

Prediction of Job Satisfaction in Teachers of Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities through Altruistic and Meaningful Life Structures

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Abstract

Aim: This research aimed to study the relationship of altruism and meaningfulness of life with job satisfaction of teachers of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The study population included special education teachers in Tabriz. Convenience sampling was used to select 180 of them. The Carlo et al. revised social attitudes, Minnesota job satisfaction, and Steger meaningful life scales were used to collect the data. Multiple regression analysis revealed that meaningfulness of life and altruism can significantly explain the changes related to job satisfaction. Among the predictor variables, expressive empathy, participatory empathy and the presence of meaning positively and significantly predict teachers' job satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). Altruism and meaningfulness of life help increase teachers' job satisfaction through search for meaning, presence of meaning, expressive empathy and participatory empathy.

Keywords: *Altruism, Job satisfaction, Meaningful life, Teachers of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

Introduction

Intellectual and developmental disability is a neurodevelopmental condition before the age of 18, which is characterized by a lack of mental abilities and adaptive functioning in the practical, social and conceptual contexts (Zablotsky et al., 2019). Children with mental and developmental disabilities need health care and educational services more than their healthy peers (Andzik et al., 2019). Due to the challenging characteristics of these children, work stress and psychological well-being is more prevalent in their caregivers and service providers (Ryan et al., 2021). Among the consequences of such challenging characteristics is an increase in teachers' mental burnout, which results in increased burnout and ultimately their job dissatisfaction (Sumanasena et al., 2020). Altruism is the motivation to help others, which is often done selflessly (Palta, 2020). The meaning of life is defined as a person's self-perception of life as well as their future goals (Heintzelman and King, 2014). There is a positive and significant correlation between altruism and job satisfaction (Chuang et al., 2019). Altruistic behavior has a positive and significant effect on increasing job satisfaction in employees who care for people with mental and developmental disabilities (Ryan et al., 2021). Because providing training programs and interventions, especially in the field of intellectual and developmental disability, requires the establishment of evidence-based activities (Hume et al., 2021), the present study examines the job satisfaction in teachers of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in order to put into practice the ideals of evidence-based activities.

Methodology

This research is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive in terms of research method and correlational in terms of type of research.

The statistical population of the present study included 328 teachers of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in East Azarbaijan Province in 2019-2020. According to Morgan's table, 180 people were selected using convenience sampling method.

Data collection tools:

Carlo et al. revised social attitudes questionnaire

Minnesota job satisfaction questionnaire

Steger meaningful life questionnaire

Pearson's correlation test and multiple regression in SPSS software were used to analyze the statistical data.

We investigated the relationship among variables and their predictive power. Before analyzing the data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check the normality of data distribution, which confirmed normal data distribution.

Results

Based on the results, the calculated correlation coefficients between the meaning of life and its components, as well as altruism and the components of expressive empathy and participatory empathy with job satisfaction are positive and significant (Table 1).

Table 1. Matrix of correlation coefficients between job satisfaction and variables of life significance and altruism

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--------|---------|---------|----|
| 1- Search for meaning | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2- Presence of meaning | 0.255** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3- Meaning of life | 0.928** | 0.596** | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4- Reactive empathy | 0.088 | 0.056 | 0.095 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 5- Expressive empathy | 0.032 | 0.002 | 0.027 | 0.057 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 6- Participatory empathy | -0.041 | 0.06 | -0.011 | 0.105 | 0.277** | 1 | | | | | | |
| 7- Emotional affectivity | 0.062 | -0.119 | 0.006 | 0.206** | 0.071 | 0.155* | 1 | | | | | |
| 8- Emotional stability | 0.08 | 0.218** | 0.151* | -0.141 | 0.038 | -0.081 | -0.25** | 1 | | | | |
| 9- Empathy for others | 0.108 | 0.052 | 0.11 | -0.078 | -0.061 | -0.185* | -0.152* | 0.143 | 1 | | | |
| 10- Control | 0.077 | -0.58 | 0.042 | 0.222** | 0.086 | 0.23** | 0.264** | -0.219** | -0.026 | 1 | | |
| 11- Altruism | 0.127 | 0.051 | 0.125 | 0.527** | 0.526** | 0.556** | 0.536** | 0.061 | 0.157* | 0.477** | 1 | |
| 12- Job satisfaction | 0.15* | 0.299** | 0.239** | 0.077 | 0.224** | 0.222** | 0.036 | 0.052 | 0.046 | 0.028 | 0.243** | 1 |

Multiple regression test was used to predict job satisfaction through significant variables of meaning of life and altruism. Based on the obtained results, among the predictor variables, expressive empathy, participatory empathy and presence of meaning predict teachers' job satisfaction in a positive and significant way. Other variables were not able to predict teachers' job satisfaction (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of regression analysis to predict job satisfaction based on significant variables of life and altruism

| | Non-standardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | t | Significance level | R | R ² | F | Significance level |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|-------|----------------|-------|--------------------|
| | B | Standard error | Beta | | | | | | |
| Constant | 9.226 | 12.305 | | 0.75 | 0.454 | 0.418 | 0.175 | 4.124 | 0.01 |
| Reactive empathy | 0.117 | 0.263 | 0.032 | 0.445 | 0.657 | | | | |
| Expressive empathy | 0.696 | 0.283 | 0.177 | 2.461 | 0.015 | | | | |
| Participatory empathy | 0.651 | 0.284 | 0.172 | 2.293 | 0.023 | | | | |
| Emotional affectivity | 0.12 | 0.252 | 0.036 | 0.476 | 0.634 | | | | |
| Emotional stability | -0.062 | 0.437 | -0.01 | -0.141 | 0.888 | | | | |
| Empathy for others | 0.343 | 0.323 | 0.076 | 1.061 | 0.29 | | | | |
| Control | -0.214 | 0.478 | -0.034 | -0.448 | 0.654 | | | | |
| Search for meaning | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.073 | 1.003 | 0.317 | | | | |
| Presence of meaning | 0.881 | 0.241 | 0.269 | 3.649 | 0.001 | | | | |

Discussion and conclusion

The results of the present study showed that altruism and meaningfulness of life increase the level of job satisfaction among teachers of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In fact, altruism and meaningfulness of life protects teachers from the stress and work pressure caused by teaching students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Furthermore, instead of being dissatisfied with or leaving their jobs, they strengthen the sense of altruism and the meaning of life and instead of dealing with adversity in their work events, they accept and take action to eliminate the adversity. It is suggested that other factors and variables related to increasing teachers' job satisfaction such as self-efficacy, satisfaction with income, school working conditions, personality traits, religious beliefs and coping strategies be considered as mediating variables.

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