

Job Satisfaction among Early Childhood Female Teachers and its Impact on Professional Commitment

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to reveal the level of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers in private and public schools in Al-Ahsa Governorate in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It also investigated the impact of job satisfaction on their professional commitment. To achieve the objectives of the study, quantitative and qualitative methods were used to verify the level of job satisfaction and its impact on professional commitment. To obtain relevant and sufficient data, the descriptive-analytical method was used to verify the current practices of female teachers concerning job satisfaction and its impact on their professional commitment. A sample of 208 female teachers from public, private and international schools and kindergartens participated in the research. They were chosen randomly. The results showed a high level for most dimensions of job satisfaction. Satisfaction with salary scored (2.169), community appreciation (2,922), working conditions (2.851) and relationships with children and their families (2.5). The three dimensions of professional commitment also scored high including emotional commitment (4.158), normative commitment to the profession (3.854) and dimension continuity (3.239). This shows that the dimensions of job satisfaction had a strong relationship with the level of professional commitment. 82.7% of the female teachers stated that they would choose the teaching profession in early childhood if they chose the profession again. In light of the current findings, the research presented some recommendations that can be used in educational programs to enhance the positive aspects of female teachers to increase levels of satisfaction and professional commitment.

Keywords: Committed teacher, Job satisfaction, Professional commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher job satisfaction has been studied extensively over the past several decades. With educational reform initiatives, this issue has gained an increasing sense of importance, especially in the early childhood stage, which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has given special emphasis due to its importance. Numerous studies have shown that job satisfaction and teaching conditions are indicators associated with professional competence and commitment (Jorde-Bloo, 1988; Razzaz & Hamada, 2016). Therefore, the teacher's job satisfaction is of great importance because it is linked to developing his performance, behavior and other positive reflections. Most female teachers spend a large part of their time in their workplace. Therefore, they need to search for job satisfaction due to its impact on their quality of life. Khamis (2010) confirmed that the degree of quality of life for a teacher varies according to the degree of his job satisfaction. He added that 32% of the variance in the degree of quality of life was due to the different levels of job satisfaction. In addition, any increase in the level of job satisfaction reflects the motivation to work and professional commitment that contributes to the entire educational process. Shah et al. (2012) mentioned that if teachers are satisfied, they stick to their jobs largely. Job satisfaction also contributes to an increase in positive feelings, one of the most important factors for human resource development. In addition, it enhances loyalty, belonging and a sense of responsibility as well as leads to creativity in work.

Quality in early childhood can make a huge difference in young children's lives. Therefore, understanding the factors affecting job satisfaction is fundamental to attracting and retaining a good female teacher in the workforce.

Most of the Arab research so far has focused on the job satisfaction of kindergarten teachers. It did not expand to include all early childhood teachers, which includes kindergarten teachers and primary classes together, and it is one educational stage according to the executive framework for the renewal of teacher preparation programs (Saudi Ministry of Education, 2018). The research also did not address the relationship of job satisfaction with the professional commitment of early childhood teachers, and this reduces the practical benefit of generalizing the results of this research to the early childhood stage as a whole.

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The Problem and Research Questions

According to the 2030 vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, progress depends on the quality of education. This requires a teacher who takes responsibility for shaping the future based on his skills and competencies. Teaching is not an easy task because it requires a high degree of professional commitment and professional competencies inculcated in the teacher's personality. Therefore, the negative impact on teachers affects their professional commitment. Officials realized that providing a sufficient number of female teachers is not as important as ensuring a good quality of them in terms of possessing knowledge, skills and competencies that qualify them for the teaching profession. Society needs female teachers who can make education full of life and production-oriented. A teacher who has a professional commitment is more engaged and devoted to her profession. The low professional commitment influences the effectiveness of education and the success of female teachers in their professional performance or leaving the job. The results of Jiang's study (2005) showed that the organizational climate and participation in curriculum reform are direct factors to influence the job satisfaction of early childhood teachers. They are also important variables that improve teachers' professional commitment. Jiang (2005) concluded that the organizational climate and participation in curriculum reform not only facilitates the independence of teachers but also relieves their feelings of fatigue. Sargent and Hannum (2005) study explored the factors leading to primary school teachers' job satisfaction and the conditions that make them happy. The results shed light on the need for more attention to social aspects of their impact on teacher satisfaction, and salaries were negatively related to the desire to change professions. The results of Liu's study (2016) also showed that heavy workload and low wages had a negative impact on teachers' satisfaction upon integrating care with early childhood education. Teacher job satisfaction can be enhanced when workload and interpersonal relationships, feedback on work, teamwork, and teaching autonomy are considered.

Hence, this research was conducted to assess the level of job satisfaction among early childhood teachers and its impact on their professional commitment. The main problem of the research was identified in the following main research question:

What is the relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment among early childhood teachers in Al-Ahsa Governorate?

Sub-questions emerged from this question:

1. What is the level of job satisfaction for early childhood teachers in Al-Ahsa Governorate?
2. What is the level of professional commitment of early childhood teachers in Al-Ahsa Governorate?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment in early childhood in Al-Ahsa Governorate?
4. Can professional commitment be predicted based on job satisfaction?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The current research aimed to determine the degree of job satisfaction for a sample of kindergarten and primary school teachers in Al-Ahsa Governorate in Saudi Arabia and its impact on their professional commitment.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in the following points:

1. The results of the research may help in enhancing job satisfaction and professional commitment among early childhood teachers that contribute to improving and increasing the effectiveness of the educational process at that stage.
2. Some solutions are suggested to the problems faced by early childhood teachers and presented to the Ministry of Education to help raise the quality of work.
3. Some proposals are submitted to education officials to improve the working environment and conditions in learning environments.
4. Awareness is created among education administrators, school leaders and the administration of the educational region about the factors that affect the job satisfaction and professional commitment of female teachers in schools and kindergartens.
5. There are very limited studies that dealt with the relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment among early childhood teachers.

Delimitations of the Study

The search is determined by a sample of early childhood teachers in public, private and international schools in Al-Ahsa Governorate, and the time of the research conducted in the 2021 school year.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Job Satisfaction

The interest in job satisfaction increased by educators, by examining the dimensions associated with it, measuring the degree of teacher satisfaction with his job, and examining the causes and sources of dissatisfaction. The factors affecting job satisfaction have been identified, and their presence is considered a basis for achieving it, and their deficiency leads to its reduction, and consequently the negative impact on the quality of the educational process.

Job satisfaction is the teacher's feelings and attitudes towards work and awareness of what the profession offers him, and what he should get from it. It is also the sum of the special attitudes towards the various elements related to work. These attitudes are represented by the institution's policy in organizing work, the quality of supervision, relations with superiors, colleagues, children, and parents, and opportunities for advancement and advancement in work. They also include the advantages of working in the institution, a sense of security, work responsibilities, and the ability to accomplish, be appreciated and respected feelings by the community. According to Yunus (2018), increasing opportunities for positive interaction and communication between the elements of the educational system in kindergartens enhances work motivation and increases job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a term with several definitions. It is the psychological feeling of contentment, satisfaction, and happiness to satisfy the needs, desires and expectations of the work itself and environment with trust, loyalty and belonging to the work and relevant internal and external environmental factors. Also, it represents the outcome of a group of factors related to job work, which is measured by the individual accepting that work with satisfaction and his ability to produce as a result of the inner feeling that enables him to do his work without boredom or distress. In addition, it is the individual's feeling of happiness and satisfaction while performing his work, and this is achieved by compatibility between what the individual expects from his work, and what he actually gets from this work. This was confirmed by the study of Al-Ghul (2019). The teacher's satisfaction is represented in his feelings and expectations towards his work and the extent of suitability for his ambition and dreams. He stressed that the general satisfaction of the teacher is related to several variables such as self-esteem, affiliation, nature of work, administrative interaction between teachers, school administration and educational supervisors, and interactions between teachers and parents. He also explained that the imbalance in wages and rewards leads to anxiety, and inability to give, and may lead to absence from work and sit-ins. It may result in an imbalance in students' achievement. This notion was confirmed by previous research that dealt with the relationship between job satisfaction, work environment and job retention (Dagli, 2012; Perrachione et al. 2008; Mancuso et al., 2011). Job satisfaction represents the sum of the positive feelings and attitudes that female teachers show toward working in an educational institution. Its dimensions affect the success of female teachers and are considered the most important indicator of the institution's success that is linked to the teacher's professional commitment and his performance of the roles and duties entrusted to him.

Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction among Teachers

Job satisfaction is a complex and multifaceted concept that can mean different things to different people affected by different factors. The extent of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work can be determined by ascertaining how workers view their working conditions, personal relationships and job content. Haybah (2016) identified the factors that affect job satisfaction in several points: age, qualification, experience, human relations, nature of work, professional development, work environment, material incentives and the relationship with kindergarten management. Several studies have also supported these factors (Al-Namrousi, 2012; Bani Hamad, 2020; Younis, 2018). Al-Thubaiti and Al-Anzi (2014) showed the job satisfaction of teachers was affected by school leadership work environment, supervision methods, material aspects and incentives and qualifications and training. Also, the study showed that the level of job satisfaction of teachers in Al-Qurayyat governorate was linked to the qualification variable in favor of the bachelor and postgraduate qualifications. In addition, it correlated with the experience variable, in favor of the experience over ten years. Hassan (2009) emphasized that working conditions were stressful due to several reasons including limited material resources, low social appreciation for the role played by the teacher and an increase in the number of children in one class.

Job satisfaction also represents a set of factors related to the work environment and measured by the degree of the individual's acceptance of his work with satisfaction and the extent of his professional commitment to work because of a feeling of satisfaction to enable him to do his work with satisfaction and conviction without boredom. Zhang's (2006) study found that teachers' participation in decision-making and incentives are the best predictors of job satisfaction. Student willingness to learn and parental involvement significantly influence teacher job satisfaction, too.

Based on the above, we can conclude that regardless of the methods used to study job satisfaction, several factors can be identified from the previous related variables such as work environment, the teacher's characteristics and demographic variables (gender, age, and educational qualifications).

Professional Commitment

Meyer et al. (2002, 1997) defined professional commitment as the emotional bond between the teacher and the school concerning his continued association with the institution, acceptance of its values and objectives, and willingness to help achieve these goals and values. It also leads to motivation to work. Therefore, professional commitment is an association that binds an employee to his organization. Shukla (2014) defined it as a high level of an individual's attachment to an organization. As explained by Meyer and Allen (1997),

commitment as a behavior becomes apparent when an individual commits to a specific behavior because it is morally right, not personally beneficial to him. Meyer and Allen (2002) defined professional commitment as a state in which members of an organization are bound by their actions and beliefs that support their activities and participation in the organization.

The success of the educational system depends on a competent teacher, who can achieve high-quality education and predict the effective performance and academic achievement of his students. A teacher who can fulfill professional teaching responsibilities can achieve educational goals. He determines the quality of education and the academic performance of students and the school. He is a major player in the implementation of curricula and education as a whole. Therefore, the commitment of teachers is an important aspect of achieving quality education. Thus, the success of education depends on professional competence, and commitment is based on teacher skills and effective teaching that can be measured through school performance. Therefore, the teacher's professional commitment and its impact on the determinants of job satisfaction in kindergarten and primary grades is a subject worth studying. Rahmatulla (2016) studied the relationship between teaching effectiveness, teacher efficiency and performance. The results concluded that teachers did not perform well due to limited capabilities related to learning effectiveness. The teachers pointed out that teaching alone is not sufficient. Rather, it needs an integrated learning environment and motivational factors that lead to teachers' commitment and high performance.

Mwesiga and Okendo (2018) also demonstrated that teachers' commitment to teaching was limited by many challenges. The challenges included poor training and professional development, ineffective participation in school decision-making, inefficient leadership, low wages, lack of incentives, insecurity, poor work environment and government interference in the teaching profession. Kontos and File (1992) demonstrated that the levels of job satisfaction and commitment were relatively high for early intervention employees and did not differ in different job categories. Salaries also emerged as a major concern for them. Several teachers pointed out that they wanted promotion and career advancement.

Professional Commitment

Professional commitment is an emotional attachment to the job and the institution. It has been defined in three elements: (1) emotional commitment (love of the job), a strong psychological attachment to the job and the institution that increases job satisfaction, (2) continuing commitment (fear of losing a job), the fear of losing a job and the benefit of which may be greater than what he can get from a new job, (3) normative commitment (commitment to stay in the job), the state of mind in which the employee feels the need to stay with the organization (Meyer and Allen, 2002). This idea confirms that teacher job satisfaction leads to their commitment to their jobs and school. The areas of professional commitment of the teacher have been identified in Figure 1.

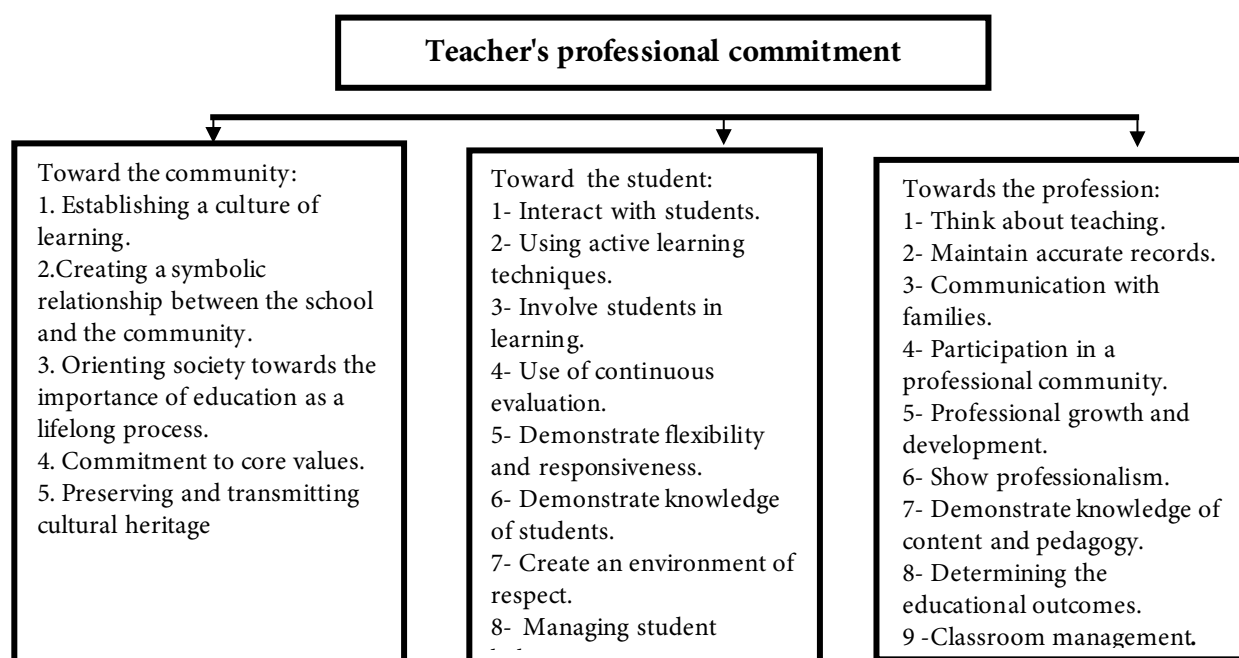


Fig. 1: Fields of Teacher Professional Commitment (Hussen, Awgichew, 2016)

The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Professional Commitment

According to Nguyen et al. (2014), and Dery and Puopiel (2013), job satisfaction is linked to professional commitment and influences workflow. Mannheim et al. (1997) pointed out that job satisfaction is an important predictor of professional commitment. Although some researchers have argued that job satisfaction reflects immediate emotional reactions to the job, professional commitment to the organization develops very slowly. The individual forms more comprehensive assessments of the institution, its values, expectations and future. Therefore, job satisfaction is seen as one of the determinants of professional commitment. Female teachers with high job satisfaction are expected to be more committed to the profession. Bashir (1917) indicated a positive, statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment. This proves that job satisfaction and professional commitment are closely related to each other. This result was confirmed by Aref and Aref (2011). The results showed that teachers who were satisfied with their work showed better emotional commitment and continuity toward their school. Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011) found that job satisfaction significantly and positively explained the variance in professional commitment. This means that the variance of the employees' professional commitment was significantly related to their level of job satisfaction.

METHOD

Research Design

The descriptive-analytical approach was adopted to investigate the current practices of female teachers concerning job satisfaction and its impact on professional commitment in kindergarten and primary grades.

Population and Sample/ Study Group/Participants

The research included (207) early childhood teachers randomly selected from private, governmental and international kindergartens and schools in Al-Ahsa. The distribution of

the sample included 143 elementary kindergarten teachers, 45 elementary grade teachers, 13 kindergarten teachers and six elementary grade teachers. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample according to the variables:

Data Collection Tools

The job satisfaction and professional commitment questionnaire was built according to the following:

A. Job Satisfaction

A questionnaire was built to measure job satisfaction to assess six dimensions of job: satisfaction with salary (5 items), motivation and professional readiness for kindergarten and primary school teachers (7 items), appreciation of society and social status of the profession of kindergarten and classroom teachers (4 items), work conditions and nature (16 items), the relationship with children and their families (5 items).

B. Professional Commitment

It assesses three main dimensions: the emotional commitment to the profession (7 items), the commitment of female teachers to continuity in the job (6 items) and the normative commitment of female teachers towards their profession (6 items).

C. Open Questions

What are the two things that make you most satisfied/disappointed in your job?

The questionnaire's total sub-items consisted of (56) items in addition to demographic data. The items of the questionnaire were built based on the literature and previous studies that dealt with job satisfaction and its impact on professional commitment. Then the dimensions and sub-items were identified for each dimension.

The sample was asked to respond to the questionnaire items according to their job (basic/assistant primary class teacher, basic/assistant kindergarten teacher). The teacher's identity was not disclosed. The questionnaire in its initial version was presented to (7) experts to express their opinion on the main

Table 1: Distribution of sample members according to research variable

Social status	Married		Unmarried	Other	%
	71%		29%	-	100%
Academic qualification	Bachelor	Diploma	Master	Doctorate	100%
	84%	5%	4%	4%	
Years of experience	-5 years		5- 10 years	10-30 years	100%
	40%		30%	30%	
Job title	Kindergarten teacher	Kindergarten assistant teacher	Elementary School teacher	Elementary School assistant teacher	100%
	69%	6%	22%	3%	100%

and sub-themes. The percentage of agreement among the experts' opinions was (88.5%) on all the questionnaire items. Then, the questionnaire was written in its final version. To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, it was applied to a random sample of (20) participants, and the Cronbach's alpha equation was applied. It was found that the reliability coefficient ranged from 0.77 to 0.92.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The first question: What is the level of job satisfaction for the teachers?

Means and standard deviations were calculated in descending order for each item of the job satisfaction scale according to each dimension as shown in Table 2,3,4,5 and 6.

Table 2 shows the items arranged in descending order according to their means to express the level of satisfaction with the salary. It is shown that the overall satisfaction for this dimension came with a means of 2.169. This result explains that early childhood teachers make a comparison between their salaries and jobs with those of teachers at higher educational levels. Female teachers reported that they make more effort with children of that age group, and their salaries are supposed to be equal to teachers at higher levels. 60% of the sample is not satisfied with the salary compared to other jobs. 62% are not satisfied with the incentives and rewards compared to other jobs. This result is consistent with previous research for the same professional category such as Al-Sharida's (2008) study, which stated that the level of job satisfaction was low among primary school teachers concerning the salary and incentives system. The responses to the open question concerning

the sources of satisfaction/frustration in their job in this dimension were almost in agreement. 142 female teachers (68.3%) mentioned that among the sources of their frustration is that their efforts are not rewarded in the way they should be, and some of them mentioned the item (I will retire soon).

Table 3 displays the order of items according to their means in descending order to express the dimension of motivation and professional readiness. As shown in Table 3, the level of satisfaction in general in this dimension received a mean of 2.171. This result reflects great frustration among female teachers. Most of them are keen to pursue higher studies, yet they are not rewarded financially or morally. There are no advantages for female teachers who have master or doctoral degrees. Promotion and assuming senior positions depend on seniority regardless of degree or training type. The responses of the female teachers to the open question about sources of satisfaction/frustration are also consistent with their responses to the closed items. 167 female teachers (80.2%) of the total sample stated that the promotion system is unfair and does not assess competence, training, or level of study. Only seniority counts. This result is consistent with the study of Al-Razzaz and Hamada (2016), which concluded that the teacher's self-efficacy has a direct impact on his professional satisfaction.

The items were arranged in the dimension of society and social status in descending order according to their means. Table 4 depicts that the item "Parents appreciate the work I do with children" ranked first in this dimension with a means of (3.62), ranking very high. The item "Society appreciates my profession as an early childhood teacher" ranked last (2.163), rating medium. The overall estimate of the respondents in

Table 2: Means and standard deviations –salary satisfaction

The first dimension: satisfaction with salary	Mean	Standard division	Level
I receive very appropriate financial incentives and rewards.	2.871	1.141	High
I am satisfied with the salary increase opportunities.	2.519	1.152	High
I feel my efforts are well rewarded.	1.668	.988	Medium
My salary is adequate compared to the salaries of other similar jobs.	1.572	.941	Low
I get a decent salary for the work I do.	1.442	.578	Low
Total	2.169	0.689	Medium

Table 3: Means and standard deviations –motivation and professional readiness

<i>The second dimension: motivation and professional readiness</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Standard division</i>	<i>Level</i>
There are many vocational training opportunities for promotion.	2.5	1.076	Medium
The chances of promotion are very high in my job.	2.216	1.144	Medium
The promotions system adopted in my job is fair and equitable.	2.149	1.045	Medium
Promotions are based on efficiency at work and according to very clear criteria.	2.057	1.066	Medium
Promotions are based on seniority without regard to graduate studies.	1.933	1.009	Medium
Promotions are primarily dependent on the completion of my higher education.	1.841	.873	Medium
Completing my higher education helped me advance.	1.788	.939	Medium
Average	2.171	0.596	Medium

this dimension was high with a means of (2.922). This result shows the extent to which early childhood teachers need moral appreciation from the community. The teacher is emotionally affected by the opinion of the society in which he lives. 153 female teachers (73.6) of the sample stated that they are proud of their profession and feel proud of their parents' appreciation for them. But, they need more community support, and this

is consistent with Al-Habeht's (2013) study, which concluded that social status and community appreciation came in second place after the teacher's relationship with children on the job satisfaction questionnaire.

Items in Table 5 are arranged in descending order of working conditions and nature according to their means. Table 5 shows that the item "The institution-building is appropriate

Table 4: Means and standard deviations –appreciation society and social status

<i>The third dimension: appreciation of society and social status</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Standard Davion</i>	<i>Level</i>
Parents appreciate the work I do with children.	3.615	.7197	Very high
Sometimes I feel that my work is worthless and underappreciated by others.	2.932	.6704	High
I love my profession and am proud of it.	2.701	1.034	High
Society appreciates my profession as an early childhood teacher.	2.163	1.180	Medium
Total	2.922	0.483	High

Table 5: Means and standard deviations –working conditions and nature

<i>The fourth dimension: working conditions and nature</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Standard division</i>	<i>Level</i>
The institution building is appropriate and takes into account the rules of security and safety	3.677	.544	Very high
The school administration is very cooperative.	3.504	.666	Very high
I cooperate with my colleagues to achieve educational goals for the benefit of society.	3.355	.741	Very high
The education supervisor on my performance is very specialized.	3.206	.927	High
The leader / manager works to overcome the difficulties of work constantly.	2.961	1.025	High
The leader is understanding, cooperative and caring, and involves us in making decisions.	2.941	.991	High
There is mutual respect between female colleagues, and I enjoy working with them.	2.894	.972	High
The education supervisor treats me well during visits.	2.841	1.014	High
Administration appreciates my cooperation in extracurricular activities with children.	2.836	.781	High
Administrative procedures, laws and regulations make work difficult.	2.807	1.012	High
School / kindergarten working hours are very appropriate and not stressful.	2.798	.936	High
The education supervisor responsible for following up on my performance is flexible and unobtrusive.	2.759	.987	High
Furniture, fixtures and tools are appropriate and supportive of the educational process.	2.533	1.111	High
The classroom is equipped with appropriate furniture to accommodate children.	2.519	1.041	High
Administrative communication is good inside and outside the kindergarten.	2.451	1.047	Medium
I stick to my work schedule and do all my duties diligently.	2.346	1.058	Medium
Total	2.851	0.538	High

Table 6: Means and standard deviations – relationships with children and their families

<i>The fifth dimension: Relationships with children and their families</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Standard division</i>	<i>Level</i>
I help the children complete tasks with vigor and accept my directions.	3.817	.445	Very high
I always communicate with the children's families, and answer all their inquiries.	3.726	.526	Very high
I help solve children's behavioral and social problems and inform their families about everything.	3.692	.521	Very high
I organize periodic meetings for families of children in the school / kindergarten.	3.524	.680	High
My relationships with children are friendly and intimate.	2.442	1.097	Medium
Total	3.551	0.453	Very high

and takes into account the rules of security and safety” ranked first in this dimension with a means of (3.67). The item “The school administration is very cooperative” ranked second with a means of (3.5). The item “I cooperate with my colleagues” to achieve educational goals for the benefit of the community” ranked third with a means of (3.35). Both items had a very high level. On the other hand, the item “I adhere to my work schedules, and I do all my tasks diligently” ranked last with a means of (2.346), rating medium. The overall rating of the respondents in this dimension was high with a means of (2.851). The result of these items was high, and the female teachers expressed that they enjoy the time they spend in school as a result of the mutual respect between colleagues, the leader and supervisors. This result is in line with the study of Yunus (2018), who showed that the level of job satisfaction was low in all domains except for the work environment and its prevailing role relations.

As shown in Table 6, items in the dimension of relationships with children and their families were arranged in descending order of their mean. Table 6 shows that the item “I help children to accomplish tasks actively and accept my directions” ranked

first in this dimension with a means of (3.8) whereas the item “I always communicate with children’s families, and answer all their inquiries” ranked second with a means of (3.8, 3.7). Both items had a very high level. On the other hand, the item “My relationships with children are friendly and intimate” ranked last with a means of (2.4). The overall rating of the respondents in this dimension was very high with a means of (3.5). This result accords with Al-Habeht’s (2013) study, which found that the teacher’s relationship with children comes first on the job satisfaction scale.

2. The second question: What is the level of professional commitment of early childhood teachers?

Means and standard deviations were calculated in descending order for the professional commitment of the sixth, seventh and eighth items as displayed in Table 7.

The items in the sixth dimension (emotional commitment to the profession) were arranged in descending order of their means. As shown in Table 7, the item “The teaching profession is important to me, it is my self-esteem” ranked first in this dimension, and the item “I am proud to be a teacher” ranked

Table 7: Means and standard deviations in descending order of professional commitment

<i>Emotional commitment to the profession</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Standard Davion</i>	<i>Level</i>
The teaching profession is important to me, it is my self-esteem.	4.807	.462	Very high
I am proud to be a teacher.	4.807	.441	Very high
My profession means a lot to me on a personal level.	4.692	.591	Very high
I love the practices of the teaching profession.	4.634	.645	Very high
I feel that the image of the school/kindergarten reflects my own image.	4.418	.852	High
I feel that the school/kindergarten problems are my personal problems.	3.480	1.231	high
The decision to teach in this school/kindergarten was a mistake.	2.274	1.178	Medium
Means	4.158	0.771	High
Commitment to continuity in the profession	Means	Standard division	Level
I will not leave the teaching profession now, I have a sense of commitment to the profession.	4.293	.924	High
Changing my profession would be very difficult for me.	4.129	.951	High
I will work in this kindergarten/school as long as there is no other option.	3.951	1.043	High
I will not change school/kindergarten even if I get a better chance.	2.990	1.369	Medium
I will feel psychological relief if I decide to change my teaching profession.	2.216	1.071	Low
For me, leaving the teaching profession is more beneficial than continuing with it.	1.86	.924	Low
<i>Means</i>	3.239	1.047	<i>Medium</i>
Normative commitment of teachers to their profession	Means	Standard division	Level
My sense of loyalty to the teaching profession is the reason for my commitment to it.	4.418	.769	High
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the school/kindergarten I work in.	4.341	.836	High
I would feel guilty if I left my teaching career.	4.120	1.007	High
It gets even better when the teacher stays in one profession.	3.831	1.181	High
Leaving the teaching profession is a mistake, even if it is in my own good.	3.677	1.214	high
Jumping from one job to another is unethical for me.	2.74	1.120	Medium
Means	3.854	1.021	High

second with a similar means for both of them (4.807), rating high. The item “I am proud to be a teacher” ranked third and the item “The decision to teach in this school/kindergarten was a mistake” ranked last with a means of (2.274), rating medium. The overall degree of female teachers in this dimension was high with a means of (4.158). The items in the seventh dimension (the level of commitment of the participants to the continuity in the profession) were arranged according to their means in descending order. As evident in Table 6, the item “I will not leave the teaching profession now, I have a feeling of commitment to the profession” ranked first in this dimension with a means of (4.293). The item “Changing my profession will be very difficult for me” ranked second with a means of (4.129). Both items scored high. The item “For me, leaving the teaching profession is more useful than continuing with it” came last with a means of (1.86), ranking low. The overall degree of female teachers in this dimension was medium with a means of (3.239).

The items in the eighth dimension (the normative commitment of female teachers toward their profession) were arranged in descending order according to their means. It is evident from Table 6, the item “My feeling of loyalty to the teaching profession is the reason for my commitment to it” ranked first in this dimension with means of (4.418). The item “I feel a strong sense of belonging to the school in which I work” scored second with a means of (4.341). Both items came high. The item “Jumping from one job to another is an unethical act for me” was last with a means of (2.74), scoring medium. The overall degree of the participants’ responses in this dimension was high with a means of (3.854).

The result of the current research with regard to professional commitment agrees with that of Hashem’s (2007) study, which found a correlation between the psychological adjustment of female teachers and their satisfaction with their professional growth. Also, the result is in line with Mart’s (2013) study that confirmed that committed teachers seek to fulfill their responsibilities towards their students. One of their distinguishing characteristics is the degree of commitment of committed teachers to their profession. They play an important role in the development of learners.

3. The third question: Is there a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment among early childhood teachers, and can professional commitment be predicted through job satisfaction?

To study the relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used. The result showed that the correlation coefficient between job satisfaction and professional commitment was 0.96, significant at (0.00) and a good relationship. The multiple regression coefficients were also calculated using the Stepwise

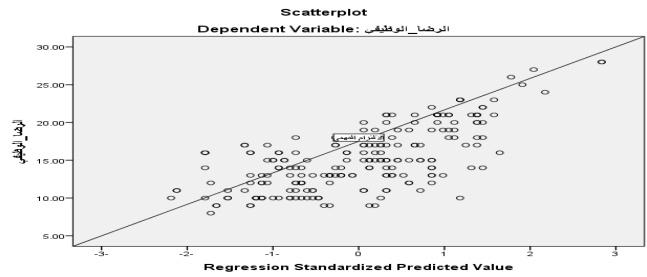


Fig. 2: Linear regression line

method, considering that the professional commitment is the dependent or predictive variable and the job satisfaction variable is the independent variable. The results revealed that the square of the multiple correlation coefficient (R square) or the so-called coefficient of determination was equal to (0.69). That is to say that the independent variable explains (69%) of the total variance in the degrees of the dependent variable, which is an acceptable amount of the explained variance. This indicates a statistically significant effect (at a level less than 0.001) for the independent variable (job satisfaction) on the dependent variable (professional commitment). The linear regression coefficient represented by the value of the Bay coefficient B was (4.05). The standard error of the blunt parameter Str. Error amounted to (1.422). The value of the Beta coefficient amounted to (.690), then the value of T (2.848) and its statistical significance. The female teachers who have job satisfaction have a professional commitment at an acceptable rate of about (70%). Figure 2 shows the linear regression line:

CONCLUSION

The results of this research link theory with practice in a very useful and practical way. Assessing aspects of job satisfaction can be an important step in creating high-quality and satisfying work environments for teachers on a professional and personal level. It can help to change policies and practices at the Saudi Ministry of Education level for all aspects of the early childhood education profession as it relates to job satisfaction and professional commitment. Studying the relationship between job satisfaction and professional commitment may facilitate effective job restructuring to implement organizational practices that contribute to enhancing the teacher’s association with the profession and its stability in it. It will be possible to train and motivate female teachers in environments that enhance overall job satisfaction and professional commitment. This insight may be useful in recruitment and job testing. An administrator interviewing new teachers can ask questions specifically related to their perceptions of the teacher’s profession about each aspect of the profession. Also, it can be said that job satisfaction is reflected in increased productivity and improved learning as evident in the theoretical framework of this research. It indicates that the

level of satisfaction is an accurate indicator of several indicators of the effectiveness of learning environments. Early childhood work environments need to establish practices that enhance the quality of working life, a worthwhile end in itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the current results, the study recommended the necessity of preparing and implementing counseling programs for early childhood teachers urging them to commit to their profession, regardless of the financial return. Also, the government, the education administration and schools need to pay special attention to vocational training, rewards, incentives, continuous constructive support, fair and equitable salaries and the opportunity for promotion. This will reduce the turnover of female teachers and help to increase the level of job satisfaction and professional commitment to them. In addition, there is a necessity to conduct training courses for school leaders to establish positive social relations in the school environment, which positively affects the mental health of the teacher. Moreover, guidance officials need to communicate directly with teachers to enhance educational supervision, rather than just contacting leaders, which encourages the teaching and learning process effectively. Furthermore, there should be ways to enhance the moral and material appreciation of scientific degrees such as obtaining a master's degree and a doctorate. Further, the Department of Education should work on exchanging the experiences of female teachers inside the school with other model schools. And it is necessary to raise the level of positive competition at work. Female teachers can be classified annually in performance levels through fair and equitable financial rewards or any other initiative to appreciate their efforts. Finally, the Education Department needs to pay attention to the levels of job satisfaction because of its positive impact on the professional commitment of its employees.

SUGGESTIONS

The study suggests conducting studies on job satisfaction and its impact on the professional commitment of contractors in public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Also, more studies are suggested on occupational satisfaction and its relationship to self-efficacy among early childhood teachers in the Eastern region. In addition, future research may focus on identifying the determinants of professional commitment among early childhood teachers in the Eastern region. Finally, a study is suggested about the relationship between the dimensions of occupational satisfaction and the quality of career of early childhood teachers in the Eastern region.

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