.

The descriptive study was adjusted to the positivist quantitative paradigm, which required a non-experimental methodology, characterized by the situation. It was not modified at any time, since it works with a group of people who are immersed in a given context and this allows us to obtain the required information. “These methods are limited to describing the situation that is already given, although it can select values to estimate relationships between the variables” (Arnal et al., 1992: 72).

At the same time, it is of the type of study described by Danhke (1989, cited by Buendía, 2001: 57). He mentions that “these seek to specify the properties, characteristics and important profiles of people, groups, communities or any other phenomenon that is subjected to analysis”. And, therefore, it is “ex post facto”, because the events and variables have already occurred, and the variables and the relationships between them have been observed in context. This is why this method is suitable for this study, since it allows us to measure or collect information independently or together, on the concepts or variables with which we are working.

Likewise, the bivariate correlation and linear regression tests were applied in order to know the degree of correlation between the variables under study, and to determine job dissatisfaction in basic education teachers and the levels of stress they develop. The study is based on their professional concerns, lack of professional recognition and the stress of the role, which allow us to know the degree of direct correlation between them, as well as their inference. The sample for the development of this study was made up of 415 teachers from the city of Mexicali Baja California, from the municipality of Mexicali B. C., under a simple random non-probabilistic sample.

The questionnaire used is The Revised Burn Out Questionnaire (CBP-R) by Moreno et al. (2000). This is made up of 69 items with a response on a Likert scale of five options. It is divided into different categories: Burn Out (in its categories of analysis of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of performance), organizational conditions, supervision, lack of professional recognition, role stress and professional concerns, the last four categories being the ones used to assess job satisfaction. Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient was 0.943.

3. Results and discussion

It is a reality that work stressors and their degree of teacher job satisfaction largely determine the job satisfaction of individuals and in this case of teachers. In the present study, the analysis carried out allowed us, in addition to the above, to visualize the correlation between these and the categories of professional concerns, lack of professional recognition and role stress.

The bivariate correlation analysis showed a significant relationship ($p < .001$) between the stress of the role with respect to professional concerns ($r = 0.685$) and is related to the lack of professional recognition ($r = 0.567$); in turn, this was found to be related to supervision ($r = 0.643$). Likewise, a significant relationship is observed ($p < .001$). It was also observed within the category of professional concerns regarding the lack of professional recognition that in addition to the significant relationship ($p < .001$), its correlation index is good ($r = 0.770$). (Table 1)

Table 1. Bivariate Correlation between the Variables Stress of the Role, Supervision, Professional Concerns, Lack of Professional Recognition

		Stress of the role	Supervision	Professional concerns	Lack of professional recognition
Stress of the role	Pearson's correlation	1	.643**	.685**	.567**
	Sig. (bilateral)		.000	.000	.000
	N	415	415	415	415
Supervision	Pearson's correlation	.643**	1	.366**	.217
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000		.002	.078
	N	415	415	415	415
Professional concerns	Pearson's correlation	.685**	.366**	1	.770**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000	.002		.000

	N	415	415	415	415
Lack of professional recognition	Pearson's correlation	.567**	.217	.770**	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000	.078	.000	
	N	415	415	415	415

Here, studies such as those of Bravo et al. (2017); Kroupis et al. (2017); Güell (2015); Arias and Jiménez (2013); Salanova and Llorens (2011); Arís (2009); and Fernández (2002) should be emphasized. Their results also mention organizational factors as the main cause of job dissatisfaction, where, in addition, personal fulfillment and professional concerns are the most affected.

Likewise, in the linear regression analysis between the categories, professional concerns regarding lack of recognition confirm the existence of a significant correlation ($p < .001$). At the same time, it shows us a good correlation index ($r = 0.770$), from which we observe that the correlation occurs with respect to the R2 coefficient index, which is 59.3 % in relation to the variable lack of professional recognition. In the same way, the ANOVA test shows us a highly significant correlation ($p < .001$). (Tables 2 and 3)

Table 2. Linear Regression between the Variables Professional Concerns, Lack of Professional Recognition

Model	R	R squared	R squared fitted	Standard error of the estimate
1	.770 ^a	.593	.587	.936

Table 3. ANOVA Test of the Variables Professional Concerns, Lack of Professional Recognition

Model		Sum of squares	Gl	Quadratic mean	F	Sig.
1	Regression	82.946	1	82.946	94.647	.000 ^b
	Residue	56.964	413	.876		
	Total	139.910	415			

As can be seen, there are teachers who presented low professional and personal achievement, as well as low acceptance. Likewise, it can be observed that studies such as those of Aris (2009), Fernández (2010) and Güell (2015), obtained similar results.

Regarding the linear regression analysis applied to the categories organizational conditions, professional concerns and supervision, this confirms the existence of a significant correlation ($p < .001$). At the same time, the correlation index is good ($r = 0.773$), and the coefficient index R2 is 59.8% in relation to the variable lack of recognition. The ANOVA test shows a highly significant correlation ($p < .001$). (Tables 4 and 5)

Table 4. Linear Regression between the Variables Organizational Conditions, Professional Concerns, Supervision

Model	R	R squared	R squared fitted	Standard error of the estimate
1	.773 ^a	.598	.579	.945

Table 5. Anova test of organizational conditions, professional concerns, supervision

Model		Sum of squares	Gl	Quadratic mean	F	Sig.
1	Regression	83.671	3	27.890	31.243	.000 ^b
	Residue	56.240	412	.893		
	Total	139.910	415			

As can be seen in the results obtained, job dissatisfaction is determined by job stressors which were evaluated through the categories lack of professional recognition, professional concerns and role stress within education professionals. The results allow us to observe that they coincide with other studies carried out in different countries of Latin America and in similar conditions, specifically in schools of basic education and high school, where the results mention work stressors as triggers of work stress and consequently job dissatisfaction. Among these, the volume of work, factors related to students, inadequate salary, the deficit of material resources, the shortage of equipment and work facilities were considered (Oramas et al., 2007). A study of Venezuela in the metropolitan area of Caracas with 295 classroom teachers reported high levels of stress due to various factors, among which the recognition of salary and benefits, and insecurity in the school environment both stand out (Álvarez et al., 2010).

At the same time, studies such as that by Karimi and Adam (2018), mention that having good control of the work environment together with the support and supervision of school institutional management can reduce work stressors perceived by teachers. Likewise, they affirm that a bad teaching context resulting from poor supervision can generate high levels of stress in teachers, due to the fact that they generate other triggers of work stress, such as health problems and an increase in their physical exhaustion, among others.

In his study with teachers at different educational levels from the state of Guanajuato in Mexico, Rodríguez (2012) obtained results very similar to those of the present study. In addition, in his study he also determined the physical environment to be the main cause of stress, as well as overwork being mentioned as a trigger for job dissatisfaction.

Precisely, and starting from the aforementioned, it is observed that work stressors affect teachers without distinction and level of affectation. At the same time, it is evident that this depends on their responses to the agents that cause stress and the strategies that have been implemented with help from the different dependencies that make up the educational system, which allow them to face such situations. It is a reality that the development of coping strategies that help teachers and managers to have an active role in tackling potential stressors becomes unavoidable (Antonioni et al., 2013). In the same way, a lack of organization and direction by the educational institution as perceived by teachers can lead to an increase in their levels of work stress, for which it is necessary that they are externally regulated by a school management organization in order to reduce stressors (Ablanedo-Rosas et al., 2011; Karimi, Adam, 2018).

4. Conclusion

Our approach stated the need to evaluate organizational stressors and teachers' job satisfaction through the categories of professional concerns, lack of professional recognition and role stress. These categories are inseparably related to the workplace within educational organizations, and at the same time, they lead to the development of stress and consequently to job dissatisfaction.

In conclusion, these types of stressors lead to a deterioration in personal well-being, quality of life, and consequently the short, medium and long-term life goals of the subjects – in this case, teachers. It is evident that teachers develop job dissatisfaction when the demands and changes in their work are greater than their ability to cope with them. It also should be mentioned that these are triggers for mental health problems, which can become serious and lead to disease. Thus, they lead to low productivity, which is reflected in teachers' poor performance in their tasks within the educational organization.

Therefore, these types of stressors lead the teacher to an increase in absenteeism, as well as “presenteeism” (which describes workers who go to work when they are sick, but are unable to perform effectively), and increase the rate of accidents and injuries. Due to all of the above, it is important to promote diagnostic studies on the levels of dissatisfaction in the teaching staff, in order to provide preventive recommendations aimed at generating more favorable organizational and personal conditions. This would provide increased well-being for the staff of the educational organization, and its environment, in the future.

The study was carried out through the application of a questionnaire, in which it was shown that educational professionals experience job dissatisfaction and are a risk factor, because at some point in their life they may present with higher levels of job dissatisfaction.

Given current conditions (distance work, pandemic, absenteeism by students), there is a higher incidence of dissatisfaction in teachers. Therefore, the field of education, just as in other

areas such as health, must seek alternatives and balancing activities in people's personal and working lives. Ways to do this might be to use free time in a better way; to ensure a balance between professional wear and tear and personal wear and tear; to maintain an adequate state of well-being; and in turn, to develop better tools that reduce the risk of job dissatisfaction.

Thus, based on the results and the literature, it is necessary to emphasize that the following:

On the one hand, motivation and job satisfaction should be considered as fundamental elements in the organizational climate; at the same time, this translates into a substantial improvement in production processes.

Along with the above, strategies should be developed to avoid work stress, as should methodologies aimed at preventing and managing stress in teachers. Above all, an awareness should be created in employers (educational authorities), managers and workers (teachers) about this type of phenomenon and the effects that can develop, causing alterations both personally and professionally.

In conclusion, it is always necessary, as education professionals, for us to look for tools to prevent, diagnose and treat such problems that occur within organizations. Doing so will bring a positive result: as a consequence, adequate job satisfaction will be developed.

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